

MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS AND DEVELOPING SUSTAINABILITY:  
THE CASE OF VANOC AND THE VANCOUVER 2010 NATIONAL PARTNERS

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to investigate how corporate sponsorship might contribute to Olympic sustainability, including economic, environmental and social sustainability. The research focused on the partnership management strategies of VANOC (the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Organizing Committee) and the six national Vancouver 2010 corporate partners, with an emphasis on the role of social responsibility imperatives in shaping corporate investments in the sustainability of the Vancouver 2010 Games.

The research followed an interpretive approach. My research focused on how decision-makers endeavored to reduce the potentially negative impacts and to enhance the benefits of the Vancouver 2010 Games. The research followed a case study approach focusing on the key relationships formed in the sustainability area. Data collection included document analysis (128 documents) and semi-structured interviews with 26 key informants identified by VANOC and the corporate partners.

The results of the study show that VANOC was the first OCOG to fully integrate sustainability into its vision statement and to apply sustainability principles in all aspects of Games' planning, operations and delivery. These measures were a direct response to the Vancouver 2010 bid commitments, as well as a response to the IOC's (International Olympic Committee's) adoption of sustainability, along with sport and culture, as a central element of the philosophy of the Olympic Movement.

Although the motivations for corporations to enter Olympic sponsorship were typically not for sustainability objectives as such, they considered sustainability a key component in forming the Olympic partnership. Sponsorship activation on sustainability for the corporate partners was aided through the 2010 Sponsor Sustainability Initiative and 2010 Legacies Now. For the most part, the corporate partners were very satisfied with their role in contributing to the sustainability of the Games and with VANOC's management strategies. Nevertheless, a few areas of tension were identified. One was that VANOC did not have an activation budget for promoting the sustainability program and the contributions of the partners to the sustainability of the Games. The other key point of tension occurred when VANOC sought assistance in areas that were outside of their corporate expertise or core business interest.

## **PREFACE**

Ethics approval was obtained for this research from the University of British Columbia Behavioural Research Ethics Board (UBC BREB). A Certificate of Approval was issued by the UBC BREB on January 16, 2008. The Ethics Certificate number is H07-02487 (see Appendix II).

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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my son, Ziyang, whose inspiration helped me conquer my fears toward my task, even though he was at such a young age.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

“This would be something ...how can you as a student make the most important impact to inspire [future organizing committees] to be a change agent for sustainable initiatives.” (Interview with RONA, 2008)

### 1.1 Sustainability and the Olympic Movement

On February 1, 2007, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and its president, Jacques Rogge, were awarded the “Champion of the Earth 2007” distinction by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). This honor recognized the IOC’s commitment to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable development in sport. Rogge commented, “Today, from the beginning of a city’s desire to stage an Olympic Games, through to the long-term impact of those Games, environmental protection and, more importantly, sustainability, are prime elements of Games planning and operations” (IOC to be honored, 2007).

The Olympic Games have played a significant role in the development of sport and sports events in the past century, however, the celebration of athletic performance was only ever one component, and culture formed an important second pillar of the Olympic production (Barney, Wenn & Martyn, 2002; Masterman, 2004). Today, the cultural and sustainability roles of the Games are both essential to the success of the Olympic Movement. The Games can be a significant catalyst for urban economic and

social development as well as for global attention via media coverage (Essex & Chalkley, 1998; Pruess, 2004); Despite this, the Games' management-related problems of the past, such as cost overruns, environmental damage, and the diversion of public funds to event-related expenditures have contributed to a history of unfulfilled economic promises and negative social impacts that continue to be concerns for host countries (Lenskyi, 2000; Simon & Jennings, 1992). Community resistance to hosting the Olympic Games can be extremely powerful, as seen in the case of Denver citizens' rejection of the IOC's offer to host the Olympic Games in 1972. The economic shortfall of the Montreal Olympic Games in 1976 culminated in a CA\$1.5 billion debt that Montreal taxpayers were required to pay off over the next 30 years. This debt was not cleared until 2006 ([www.cbc.ca](http://www.cbc.ca), 2006; Payne, 2005). In response to a public referendum in 1978 in which citizens of Los Angeles voted against the use of public funds to support the Games, led by Peter Ueberroth, the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee (LAOOC) adopted an entrepreneur model for staging the 1984 Los Angeles Summer Games (Los Angeles and the 1984, 2004; Payne, 2005). With a strategy of "less is more" in the recruitment of corporate sponsors, LAOOC generated a US\$225 million surplus for LAOOC. This was a turning point for the IOC and future OCOGs and supported a new approach wherein financial responsibility for hosting the Games, and as a result the economic sustainability of the Games, could be ensured through corporate support (Payne, 2005; Reich, 1986).

The Lillehammer Winter Games in 1994 were considered to be the first environmental awareness Games. The Lillehammer Olympic Organizing Committee

(LOOC) set up an environmental framework and invited Project Environment Friendly Olympics (PEFO) to draft an environmental policy and action plan. The *Greening Our Games* concept listed more than 20 environmentally concerned projects, including innovative construction, use of recycled materials, efficient transportation and environmentally sustainable solutions. It was praised for the efforts made to increase environmental awareness and promote environmental responsibility (Chernushenko, 1994).

In 1994, the IOC added concerns about the environment to the Olympic Charter as the third pillar to the Olympic Movement, alongside sport and culture. An IOC Commission on Sport and Environment was created in 1995 to promote environmental protection. In 1999, the IOC adopted its version of the United Nations' *Agenda 21*, named *Sport for Sustainable Development*, to promote sustainable development through sport. According to the *Olympic Movement's Agenda 21*, the definition of sustainable development is to "satisfy the needs of the present generation without compromising the chance for future generations to satisfy theirs" (p. 17). It has three objectives: 1) improve socioeconomic conditions in host communities; 2) protect the environment through sport; and 3) combat social exclusion. This was a fundamental policy shift that identified general actions to be undertaken when hosting the Games, as well as defined the role the Olympic Movement would endeavor to play in the improvement of community and environmental well-being (*Olympic Movement's Agenda 21*, 1999). In addition, the controversy over these issues led the IOC to hold a biennial World Conference on Sport

and Environment beginning in 1999, in which the government, nongovernment, sport, legal and industry sectors gathered to participate in the debate.<sup>1</sup>

The conflict between the costs of hosting the Games and the limited benefits to a host community is a central issue for organizing committees and host cities alike. Sport mega-events have significant capacity to shape the image of the host city and offer opportunities to stimulate economic growth (Manzenreiter & Horne, 2005). In particular, heightened awareness of the host city through media coverage, and increases in tourism and in promotion of sport and physical activity, have motivated political and business groups to view sport mega-events like the Olympics as a vehicle for urban economic development (Emery, 2002). However, concerns remain about the actual benefactors, and the potentially negative impacts (financial costs, environmental and social consequences) that may be off-loaded in the host region onto other groups.

While the motivations for a city to host the Games often parallel corporate sponsors' expectations, such as business opportunities and brand awareness (Barney et al., 2002), urban social problems are increasingly important as well (Lenskyj, 2000; Lenskyj, 2002). The latter raise questions about who will pay and who will benefit? Although global awareness, economic gain, national pride, and image enhancement are major

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<sup>1</sup> In 1999, the Olympic Movement adopted Agenda 21 for the sports community, addressing issues and challenges, to ensure sustainable development of sport. In cooperation with International Sports Federations (IFs), National Olympic Committees (NOCs), Organizing Committees of the Olympic Games (OCOGs), and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the IOC has launched a series of programs and activities ranging from organizing a biennial World Conference on Sport and Environment to organizing local activities during the UN World Environment Day that is held every year on June 5. [http://www.olympic.org/uk/organisation/missions/environment/sustainable\\_development/index\\_uk.asp](http://www.olympic.org/uk/organisation/missions/environment/sustainable_development/index_uk.asp)

factors that stimulate corporations to link their names and products to the Games, local politicians and business leaders often do not take adequate action to fulfill Olympic promises of dramatic urban improvements made during the bid phase (Lenskyj, 2000, p. 111). Research shows that host cities often fall short of solving these social concerns, such as antipoverty programs or the inclusion of public participation during the process (Andranovich, Burbank, & Heying, 2001). Some host cities have made promises for the inclusion of non-elite interests in their bid plans, yet social impact studies conducted after several Games reveal that hundreds of homeless people were subjected to relocation or were expelled from the host city to create a “good image” (Lenskyj, 2000).

For the host city, economic opportunities derived from the Games are often a primary goal of an Olympic bid. These opportunities include job creation, tourism revenues, and global media exposure as a “world class” city (Andranovich et al., 2001; Preuss, 2004). However, even though the Olympic-related economic boom may bring short-term employment opportunities, it may also bring a rise in the cost of living and disadvantages for the poor (Burton, 2003; Preuss, 2004). Equally important, hosting the Olympics typically leads to social pressures to relocate homeless people and rehabilitate youth at risk (Lenskyj, 2000).

The environmental side of the Games has received increased attention since Lillehammer 1994, and there has been success in mitigating environmental impacts and using the Games to enhance environmental awareness and initiated environmental programs. The same has not been true of social programs, although this is changing.

The Sydney 2000 Olympics, for example, pioneered the “Green Games,” which made great progress towards fulfilling the commitment to stage a more environmentally responsible Summer Olympics (Chernushenko, van der Kamp, & Stubbs, 2001). Despite this success, however, Aboriginal issues and homelessness problems left criticisms of what was actually achieved (Lenskyj, 2002). Sydney 2000 demonstrated that pursuing sustainable development can be achieved through successful stakeholder engagement and a system approach to environmental protection. To illustrate, environmental groups, especially Greenpeace, not only assisted in developing a bid agenda and environmental guidelines but also served as independent monitors to evaluate and critique the Games’ performance. Through integrating water conservation and waste management practices into all planning and implementation, for example, Sydney 2000 set up a new global standard for evaluating the sustainability of future bids (Chernushenko et al., 2001).

The Beijing 2008 Games made unprecedented efforts to prepare and stage a “Green Olympics” (one of its three key themes<sup>2</sup>) in terms of large-scale environmental improvements in the host city. As the first developing country to host the Olympics, China invested a total of US\$17 billion on environmental initiatives for the Beijing Games, not only to fulfill its original promises in its bid, but also to achieve ambitious commitments to environmental sustainability (UNEP, 2009). Based on a recent evaluation conducted by Greenpeace (2008), the Beijing Organizing Committee for the

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<sup>2</sup> Three themes of Beijing Olympic Games were “ Green Olympics, Hi-tech Olympics and People’s Olympics”. Retrieved March 10, 2009, from <http://en.beijing2008.cn/90/95/article212029590.shtml>

Games of the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG), and the Beijing municipal government created a positive legacy in terms of environmental initiatives for the city (Greenpeace, 2008). More importantly, the 2008 Games raised the environmental bar by including public transportation, waste treatment, and green Olympic venues, according to an independent assessment by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP, 2009). As a result of its achievements in hosting the Games, the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau and BOCOG won the first-ever IOC Award for Sport and the Environment for Asia at the *8th World Conference on Sport and the Environment* in Vancouver on March 30, 2009 (Benjamin, 2009). I attended the award ceremony and witnessed the historic moment that night in the Vancouver Convention Center. Nevertheless, some shortcomings and missed opportunities also were highlighted by Greenpeace. These included the lack of mandatory guidelines for ethical procurement and construction materials used for the Games, such as Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified timber, and the lack of engagement with nongovernmental organizations in terms of using their environmental expertise to help prepare for the Games (Greenpeace, 2008; UNEP, 2009).

Realizing that hosting an Olympic Games has a significant impact on the host city and community, the IOC launched the Olympic Games Impact (OGI) study in 2002 to encourage host cities to improve impacts through professional planning processes related to staging the Games. A total of 154 indicators were originally proposed to measure three

dimensions of sustainability - economic, social, and environmental (Leonardsen, 2007).<sup>3</sup>

In 2003, the IOC required all future applicants and candidate cities to conduct an OGI study in partnership with an independent research institute. Vancouver 2010 and London 2012 are the first Winter and Summer Games, respectively, that are obligated to submit an OGI report as part of their Host City Contracts with the IOC. Beijing 2008 voluntarily produced an OGI report in partnership with Renmin University (Beijing to be 1st, 2004).

VANOC is the first Organizing Committee that has integrated sustainability into its mission statement and applied sustainability principles in all aspects of the Games' planning, operations, and delivery (*Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Report 2005 – 06*).

Detailed commitments for the delivery of social, economic, environmental outcomes and benefits were incorporated in the Host City Contract with the IOC in the Candidature phase (*Vancouver 2010 Bid Book, 2003*). A major challenge for VANOC as a result was how to fulfill the promises made during the bid, meet the expectations of the community and the IOC, and stage a sustainable Games with minimal negative impact.

This raises the important question of how the opportunities of the Olympic Games can best be mobilized to support sustainable legacies in the host city and community. One clear possibility is to examine the opportunities presented by the Olympic Partners and their own corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs. In other words, these problems

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<sup>3</sup> A total of 126 indicators were used in the first Olympic Games Impact (OGI) study for the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games conducted by the University of British Columbia \*UBC). Retrieved December 5, 2010, from <http://www.publicaffairs.ubc.ca/2009/12/04/pre-games-impact-study-for-2010-olympic-winter-games-finds-modest-benefits/>

must be solved through the pursuit of economic goals in parallel with social and environmental objectives linked to sustainability (Chernushenko et al., 2001). While Owen (2005, p. 1) argues, “empirical research does not find evidence of statistically or economically significant positive impacts,” sport mega-events like the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup have increasingly been viewed as tools for social development in urban communities and a platform for the reduction of social exclusion and crime (Chalip, 2006; Manzenreiter & Horne, 2005). In essence, this concept is consistent with theoretical frameworks of CSR which is defined as “a commitment to improve community well-being through discretionary business practices and contributions of corporate resources” (Kotler & Lee, 2005, p. 3). In practice, CSR has become an increasing priority for corporations to integrate social issues into the strategic management of their businesses to obtain a wide range of benefits. The following quote indicates the important development of this trend.

For many years, community development goals were philanthropic activities that were seen as separate from business objectives, not fundamental to them; doing well and doing good were seen as separate pursuits. But I think that is changing. What many of the organizations that are represented here today are learning is that cutting-edge innovation and competitive advantage can result from weaving social and environmental considerations into business strategy from the beginning. And in that process, we can help develop the next generation of ideas and markets and employees.

Carly Fiorina, Hewlett-Packard, at the Business for Social Responsibility Annual Conference, Nov. 12, 2003 (Excerpt from Kotler & Lee, 2005, p. 1)

Given the critical importance of the impacts of staging the Games, adopting a CSR approach could assist with achieving positive, sustainable outcomes for the host city and community. In order to stage a successful mega-event like the Olympic Games, it is argued that the host city must focus on how to achieve economic, environmental, and social responsibility which is also called the “triple bottom line” as opposed to the traditional financial bottom line (Elkington, 1999; Savitz & Weber, 2006) and, more importantly, integrate these sustainability goals into the planning and operations of the Olympic Games.

Since the 1984 Summer Olympics, corporate sponsors have played an increasingly central role in financing and hosting the Olympic Games. Organizing committees, like VANOC, invest considerable effort in recruiting corporate partners and managing the often complex relationships that result. Given the significant financial support provided by corporate sponsors, building partnerships and managing the relationships with these corporate partners has increasingly become part of the solution to sustainability for host cities. Public-commercial partnerships can create positive changes for both sides (Kanter, 1999).

For a mega-event organizer, partnering with corporations, government, and the community could be an effective way to achieve these goals because some “corporate and nonprofit organizations want to increase their CSR impacts and be perceived as good corporate citizens by stakeholders” (Babiak & Wolfe, 2006, p. 216). The debate on this matter is not limited to the realm of sport but has been taken up within the strategic

management literature. While sport sociologists raise criticisms of the side effects of the Olympic Games, sport management theorists/scholars are exploring solutions to resolve these challenges. Chalip points out that:

[I]f the occasion is a sporting event, the sport may be the catalyst, vehicle, or rationale for the felt sense of importance, but is neither the object nor the cause....[T]here is more going on than “bread and circuses” in sport events. (Chalip, 2006, pp. 110-111)

This point raises questions of how social issues are identified in relation to sport events and how to use the event to generate sustainable outcomes. The landscape concerning Olympic impacts has changed over the past two decades, shaped by politics, economic impacts, and social issues. Indeed, it could be argued that the Olympic Movement of the 1980s, with the growth of sport marketing and, more recently, growing concerns over social issues, are just some of the factors that researchers should address. The Olympic Games are about more than athleticism and celebration, they have also created opportunities for legacies through public-private partnerships that provide benefits beyond what each unit could do separately (Babiak & Wolfe, 2006; Kanter, 1989). With this view, it is important to examine inter-organizational relationships between sport and business regarding best CSR practices and how such knowledge is used within the networks of various relationships.

The underlying thesis of my study is that progressive management of sponsorship relationships has the potential to link the individual CSR programs of sponsors with a broad range of sustainability (economic, environmental, social) initiatives, undertaken by

the organizing committee and add to the potential for positive and sustainable outcomes from hosting the Olympic Games. The Olympic Games' financial health and environmental and social impacts are important concerns for the future success of the Olympic Movement and underscore the need to come to terms with how hosting the Olympic Games can have a sustainable and positive outcome.

## **1.2 Research Objectives and Questions**

The purpose of this study was to investigate how corporate sponsorship could contribute to Olympic<sup>4</sup> sustainability (i.e., economic, environmental, and social sustainability, also called the “triple bottom line”). The research focused on the partnership management strategies between VANOC and six national Vancouver 2010 corporate sponsors, with an emphasis on the role of social responsibility imperatives in shaping corporate investment in sport and social development. The overall goal of the study was to examine how these relationships can support the sustainability initiatives of the Olympic organizing committees in host countries. The best practices<sup>5</sup> approach of the study was intended to provide a better understanding of how the Olympics could be operated, in terms of corporate sponsorship, to achieve sustainability goals. The results of

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<sup>4</sup> While VANOC was responsible for the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games, this study only focuses on the Olympic Games. Additional research is required to determine how sponsorship relationships were tied to sustainability for the Winter Paralympic Games.

<sup>5</sup> Drawing on industry language, I use the term ‘best practices’ in this dissertation, but I realize that insufficient research has been done to determine whether they really are “best”. See quotes in finding chapters.

the study are meant to help Olympic management practitioners and policy-makers engage economic, environmental, and social responsibility issues more effectively in planning and staging the Olympic Games, as identified by the Olympic organizers and the corporate sponsors themselves.

To focus the study and help accomplish the study objectives, the following research questions were developed:

1. What were the strategic motivations for VANOC to establish sustainability goals for Vancouver 2010?
2. What were the strategic motivations of corporations to enter into the Olympic sponsorship in relation to sustainability?
3. How could sport sponsorship relationships be managed to achieve the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games' sustainability goals?
4. How were VANOC and the corporate sponsors planning to evaluate the attainment of Olympic sustainability goals?
5. How could corporate sponsorships be activated using Corporate Social Responsibility programs of the sponsors to support the sustainability goals of the Organizing Committee?
6. In what way(s) can corporate sponsors work together to facilitate this process?

### **1.3 Significance of Study**

This project makes several contributions to the understanding of inter-organizational relationships, sport sponsorship and CSR in sport event management. First, while there is a significant literature on inter-organizational partnerships among commercial organizations (e.g., Child & Faulkner, 1998; Culpan, 2002; Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Kanter, 1989; Lorange & Roos, 1992), there has been little investigation of the rationale and processes associated with establishing partnerships between nonprofit organizations and business sectors (Frisby, Thibault, & Kikulis, 2004). In particular, there is a lack of research focusing on relationships between the Olympics and corporate partners in relation to sustainability goals. A qualitative study of organizing committee – sponsor sustainability practices is timely and can help to expand our understanding of how social responsibility imperatives can help shape corporate sponsorship and event sustainability outcomes.

In addition, although a relationship approach to sponsorship emphasizes the importance of understanding the mechanics of corporate-sport relationships (Cousens, Babiak, & Bradish, 2006; Urriolagoitia & Planellas, 2007), little research has been done on how to manage the relationships in terms of appropriate structures, processes, and evaluation strategies. Recent research shows that sponsorship can operate as a strategic investment for both sponsors and sports entities (Amis, Pant, & Slack, 1997; Yang, Sparks, & Li, 2008) and that understanding the mechanics of sport sponsorship relationships is critical for sponsorship success (Olkkonen, 2001; Urriolagoitia &

Planellas, 2007; Yang et al., 2008). Nevertheless, there is a lack of research focusing on relationships between event organizers and corporate partners, particularly with respect to how CSR motivations might be relevant to organizing committee sustainability goals as now mandated by the IOC, including economic development, social inclusion, and environmental footprint reduction. This study identified the major relationship factors that influence corporations to be involved in both Olympic sponsorship and sustainability.

Finally, this research project has practical implications. By studying the collaborative relationships linked to accomplishing sustainability goals, it identifies ways in which social leverage may resonate with economic leverage (Chalip, 2006). The study specifically examined how corporate sponsors can support grassroots sport and social development, ranging from local to international programs.

#### **1.4 Structure of Dissertation**

The dissertation follows a traditional structure with chapters organized to provide an introduction and rationale, review of literature, methodology, a report of findings and finally a discussion. This chapter has summarized the evolution of sustainability in the Olympic Movement over the past thirty years, and has provided a rationale for undertaking this research, and investigating how corporate sponsorship can contribute to Olympic sustainability.

In Chapter 2, the theoretical and substantive literature is reviewed. The work of scholars who have developed theories of inter-organizational partnerships (including knowledge of collaborative advantages, cooperative strategy, and strategic alliances) and partnerships between sport and commercial sectors, are discussed. Following this, I describe theoretical frameworks of sport sponsorship, paying special attention to the concept of sponsorship relationships in the Olympic context. I also provide a discussion of the CSR literature, and previous research that focuses on managing partnerships and its link to CSR initiatives. Drawing on these theories, including partnership, sport sponsorship, and CSR, I conceptualize a theoretical framework that contextualizes my analysis for the findings chapters. In particular, Frisby et al.'s (2004) framework of managerial structures and processes provides a basis for my framework and helps to identify gaps in the existing literature.

In Chapter 3, the methodology and methods that were used to address the research questions are discussed. A detailed rationale is provided for choosing the research case and an explanation is given of the data collection process. Potential problems of this approach are discussed.

The findings in relation to my six research questions are presented in Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7, respectively. Chapter 4 presents motivations for VANOC to establish its sustainability objectives and motivations for corporate sponsors to enter into Olympic partnership. Chapter 5 explores the three phases of partnership management. In particular, by examining the managerial structures and processes, key elements that influence

partnership success in relation to VANOC's sustainability objectives are identified. I further refine the theoretical model described in Chapter 2 to make the connection between corporate sponsorship and Olympic sustainability, and I offer a conceptual model for managing sponsor partnerships to achieve sustainability in this chapter. Issues around sponsorship partnership including tension between VANOC and media relations are presented. Chapter 6 presents the results about the relation between sustainability and CSR, the governance structure through which VANOC proposed to achieve its sustainability goals, and the method that VANCO used to evaluate its sustainability performance, followed by a discussion of issues around VANOC's sustainability objectives. Chapter 7 describes the Vancouver 2010 Sponsor Sustainability Initiative (SSI) as a collaborative network for corporate sponsors to activate their Olympic sponsorship on sustainability. I provide evidence that organizational learning is a useful framework to help account for the sponsorship activation phenomena in the context of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games.

Chapter 8 illustrates how a not-for-profit organization – 2010 Legacies Now – acted as a unique entity to leverage the legacy of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games. This not-for-profit organization, in partnership with different levels of government, Olympic corporate sponsors, and communities, capitalized on opportunities presented by the partnerships to help build sustainable legacies in the host communities.

In Chapter 9, I synthesize and summarize the findings of the case study. Finally, in Chapter 10, I discuss the contributions and possible implications of this study for

future event organizing committees and corporate sponsors. The limitations of the study are acknowledged in this chapter. I also offer ideas for future research in the area of Olympic sustainability in terms of corporate sponsorship.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, I explain the theoretical approach of the study, drawing on research on partnerships, sport sponsorship, and CSR. I start with a brief discussion of the concept of sustainability. In the second section, the literature related to partnership formation, management, and evaluation and their uses in sport contexts and sport sponsorship is discussed. Third, theories and research that examine CSR and its use in sport are presented, followed by a discussion of the potential links between CSR and partnerships. Finally, an initial conceptual framework is provided that situates the study within the literature.

#### **2.1 Concept of Sustainability**

Sustainability is a concept that has a range of different meanings in different contexts and disciplines (Crew, 2010). The literature on sustainability is extensive. A Google search in December 2010 using the term ‘sustainability’ resulted in 32,300,000 entries, and a search on Google Scholar, 2, 250, 000 entries. Even though this dissertation focuses on sustainability in the sport area alone, there is still a large volume of work that addresses sport and sustainability both conceptually and empirically. For example, a search on ‘sustainability in sport’ turned up to 2,430,000 results on Google and 53,800 results on Google Scholar.

A milestone in the application of sustainability to sport was the introduction of the term in the Brundtland Commission report, *Our Common Future*, at the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development to UNEP's 14<sup>th</sup> Governing Council Session where it was defined as “development [that] meets the needs and aspirations of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs” (Brundtland Commission, 1987, p. 4). The report went on to specify that, “It is not only a new name for environmentally sound management, it is a social and economic concept as well” (Our Common Future, p. 4, 1987). Since 1987, the concept has been further developed to encompass economic benefits, environmental protection and social responsibility, and now comprises an integrated paradigm widely known as the “triple bottom line” (see Elkington 1999).

The sport management literature offers a variety of frameworks and perspectives on sustainability. Chernushenko (2001), for example, emphasizes the importance of “triple bottom line” practices in sport event management in his book *Sustainable Sport Management: Running an Environmentally, Socially and Economically Responsible Organization*. Lindsey (2008, p. 279), by comparison, claims that sustainability “has become ubiquitous in sports development policy and practices” with the result that a key definitional challenge is to provide a framework that is sensitive to issues in sport development itself. Lindsey's framework identifies four forms of sustainability – individual, community, organizational, and institutional – to help address these definitional issues. Despite the diverse meanings of sustainability, Krysiak (2000) argues

that any viable definition of sustainability needs to include the “perspective [of] the future consequences of present actions” ( p. 483). This implies that responsible decision-making in sport management needs to consider the future impacts of present choices, a point which effectively elevates the “triple bottom line” to a functional component of day-to-day planning. Such an understanding means that an organization that wants to be sustainable must weigh the potential trade-offs of short-term versus long-term benefits of business decisions and strategies on an ongoing basis (Crew, 2010; Lindsey, 2008).

The use-value of any particular definition of sustainability depends on its scope and application to the particular case being studied (Reilly, 2009). As described in Chapter 1, sustainability has been one of the three pillars of the Olympic Movement since 2002, and was an important part of the Vancouver bid for the Winter Games. Given this connection, I have elected to use VANOC’s working definition of sustainability “managing the social, economic and environmental impacts and opportunities of our Games to produce lasting benefits, locally and globally” in this dissertation. The reason for choosing this definition was to help focus the study on VANOC’s operations and sustainability objectives and thereby to help fulfill the main objective of the research, namely to identify the key partnership management strategies between VANOC and the six national corporate sponsors with an emphasis on the role of social responsibility imperatives in shaping corporate investment in sport and social development.

VANOC’s definition of sustainability also provides a useful framework for exploring the relationship between sponsorship management and sustainability. For

example, a decision between VANOC and its corporate partners to support the costs for a higher LEED building standard for a venue could potentially have long-lasting benefits for the host community in terms of a reduced carbon footprint. Given the scope of the Olympic Games, the “triple bottom line” approach has significant potential impacts. Among its potential benefits is its synergistic emphasis on strategically planning and managing economic, environmental and social impacts to derive sustainable benefits through sport, rather than on focusing on cost saving and short-term economic benefits alone (O'Brien & Chalip, 2008). Despite the merits of this definition, however, one criticism of the “triple bottom line” approach is the tendency by some to view the three areas as contradictory, with competing interests, rather than as complementary (Crews, 2010).

The focus of this study was on examining how organizing committees can build synergistically on sponsors' corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs and manage sponsor relations to achieve mutual sustainability goals. It is important to acknowledge that the concept of sustainability overlaps and intersects with organizational policies and practices in the area of CSR itself (Reilly, 2009). Further discussion of the CSR literature is provided later in this chapter in Section 2.4 Corporate Social Responsibility and Sport.

## **2.2 Partnerships and Sport**

Partnerships have become increasingly important over the last two decades in the increasingly competitive global marketplace. The development of partnerships represents

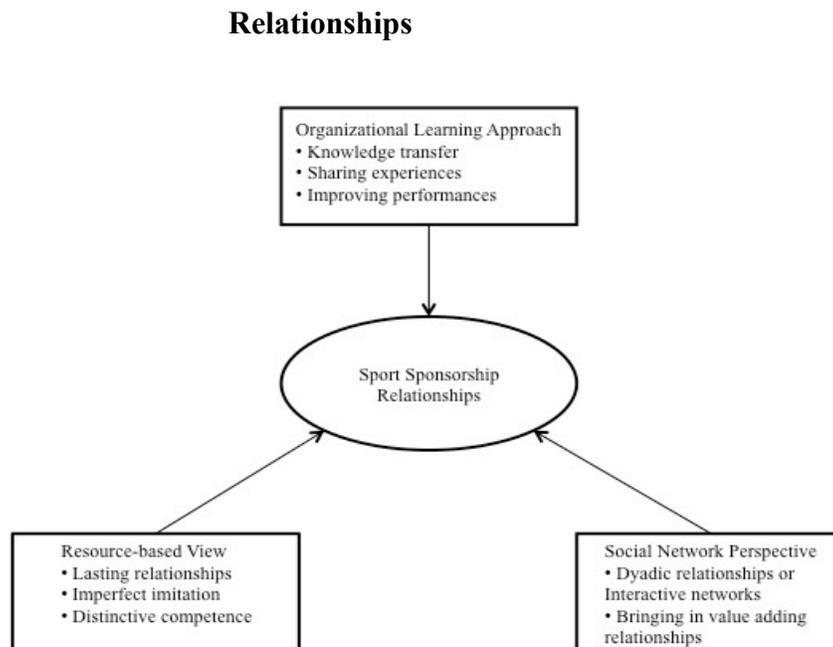
a paradoxical process – cooperating with other organizations but gaining a competitive advantage against rivals (Culpan, 2002; Lorange & Roos, 1992). In the sport context, Babiak (2003) defines partnership as: “a long-term, planned strategic action between two or more organizations with the objective of serving mutually beneficial purposes in a problem domain” (p. 6). In this study, the problem domain is Olympic sustainability. Indeed, partnerships reflect the dynamic interactions of inter-organizational relationships. Researchers and practitioners have focused on partnership formation and management as a strategy through which organizations can explore innovative ways to achieve synergies (Child & Faulkner, 1998; Kanter, 1989; Huxham & Vangen 2005; Lorange & Roos, 1992).

The rationale for an organization to seek partnerships with other organizations stems from intensified competitive pressure in the international business environment that is changing rapidly because of political, economic, social, and technological advances sweeping the world (Culpan, 2002; Kanter, 1989). The motives for forming partnerships (or alliances) include accessing new resources, possibilities for entering emerging markets, opportunities for organizational learning, and obtaining knowledge and skills that could not be accessed by each unit individually (Child & Faulkner, 1998; Culpan, 2002; Lorange & Roos, 1992). All of these motives aim at sharing financial risks and reducing uncertainties in a changing environment.

From a theoretical perspective, Faulkner and Rond (2000, p. 4) have found that there is an absence of a generally accepted and unifying theory in the existing literature

on inter-organizational or partnership relationships, and that empirical studies mostly have been framed within either economic or organizational theories. The often cited economic theories include strategic management theory, transaction cost analysis, the resource-based view, agency theory, game theory, and real option theory. In addition to this, Faulkner and Rond (2000) indicate that a number of explanations of cooperative strategy exist within the organizational theory literature, encompassing resource dependence, organizational learning, social network theory, the ecosystems view, and structurationist perspectives. Among these theories, the *resource-based view*, *social network perspective* and *organizational learning* theory have shown the most promise in context and are used to provide a conceptual foundation for this thesis (Figure 2.1).

**Figure 2. 1 A Theoretical Framework for Conceptualizing Sport Sponsorship**



According to Faulkner and Rond (2000), the *resource-based view* takes the approach that a company can achieve and sustain a competitive advantage by having a bundle of unique resources and relationships that are durable and difficult or impossible to imitate or transfer perfectly (p. 10). To illustrate, the unique resources that VANOC and different corporate sponsors bring to their sustainability efforts are good examples of unique resources. In particular, their sport sponsorship relationships cannot be duplicated by other corporations that are not Vancouver 2010 sponsors due to the exclusivity of Olympic sponsorship (c.f. Séguin & Reilly, 2008).

The concept of *social networks* is defined as the “persistent and structured sets of autonomous players (persons or organizations) who operate on the basis of implicit and open-ended contracts, which are socially rather than legally binding” (Faulkner & Rond, 2000, p. 20). This perspective provides a theoretical framework that underpins empirical studies focusing on the value creation process through which the working dynamics and evolution of collaborations can be examined. While a resource-based view explains why VANOC and its relationships with corporate sponsors are durable and can be cultivated as intangible assets, a social network perspective explores how the valuable relationships are created.

*Organizational learning* refers to “the capability of organizations to acquire, disseminate, and retain new knowledge so as to improve future performance (Child & Faulkner, 1998), and is of particular interest if each partner possesses a different set of capabilities and experiences” (Faulkner & Rond, 2000, p. 19). In the case of VANOC and

its corporate partners, organizational learning appears to have been of significant importance in their collaborative process. VANOC is a nonprofit organization whose mission and objectives were to stage a sustainable Winter Olympic Games. By comparison, corporations might seek profit-making opportunities through sponsoring Olympic Games. A key question is how can these two work together to attain VANOC's sustainability goals? Learning about how to enhance sustainability could potentially benefit all parties involved (Senge, Laur, Schley, & Smith, 2006). More importantly, *organizational learning* in a network of organizations has potential to create value by strengthening and achieving efficiencies along with better results through effective management of partnerships (Child & Faulkner, 1998).

These three theories have been chosen because they are seen as potentially synergistic and because in combination they provide a more useful and compelling framework than other single emphasis models. The primary purpose of this approach that integrates the three theories is to create a better way to describe the value creation process of sport sponsorship relationships. Although transaction cost theory also has been used to successfully analyze sponsorship transaction problems and benefits, this approach focuses singularly on the exchange costs involved in the process of negotiation and renewal of sponsorship (Sam, Batty, & Dean, 2005), rather than on collaboration to create new value together and therefore is not used here.

Recent empirical research shows that cross-sector collaboration increasingly has been embraced by all types of organizations (i.e., public, nonprofit, and commercial

units). For instance, Kouwenhoven (1993) argued that public-private partnership (PPP) has risen as a strategy to reduce government's expenditure and bring about more efficient and effective government functioning. In addition, Kanter (1999) suggested that partnerships between business and public sectors have emerged as an innovative way to "produce profitable and sustainable change for both sides" (p. 124). Huxham and Vangen (2005) illustrated that inter-organizational collaborations, such as the "alliance for social inclusion" and the "health promotion partnerships" are useful ways to fulfill social missions. These studies focused on how nonprofit organizations and their corporate sponsors are collaborating to attain CSR goals. The keys to success involve actively integrating social responsibility imperatives into their partnership agenda and effectively managing the partnerships. In the management phase, some components including effective communication, mutual trust, and learning to collaborate in order to overcome complexities are critical to the partnership success (Huxham & Vangen, 2005).

Partnerships among organizations are now a familiar feature in the leisure and sport sector. In terms of partnership management, Shaw and Allen (2006, p. 209) examined sport development partnerships among three nonprofit organizations and found that the level of intensity of partnership management, or balancing over- and under-management, is the key to partnerships' long-term success. Nevertheless, Thibault, Kikulis, and Frisby (2004) revealed that the existence of both social and business goals within public-commercial partnerships created tensions that led to complex situations for managing these partnerships in Canadian local sport and leisure departments. These

research findings revealed that in a context of budget shortfalls and cutbacks, partnerships generally are created with positive expectations, which included capitalizing on opportunities and access to more resources, improving provision of programs and services, and reducing uncertainty.

Despite the expected advantages of partnerships, there are a number of major barriers to, and shortcomings of, partnerships. Some studies reported high failure and termination rates due to inadequate management of collaborative relationships such as inappropriate structures, ineffective communication, and an unwillingness to learn (e.g., Kanter, 1989; Lorange & Roos, 1992). In contrast to collaborative advantages, Huxham and Vangen (2005, p. 60) noted that collaborative inertia can occur when “the output from a collaborative agreement is negligible, the rate of output is extremely slow, or stories of pain and hard grind are integral to successes achieved”. Significantly, Frisby et al. (2004) found that in the local Canadian sport and recreation context, under-managed partnerships can cause serious problems for all parties. For example, structural problems, such as a lack of policy guidelines, insufficient human resources and insufficient time commitment to partnerships, simultaneously lead to inadequate managerial processes, such as difficult negotiations and communication, and a lack of proper evaluation. It is evident that proactive attitudes toward dealing with these barriers, trying to overcome them collaboratively rather than avoiding them, can increase the possibility of achieving partnership success (e.g., Huxham & Macdonald, 1992; Kanter, 1989; Mohr & Spekman, 1994).

As a considerable number and kind of organizational interactions can occur, partnerships can take on a multitude of forms. In general, partnerships were widely adopted in the “hypercompetition” businesses (e.g., the IT industry) and emerging markets (e.g., the Chinese market). Various forms of inter-organizational relationships have emerged, including strategic alliances, joint ventures, outsourcing, supply-chain partnerships, R&D joint projects, licensing agreements, co-marketing alliances, and sponsorships (Culpan, 2002; Farrelly & Quester, 2005a, 2005b; Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Kanter, 1989). In the case of cross-sector collaboration (e.g., nonprofit and business), there usually are more complexities due to competing values and different professional mindsets (Thibault et al., 2004). In order to understand how partnerships can be managed creatively to tackle complex social problems within the sport context, the following section examines the ways and extent to which sport sponsorship relationships can be managed as partnerships in terms of best CSR practices.

### **2.3 Conceptualizing Sport Sponsorship Relationships as a Partnership**

Recent developments in sponsorship theory and practice suggest that corporate sponsorship is a strategic investment (Amis et al., 1997, Yang et al., 2008), and that partnerships are a sophisticated way to approach sponsor relationships in a global environment (Farrelly & Quester, 2005a, 2005b; Hecox, 2005; Roy, 2005; Urriolagoitia & Planellas, 2007; Yang et al., 2008). These developments include the growing use of sponsorship as partnerships through which parties to the sponsorship agreements share

resources, skills, and knowledge in the pursuit of competitive advantages in the local and international marketplace. Despite these developments, little research has been done on how such sponsor partnerships might contribute to sustainability goals.

Traditional sponsorship theories tend to view sponsorship as a communication tool or part of a marketing mix for corporations to increase brand awareness and enhance corporate image which eventually drives sales (e.g., Cornwell, 1995; Cornwell, Roy, & Steinard II, 2001; Farrelly, Quester, & Burton, 1997; Meenaghan, 1991). In this sense, corporations pay sponsorship fees to buy title rights and/or advertising rights (e.g., to place the corporate name or logo on the venue or players' clothing), to obtain media coverage and public exposure (Mullin, Hardy, & Sutton, 2004). However, a relationship approach to sponsorship significantly broadens the scope of the functions of sponsorship to include strategic activities, such as long-term inter-organizational relationship building and stakeholder relationship management (Chadwick, 2002; Olkkonen, 2001). This shift invites a re-conceptualization of present understandings of the investment value of sponsorship that is typically set in terms of marketing and public relations, and to consider the value of sponsorship as a strategic partnership in more global and fundamental terms. In this sense, sponsorship gradually has broadened its uses to encompass partnerships in which that both partners create collaborative advantages or synergies in addition to their marketing transactions. For example, recent research shows that community involvement and social responsibility, as well as improving employee relations, were highly rated reasons for corporations to get involved in Olympic

sponsorship (Apostolopoulou & Papadimitriou, 2004). It is argued that CSR initiatives in conjunction with corporate sponsorship can be part of this paradigm shift, creating value beyond sponsorship exchanges.

According to Urriolagoitia and Planellas (2007), “a strategic alliance is a close, long-term, mutually beneficial agreement in which resources, knowledge, and skills are shared with the objective of enhancing the competitive position of each partner” (p. 158). A strategic alliance can be constructed either as an equity alliance, an independent business unit in which alliance partners share equity, or a non-equity alliance, which is a distinct inter-organizational entity without requiring share of ownerships (Culpan, 2002).

Sponsorship typically is “the acquisition of rights to affiliate or directly associate with a product or event for the purpose of deriving benefits related to that affiliation or association” without transferring ownerships” (Mullin et al., 2000, p. 254). Based on this understanding, sport sponsorship is a non-equity alliance (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b). Like any other non-equity alliance, most sport sponsorships are a loose, mutual benefit, contractual agreement often without formal organizational structure (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b). Sport sponsorship relationships can be operated as a strategic alliance (or partnership) and are recognized to possess typical attributes of a non-equity alliance (Farrelly & Quester, 2005a, 2005b; Urriolagoitia & Planellas, 2007).

Strategic management is an emerging area in the sponsorship literature and provides logical insights that have furthered our understanding of the dynamics and complexities of sport sponsorship relationships (e.g., Amis et al., 1997; Urriolagoitia &

Planellas, 2007). Adopting strategic management theories, Amis et al. (1997) argue that with a *resource-based view*, sport sponsorship offers the potential to build strong and lasting relationships that could provide a competitive advantage for a company. This theoretical framework was taken further in an examination of the ways in which high functioning and successful corporate sponsors develop distinctive competence in the selection, execution, and management of sponsorship investments (Amis, Slack & Berrett, 1999). The significant contribution of the two studies is the recognition of the strategic investment value of sponsorship relationships when they are viewed as a resource that can be evaluated based on their ability to provide a company with competitive advantages. Moreover, the findings from the two studies indicate that companies are more likely to obtain success when they integrate their sponsorship arrangements within their overall corporate strategy (Amis et al., 1997; Amis et al., 1999). Although the two studies provide a number of important insights, they do not address how to further understand the relational process underpinning interactions between or among corporate sponsors and sport organizations.

By adopting a broader *social network perspective*, sport sponsorship can be understood as dyadic relationships and interactive networks, through which relationships are established, developed, maintained, and terminated between sport organizations and their corporate sponsors (Olkkonen, Tikkanen, & Alajoutsijarvi, 2000). The application of this perspective to sponsorship emphasizes dynamic and complex inter-organizational interactions that happen in a corporate-sport relationship. This theoretical framework was

tested in a case study of the NMP-FIS international sport sponsorship arrangement that demonstrated that “sponsorship relationships involve interaction between various kinds of organizations: public and private, profit and nonprofit” (Olkkonen, 2001, p. 312). Significantly, Olkkonen (2001) argued that “different network actors bring to the arrangement not only their own resources and capabilities, but also their own networks of value adding relationships” (p. 309). Nevertheless, issues, such as “access to the sponsor’s network of contacts, enhanced competitive advantages through asymmetry over similar or competing organizations, and increased visibility or legitimacy were overlooked” in Olkkonen’s (2001) study according to Cousens et al. (2006, p. 3).

In addition to these sponsorship-associated cases that occurred in Western countries and market contexts, Yang, Sparks, and Li (2008) investigated sport sponsorship relationships in the emerging Chinese market. Their research revealed that forming strategic partnerships between corporations and their sponsored sports is a developing trend in China. They noted that forming strategic partnerships with sport properties is an effective way for multinational corporations to overcome cultural barriers and maximize their sponsorship investment benefits (Yang et al., 2008). Although mutual learning appears to be important for bridging cultural differences and fostering integration between international corporations and the Chinese sport organizations, the authors did not employ *organizational learning* theory to explain this phenomenon. *Organizational learning* is an emerging theory that has not been extensively used to

explain sponsorship practices. Nevertheless, corporate-sport partnership management fits well with inter-organizational learning and network theories.

Evidence of practices underpinned by partnership principles is found among contemporary corporate-sport relationships, wherein the general developmental stages of sponsorship relationships are considered as a life cycle model moving through phases of formation, operation, and outcome (Urriolagoitia & Planellas, 2007). By tracing general patterns of a strategic alliance's development process, Urriolagoitia and Planellas (2007) illustrated how the key characteristics of sponsorship relationships evolve over these different stages. Although their life cycle model is a useful analytic tool for understanding the development of sponsorship relationships, Urriolagoitia and Planellas (2007) did not address issues such as exclusivity, context, the partner selection process, and complexities of managing such partnerships. Thus, there is a gap in the existing literature regarding the justification for mutually beneficial relationships involving sport properties and their corporate sponsors, particularly with respect to how CSR motivations might be relevant to Olympic organizing committee sustainability goals.

In contrast to the mainly positive evidence in much of the sport sponsorship literature, other researchers have addressed ethical dilemmas that may arise when sport sponsorship is considered by both corporations and sport organizations (Howard & Crompton, 1995; Slack & Amis, 2004). Several negative effects of sponsorships have been identified as commercial benefits expected by corporations. For example, social concerns of sport sponsorship include unbalanced sponsorship funding distribution

between high-profile sports and less popular ones, and disadvantaging fans who suffer from a lack of reasonable pricing and available seating, which often brings negative social impacts on host cities (Slack & Amis, 2004). Moreover, there are contradictions with sport being associated with tobacco or alcoholic beverage companies because negative consequences, such as drunk driving deaths, domestic violence, and physical deterioration, often are seen to be related to sport sponsorship (Howard & Crompton, 1995).

In response to these critics, Margolis and Walsh (2003) argued that, “the challenge facing those who advocate [for] corporate social initiatives then is to find a way to promote what they see as social justice in a world in which this shareholder wealth maximization paradigm reigns”(p. 273). They proposed a “hybrid” strategy through which public-private partnerships may be implemented to solve economic-social dilemmas, by finding convergence and then building links between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and financial performance (Margolis & Walsh, 2003, p. 289). This creates the possibility for integrating CSR approaches into event management strategies (e.g., Olympic sustainability) in sport sponsorship applications. In the next section, mainstream CSR theories and practices are reviewed and their application to sport is discussed.

## **2.4 Corporate Social Responsibility and Sport**

The notion that business has a responsibility to society is increasingly accepted by both academics and practitioners in many fields of study (Lantos, 2001). Concepts, such as corporate citizenship, corporate philanthropy, corporate community involvement, corporate responsibility, and sustainability all are utilized to describe CSR practices (Kotler & Lee, 2005). Since the 1970s, CSR has evolved gradually and expanded from corporate citizenship to sustainability, growing to encompass economic, environmental, and social responsibility or the “triple bottom line” as criteria to measure corporate performance (Sasse & Trahan, 2007). This idea specifies that a sustainable business is one that creates profit for its shareholder while protecting the environment and improving the well-being of the communities in which it operates. Such a business stands a better chance of being successful in the future than one that focuses on just “one bottom line”, for example, economics or financial profit (Bansal, 2005; Savitz & Weber, 2006). CSR practices have helped shift focus from shareholder-oriented perspectives that emphasize business management decisions to achieve profit maximization, to stakeholder engagement that seeks to integrate stakeholders’ interests into business operations where corporate and societal interests intersect (Carroll, 1991; Davis, 2005; Savitz & Weber, 2006). Given the complexities in an Olympic context, however, the latter poses a number of potential issues particularly in the environmental and social areas.

Also, the meanings and role of CSR have changed over time, and a criticism of the CSR literature is the lack of consistency among researchers in defining the concept

(Lantos, 2001; Lodge & Wilson, 2006; Sasse & Trahan, 2007). The fact that CSR takes many different forms and is driven by many different motives contributes to this lack of consistency. Examples of the range of forms of CSR include old-style “corporate citizenship” framework (Carroll, 1979) to “new corporate philanthropy” (Smith, 1994), and “strategic CSR” models (Lantos, 2001) to “sustainability” (Ehrenfeld, 2008; Speth, 2007). This makes conceptual and empirical consistency difficult and can affect interpretation and measurement of the legitimacy of CSR practices and results. Furthermore, many of the definitions reviewed appear to lack key ingredients, such as economic, environmental, and social responsibility that would encompass the relationships under investigation in this study. Thus, components of several definitions provided in the extant literature were reviewed to develop a more comprehensive notion of CSR.

Emerging from the management literature, Sasse and Trahan (2007) argued that one rationale for companies to engage in CSR is the mutually beneficial solutions it provides for both social needs and the business sector. In order to obtain corporate competitive advantages, companies have to improve the community environments in which their businesses operate. While encompassing several important variables, such as tying social needs with corporate strategy, this understanding is missing a few critical components like the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development. CSR is not a single strategy; it is a process that evolves over time and requires a consideration of

temporal effects. In addition, the notion of human rights in the workplace or marketplace is not included in Sasse and Trahan's (2007) definition.

According to Business for Social Responsibility (BSR), a nonprofit business association that provides socially responsible business solutions for its members, CSR is defined as, "achieving commercial success in ways that honor ethical values and respect people, communities and the natural environment" (BSR Staff, 2006). CSR includes issues related to business ethics, community investment, environment, governance, and human rights in the marketplace and the workplace (BSR Staff, 2006). This definition, while including key dimensions outlined previously, does not address a crucial element of the international effort to foster balancing relationships between economic, environmental, and social impacts (i.e., the "triple bottom line"). The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) *Guidelines* (2002, 2006) have developed this further and claimed, "Achieving sustainability requires balancing the complex relationships between current economic, environmental, and social needs in a manner that does not compromise future needs." This concept currently is the most widely accepted approach to defining sustainability (*GRI Guidelines*, 2002).

More recently, Senge and his colleagues expressed a similar understanding in their new bestselling book *The Necessary Revolution*, and state, "the term *sustainability* is widely used to express the need to live in the present in ways that do not jeopardize the future" (Senge et al., 2008, p. 9; emphasis in original). Ehrenfeld added to this with the idea that sustainability is "*the possibility that human and other life will flourish on the*

*planet forever*” (Ehrenfeld, 2008, p. 6; emphasis in original). Based on this approach, more sophisticated stakeholder engagement is looking to rationalize the decision-making process around “triple bottom line”.

In addition, companies realize that socially responsible performance can result in enhanced brand image and reputation because a good reputation with the public and the business community helps to attract capital and trading partners. According to Business for Social Responsibility (BSR), a 2001 Environics International CSR Monitor survey showed that the factors most influencing public impressions of companies were social responsibility (49%), brand reputation (40%), and business fundamentals (32%).

The best-known argument for a profit-based position on CSR was made by Nobel prize-winning economist Milton Friedman in his article, “The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits” (Friedman, 1970, p. 122). With the economic-oriented CSR position, Friedman asserted that:

There is one and only one social responsibility of business – to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud (p. 122).

While Friedman’s (1970) view on business responsibility was to make profit for shareholders, his recognition of legal and ethical responsibilities for business exemplified fair play by the rules of the business environment. This was important because he indicated a range of legal and moral obligations that business must observe in

participating in free and fair competition, although he believed that solving social problems is part of the role of government, not business (Lantos, 2001).

Attention subsequently shifted from a profit-making orientation to a broader notion of CSR when Carroll (1979) argued that corporations should be measured not only by economic criteria, but also by non-economic ones. Carroll (1991, p. 42) suggested that CSR is composed of four types of responsibilities:

Level 1: economic—the foundational responsibility to provide goods and services to society in profitable ways and to support the other three,

Level 2: legal—the responsibility is to obey the law,

Level 3: ethical—the obligation to perform in a manner consistent with social justice and avoid societal harms, and

Level 4: philanthropic—the activities contribute resources to community and charity and being a good corporate citizen.

The four components of CSR were framed in a pyramid with economic responsibilities as a base (Carroll, 1991, p. 42). The popular pyramid of CSR has been used widely to analyze CSR-related issues particular in sport. For example, Babiak and Wolfe (2006) utilized Carroll's (1991) theoretical framework to investigate CSR initiatives through Super Bowl XL in Detroit. Focusing on the ethical and philanthropic aspects of CSR, Babiak and Wolfe's (2006) empirical study revealed that engaging in CSR activities helped sport organizations to reduce criticism and build a stronger brand image. They found that the CSR initiatives of sport organizations are more likely to

inspire public enthusiasm for social issues around health care for children, environmental protection, and community well-being than other types of businesses because extensive media exposure of mega-events with celebrity athletes influences public perceptions. This advantage may lead to “nonprofit organizations wanting to increase their CSR impact and be perceived as good corporate citizens by stakeholders” (p. 216).

In order to clarify the boundaries of CSR, Lantos (2001) suggested three distinguishing forms of CSR: ethical, altruistic, and strategic. Given that this framework functions as parameters for directing CSR practices, Lantos argued,

[F]or any organization ethical CSR (avoiding societal harms) is obligatory, for a publicly-held business altruistic CSR (doing good work at possible expense to stockholders) is not legitimate, and that companies should limit their philanthropy to strategic CSR (good work that is also good for the business) (2001, p. 595).

The debate over the legitimacy of CSR has taken on growing global significance. Tracing the trend of CSR practices in the business world, some big companies increasingly have integrated social expectations into their corporate strategies. As argued by Davis (2005) in his famous *McKinsey Quarterly* article “What is the business of business?” (a.k.a. “The biggest contract: Business and society” in the *Economist*), the relationship between business and society in this respect can be viewed as a “social contract” with obligations, opportunities, and mutual benefits for both sides (Davis, 2005). Whereas some contended that the role of business is to maximize shareholders’ value in terms of individual contracts, social pressures often dictated that companies, in addition

to government, are imperative to providing solutions for unmet social needs and satisfying new consumer preferences (Kanter, 1999).

Indeed, some companies demonstrate that they gain advantages by providing these needs before their competitors. For instance, Daviss (1999, pp. 28–30) found that Marriott International Inc. set up a 24-hour multilingual hotline to solve employees' personal problems that used to be handled by social aid agencies. The project cut Marriott's turnover rate to 35 percent, compared with the hotel industry's average of 100 percent or more. As a result, this CSR initiative has saved Marriott US\$3 million a year for training and recruiting workers, while running the hotline costs \$1million a year. Such a CSR practice that helps improve corporate financial performance is not isolated. Ray Anderson's carpet firm Interface Inc. saved US\$76 million from 1995 to 1997 when he adopted the "recycling everything possible, releasing no pollutants, and sending nothing to landfills" policy, and hence his business became 23% more efficient than his competitors (Daviss, 1999).

These cases illustrate that bottom-line benefits can be gained through the socially responsible performance of corporations and as a result, profits and social responsibility are becoming inseparable (Daviss, 1999; Esty & Winston, 2006, 2009). Companies should understand the fundamental trade-offs between business and society, which are inherent in the social contract. Thus, it is imperative for business to seek CSR initiatives to accrue to its shareholder value rather than to react to debates about whether or not to take CSR initiatives. Moving from a limited shareholder-oriented perspective to the

broader stakeholder approach, corporations may take social problems as opportunities to reinforce their social contracts in order to help secure, for the long term, the invested value of their shareholders (Davis, 2005; Reinhardt, 1999).

Nevertheless, the challenge facing companies is how to systematically incorporate an awareness of social issues into their core strategic decision-making process (Bonini, Mendonca, & Oppenheim, 2006). This challenge is critical because the realization of CSR's advantages for business per se can reshape the way of doing business. As Daviss (1999, p. 33) argued, four trends are redrafting the contract between business and society:

(1) Good work and financial gain must balance; (2) Activists gain leverage by becoming advisers, not adversaries; (3) Corporations will be audited socially just as they now are financially; and (4) Corporate social identity will be as important as brand identity.

Bonini et al.'s (2006) approach triggered a revolution in CSR practices because the scope of the social contract increasingly has extended from direct stakeholders, like consumers, employers, regulators, and shareholders, to a wider range of stakeholders, such as the communities where companies operate, the media, academics, citizen groups, government, and the nonprofit sector. Social responsibility imperatives now help many organizations shape their way of doing businesses. For example, Nike responded to criticism of its outsourcing by establishing a Code of Conduct that forbids child labor in its oversea factories (Nike Code of Conduct, 2007). Consumer concern about global warming is leading auto companies to rethink their product lines in terms of green energy and fuels. In fact, research shows that the quicker a company responds proactively to the

social pressures in relation to its competitors, the faster it moves toward profitability. Toyota's success with Prius is an example: the car's reduced use of fossil fuel through hybrid technology has enabled a higher unit price for the car because of the growing interest in environment-friendly products (Bonini et al., 2006). Nike has recently initiated a program to educate workers on their human rights and working conditions in their contract factories in developing countries (Nike Corporate Responsibility Report, 2005–06). As a result, Nike is recognized as a CSR leader in the sport apparel industry, among the top three corporate citizens in *the Best 100 Corporate Citizens 2007* (100 Corporate Citizen, 2007).

As noted already, these cases demonstrate that value creation within the broader social contract principally needs to work on lessening environmental impacts and aligning their business activities better with social considerations (Crook, 2005; Esty & Winston, 2009; Lodge & Wilson, 2006; Wheeler, Colbert, & Freeman, 2003). The goal of CSR embraces social causes while pursuing profit, as companies are asked to protect the environment and fight for social justice (Crook, 2005). This is apparent in the positive reaction to 2007 Nobel Peace Prize winner Al Gore's documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, as the planet may cease to exist if consumer-oriented practices continue unchecked, including those associated with global sport events like the Olympics (Thibault, 2009).

Smith and Westerbeek (2007) suggested that sport can play a role to help bridge social and economic gaps and act as a vehicle to deploy CSR in a number of unique ways. These include enhancing health benefits and increasing sustainability awareness. They

integrated Carroll's (1979) four essential elements of CSR (i.e., economic, legal, ethical and discretionary) into what they called "different means of deploying corporate social responsibility" (p. 45). Smith and Westerbeek (2007, p. 52) argued further that,

Sport possesses the power to captivate and unite individuals within communities and create environments for contributing to social capital. Equally, the corporate world can mobilise much-needed resources to be deployed through sport to meet its social responsibilities. ...Corporate managers and sport managers alike can enhance the economic prospects of their organizations and maximize the social benefits that they deliver to society by better harnessing the power of sport to deliver on social community objectives.

This point of view is consistent with the main theme of *the 8th World Conference on Sport and the Environment* (2010) – Innovation and Inspiration – harnessing the power of sport for change. Some Olympic sponsors like Coca-Cola announced its Olympic sustainability plan and presented ways such as water neutrality (performance on responsible water use) and zero waste (recycle and reuse 100% bottles and cans that they used), that they can reduce their environmental footprint in support of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games (Kettlitz, 2009). These also showcase Coca-Cola's global sustainability efforts through the Vancouver 2010 Games.

Despite many benefits of adopting a CSR approach to management strategies, some of the most common limitations are the setup and maintenance costs, available data, inconsistent reporting, and administrative burdens. For example, Nike has 150 full-time employees who are CSR specialists (including labor health and safety compliance, community engagement, law, corporate communications, environmental health, human

resources, product sustainability, and strategic development) working on its sustainability programs (*Nike Corporate Responsibility Report, 2004*). Nevertheless, these costs need to be offset against risks of not taking such an approach because poor sustainability performance and weak stakeholder engagement would seriously damage an organization's reputation, value and stakeholders' interests, making the costs even greater (Hawke, 2004). There is a trend that leading companies view CSR reporting as a means of increasing their transparency and hence adding value.

At an operational level, the *GRI Sustainability Reporting Guidelines* are the most-used framework for setting up global standards in sustainability reporting (*GRI Guidelines, 2002*). Since their inception in 1999, more than 1000 organizations worldwide from all sectors have used the GRI Guidelines in their reporting practices, and about 20,000 people have been involved in this network. The GRI was initiated by the U.S. non-governmental organization Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies (CERES) and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) with the goals of enhancing the quality, rigor, and utility of sustainability reporting. The GRI is a not-for-profit foundation and relies on its members' financial and in-kind support to exist. These partners, for example, include Nike and Microsoft ([www.globalreporting.org/](http://www.globalreporting.org/), 2007).

The GRI framework is not a management system, but it is a starting point for organizations to enter into the sustainability arena. As an effective way of managing risks to protect reputation, increasing transparency, and reporting on sustainability is crucial to

highlighting an organization's commitments to CSR practices. Externally, reporting is a key process to open meaningful conversations with an organization's various stakeholders, which otherwise would not occur. Following the GRI Guidelines, an organization could 'walk the talk' in the field of sustainability development (Hawke, 2004). Internally, sustainability reporting benefits organizations because such measurement is central to helping users assess their CSR performance. The GRI provides report-checked services for all organizations, and is free for its members ([www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)). Furthermore, VANOC's corporate partners, RBC and Petro-Canada, registered their reports on the GRI ([www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)).

Although mainstream CSR theories and practices originated from and are cemented in the business sector (Bradish & Cronin, 2009), a CSR approach to management can be adopted by sport mega-events such as the Olympic Games (Godfrey, 2009). The organizational purpose and domain of the Olympic Movement, as described in Chapter 1, are obviously different from a for-profit corporation that is able to adopt industry-customized cases for credible CSR practices (e.g., CSR indicators for oil companies); yet, CSR approaches can be adapted to suit the needs of a short-term, not-for-profit organization like VANOC. CSR extends the concept of sustainable development across three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental responsibility. In this sense, CSR can be viewed as a comprehensive set of policies, practices, and programs that are integrated into business operations, supply chains, and decision-making processes for current and past actions as well as future impacts.

## **2.5 The Link between CSR and Partnerships: a Conceptual Framework**

Kanter (1999) noted that partnerships between companies and nonprofit organizations have emerged as an innovative way to tackle social issues. She termed this phenomenon “corporate social innovation” and argued that strong partnerships could be managed in a way that produces positive changes for both the nonprofit and commercial sectors. In the case of VANOC, the challenge to CSR initiatives and partnerships is how to make the corporate-sport sponsorship relationships work to achieve sustainability goals. According to the sport sponsorship literature, knowing how to make the partnership work requires understanding the different stages of the life cycle of sport sponsorship relationships (Urriolagoitia & Planellas, 2007). In order to explore the processes and factors deemed critical to partnership success, this dissertation research draws on Frisby et al.’s (2004) theoretical framework for partnership management and incorporates previous research on relationship approaches to sport sponsorship by Olkkonen (2001) and others into an initial conceptual framework (see Figure 2.2). This framework was used as an initial conceptual map to synthesize and build upon previous literature in the area of sport sponsorship and inter-organizational relationships, and to shed light on the interconnection of each phase through which partnerships progress, as discussed below.

Babiak (2003) identified that a partnership has three developmental stages: formation, management, and evaluation. Similarly, in the sport sponsorship literature, Urriolagoitia and Planellas (2007) proposed a lifecycle model approach to sponsorship relationships, in which they are analyzed as a dynamic process that follow a logical

sequence of three phases (formation, operation and outcomes) of development, and each phase has its particular characteristics. They emphasized that “a sponsorship relationship cannot move to the next stage unless certain characteristics are present” (p. 160).

According to a lifecycle model, Urriolagoitia and Planellas (2007) argued that the three phases of sponsorship relationships contain necessary characteristics as follows:

- A formation stage: in which partners are identified and a formal agreement is signed (p. 61);
- An operation stage: in which both parties actively engage in leveraging activities, and “knowledge-sharing routines are established and nurtured” (p. 62);
- An outcome stage, in which “the sponsorship relationship stabilizes and becomes mature, adapting to changes on a continuous basis” (p. 63).

Extending this line of thought, this study aims to gain a better understanding of some of the critical reasons why corporations decide to enter into Olympic sponsorship. It also examines the focal organization’s (e.g., VANOC) principles in selecting corporate partners (initiation phase), the structural and processual elements that are perceived as critical to successful implementation of sponsorship agreements (management phase), and the evaluation strategies that can be used to assess effectiveness of sponsorship relationships (evaluation phase). Drawing on the theoretical approaches noted above, the study examines and analyzes three phases of sport sponsorship relationships: initiation, management, and evaluation.

These principle frameworks are used to explain corporate-sport interactions including the *resource-based view* (Amis et al., 1997), *social network approach* (Olkkonen et al., 2000, Olkkonen, 2001), and *organizational learning* (Child & Faulkner, 1998; Senge, 1990, 2006). It is useful to consider the three theories together to explore potential synergies that could be missed if they are taken individually (Child & Faulkner, 1998). In the next section, a more detailed description of each phase of the partnership framework used to examine the sponsorship relationships will be discussed.

## **2.6 Three Phases of Corporate-Sport Partnership**

From a managerial perspective, it is critical to understand the motivation behind partnership formation, and subsequently, how it affects the management of the relationships. With regard to the Olympic Games, it is useful to recall that the Olympics are one of the world's best known brands (Payner, 2005). When a sport entity (event, team, and athlete) like the Olympics achieves a positive reputation, it is more likely to attract sponsorship such that the sport organization can screen them in accordance with its own standards. The potential corporate partners' resources and competence are key to selection (Culpan, 2002). From a corporate perspective, the most commonly cited benefits that sponsors expect to attain from Olympic sponsorship are the enhancement of corporate reputation and changes in brand image. A brief introduction to the Olympic sponsorship program can help explain the factors that guide the related business-to-business activities and interactions.

### 2.6.1 Olympic Sponsorship

Since 1984, when Peter Ueberroth created the concept of exclusive rights for a limited number of corporations to associate with Olympic properties, Olympic sponsorship has become one of the most dynamic forms of partnerships, offering potential mutual benefits for both corporations and the Olympic Movement. In 1985, following the Los Angeles Games, the IOC established the TOP program, a four-year exclusive marketing package for companies that gave them global Olympic involvement. The name TOP originally stood for “The Olympic Program”; however, in order to reinforce the partnership element, it was renamed officially as “The Olympic Partners” in 1985 (Payne, 2005). As Redgate (2002) argues, Olympic sponsorship is seen as “an ideal partnership supporting and leveraging the Olympic value” in *Fortune Magazine*’s (2002 February 18 issue). The twelve TOP VI (2005–2008) sponsors contribute US\$866 million to the Olympic Movement, which is a nine-fold increase over the \$95 million generated by the nine TOP I (1984–1988) sponsors (Olympic Marketing Fact File, 2008, p. 10). The IOC allocated approximately 50 percent of the TOP quadrennial revenue to support the OCOG for the Olympic Summer and Winter Games and the NOCs of the Olympic host countries (Olympic Marketing Fact File, 2008, p. 11).

Despite the TOP worldwide partners, companies, especially domestic companies, have a chance to participate in Olympic sponsorship at lower levels in the other three tiers: the national partners, the official sponsors, and the official suppliers. While IOC manages TOP partners at the international level, each OCOG has the right to generate its own

revenue by selling sponsorships at the national level. For example, VANOC signed six National Partners: Bell, HBC, RBC, GM Canada, Petro-Canada, and RONA, bringing approximately CA\$600 million cash and in-kind support in exchange for the Olympic brand marketing rights. In addition, VANOC also signed the other two categories – official sponsors (tier 2) and suppliers (tier 3) – to help finance the Vancouver Winter Games. In light of the unprecedented financial investment of the corporate sponsors, VANOC endeavored to protect their exclusive association with the Olympic brand and the Canadian Olympic team during the staging of the Games (2010: Who's sponsoring what, 2007). Given the increasing dependence of sport events like the Olympics on corporate sponsorship, especially on national level sponsors, this study focuses on the strategic management process between the focal organization (VANOC) and the six National Partners, similar to Babiak's (2003) work in which she examined the relationship between a focal sport organization and its various partners including corporate sponsors.

There are some differences between national and TOP sponsors. First, most TOP sponsors are involved in relatively long-term partnerships with the IOC. For example, Coca-Cola and the IOC have extended their partnership agreement until 2020 since the company became a charter member of the TOP Program in 1986 (Coca-Cola exclusive product, 2007). In contrast, national sponsors often develop relationships with the Olympic Games over a shorter term (typically four-year tenure). Second, TOP sponsors are able to renew their memberships so that they can keep their TOP identity as long as

they want, whereas national sponsors cannot do so because their sponsorships expire at the completion of the Games they sponsored. Third, the communication scale is different. While TOP sponsors can utilize the Olympic symbols and ideals to activate their global marketing activities worldwide, national sponsors can only capitalize on Olympic opportunities within the host nation, even though they sometimes pay higher sponsorship fees than the TOP sponsors. For instance, Bell, the first national sponsor for Vancouver 2010, paid CA\$200 million, nearly triple the amount offered by a Beijing TOP partner (2010 who's sponsoring what, 2007; Wang, 2004). Nevertheless, these national sponsors make important contributions to the organizing committee as their expertise and support in infrastructure development helps meet the challenges facing the Olympic Games organizing committee (Apostolopoulou & Papadimitriou, 2004).

Given the strategic nature of Olympic sponsorship (in terms of scale and time), adopting a strategic management approach to understanding the motivations for a company's decision to become Olympic sponsors can provide valuable insights into processes of soliciting and maintaining corporate support. According to Child and Faulkner (1998), a strategic management perspective emphasizes three themes: the motives for forming alliances, the strategic fit for selecting partners, and achieving compatible goals between partners. This theoretical view draws attention to external and contextual factors which play important roles in forging cooperative relationships (rather than competitive ones), and underscore the importance of partner selection to ensure partnership success. However, these factors may be defined differently depending on

partners involved and may change over time (Child & Faulkner, 1998; Lorange & Roos, 1992). In order to gain more reliable insights into how stated objectives are linked to achieved results in the context of Olympics, this study examines three phases of sponsorship relationships: initiation, management, and evaluation in the next section.

### **2.6.2 Phase One: Partnership Initiation**

Starting with the first phase, Child and Faulkner (1998) claimed that “strategic fit” and “cultural fit” are the determinants for selecting appropriate partners. They posit that an ideal “strategic fit” is most likely to occur between partners who possess complementary assets, a similar degree of mutual resources or skills, and congruent objectives so that potential mutual synergies can be created. Although developed as a framework to describe the conditions of relationship formation between companies in the business sector, these fundamental preconditions can be applied in a sport context.

In the sport sponsorship literature, Farrelly and Quester (2005b) argued that the “strategic fit” between sponsors and sport properties comprises six elements of strategic compatibility, including shared vision, compatibility, importance, complementary balance, added value, and market acceptance. It is significant that Farrelly and Quester (2005b) approached these drivers of sport sponsorship from a relationship perspective. In the case of VANOC, it can be argued that a good “strategic fit” with the core values of the sustainability components of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games were considered when selecting corporate partners. This point was confirmed by the results of this study, as will be demonstrated later.

From a sport organization perspective, VANOC had clear and defined strategies for partnership formation and management. In order to stage a well-organized and financially successful Winter Games, VANOC selected corporate partners based on product categories, including telecom services (Bell), banking (RBC) and automobile manufacturing (GM). The principle that VANOC applied was that product categories of national level sponsors could not conflict with TOP partners. Moreover, VANOC endeavored to select partners who had the capability to help achieve VANOC's sustainability goals. This is seen in the fact that VANOC set sustainability as a criterion for selecting business partners (Inwood, 2007). Of course, the potential partners' abilities to provide cash, technology, products and services for staging the Games also were considered as key components.

From a corporate sponsor's perspective, a study conducted during the Atlanta Games revealed that the reasons companies decide to become involved in sport sponsorship, particularly of the Olympics, are hospitality opportunities, increasing sales and market share, media coverage, and image enhancement (Payne, 2005). In addition to these four major motives, Apostolopoulou and Papadimitriou (2004) found that community involvement and social responsibility, as well as improving employee relations, were highly rated reasons for sponsorships when they examined the motivations of the 2004 Athens national Olympic sponsors. Interestingly, they also indicated that "the notion of national obligation, rather than anticipated financial returns, could be the main reason for becoming an Olympic sponsor at the national level" (Apostolopoulou &

Papadimitriou, 2004, p. 191). Their findings are consistent with the notion that sport sponsorship serves as a vehicle to achieve CSR benefits (Holmes, 2000). In a study conducted in China that examined the sponsorship investment of international and domestic corporations, Yang and Sparks (2005) found that being a good corporate citizen in the community in which companies operate is a clear motive for becoming a sport sponsor.

The fact that the stated motivations are somewhat different from business-driven exchange relationships reinforces sport sponsorship as an independent form of strategic alliance. The literature on sponsorship helps uncover the motivations behind the formation of partnerships not only for the focal organization (i.e., VANOC), but also for its multiple corporate sponsors. Corporate sponsors' motives and objectives may change during the three phases of partnership interactions with the organizing committee, as sponsorship orientation and priorities are altered along with the developing relationships (Amis et al, 1999; Urriolagoitia & Planellas, 2007). However, they serve as a starting point to explore the potential links between the corporations' objectives and efforts for Olympic sustainability.

By focusing on a CSR approach, this study aims to examine how progressive management of sponsorship relations has the potential to link individual CSR programs of the sponsors (e.g., six national partners) with the broad range of sustainability initiatives undertaken by the organizing committee (i.e., VANOC). To explore how sustainable synergies can be created, key relationship factors in partnership management

are identified in the next section which focuses on the next phase of partnerships, namely partnership management.

### **2.6.3 Phase Two: Partnership Management**

The second phase of sponsorship relationships is the partnership management stage. Babiak (2003) concluded that theoretical understandings of partnership management both business and in sport are less well developed than for the formation phase. Empirical research reveals that unsatisfactory partnership performance ranges from 40–70 percent (Culpan, 2002). Although establishing successful sponsorship relationships depends largely on understanding the preconditions for forming such relationships (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b), it is argued here that managing the relationships is itself a key step toward satisfactory outcomes, especially for corporate sponsors that involve activation or leverage of their sponsorship. In reality, senior levels of management of companies usually underestimate the importance of partnership management. In research conducted on partnerships between companies, Kanter (1989) found that senior management spends up to 50 percent of their time launching a partnership, 23 percent setting up strategic partnership plans, and only 8 percent actually managing the partnerships and maintaining the relationships. One possible reason for partnership failure is that managers pay more attention to the creation of a partnership than to its management.

In addition, Frisby et al. (2004) found that inadequate capability leads to unsuccessful partnership management because of the complexity and dynamics of cross-

sector partnerships in Canadian leisure service departments. They emphasized that effective management not only requires managers to possess the necessary skills and competencies, but also “[to] devote sufficient time and other resources to partnership relations” (Frisby et al., p. 111). They developed a theoretical framework that shows a number of structural and procedural problems that cause the poor management of partnerships, and they labeled this phenomenon “under-managed partnerships” (p. 109). Babaik (2003) found that “ambiguity in representativeness” also “impacts decision-making, negotiation, and other fundamental aspects of partnership management” (p. 209).

Despite many negative factors that can lead to partnership failure or ineffectiveness, some critical factors contribute to successful partnership management. A common theme suggests that trust and commitment are key attributes to achieving valuable outcomes for the parties involved (e.g., Babiak, 2003; Child & Faulkner, 1998; Farrell & Quester, 2003; Mohr & Spekman, 1994; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Communication is also considered to be an important component of problem-solving to achieve partnership success (e.g., Babiak, 2003; Farrell & Quester, 2005b; Mohr & Spekman, 1994; Shaw & Allen, 2006), although this becomes complicated when dealing with different professional norms and discourses across sectors (Frisby et al., 2004). As a partnership may bring together partners who have different experiences and capabilities, organizational learning is required for bridging differences and developing integration, which is essential for creating collaborative advantages (Kanter, 1994).

Beyond Frisby et al.'s (2004) findings of under-managed partnerships, questions how corporate sponsors define and realize sustainability can also be asked about how specific economic, environmental, and social responsibility objectives can be reached through managing partnerships in terms of both business and social perspectives. Elements of Frisby et al.'s (2004) model can be adapted as counterparts for improving partnership management through targeting these objectives, and elements, such as transparency and flexibility that particularly fit with the Olympic context also warrant inclusion in this framework.

### **2.6.3.1 Elements of Partnership Structure**

Sport sponsorship can be understood as a non-equity alliance, a distinct inter-organizational entity or contractual agreement, in which partners share resources and skills without sharing ownership (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b). Like other non-equity alliances, such as co-marketing alliances, this entails the pooling of resources and complementary skills by alliance partners, and implementing common cooperative strategies to obtain competitive advantage (Farrelly & Quester, 2005a). Sport sponsorship is often a loose, mutually beneficial, contractual agreement often without formal organizational structure (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b). Previous research conducted on alliances found that “clear, well-thought-out organizational arrangements, and the dissemination of information within the alliance, were associated with alliance success” (Child & Faulkner, 1998, p. 176). Optimally, it is necessary for partnership management to have strategic planning and guidelines, clear roles and reporting channels, and an

appropriate control and evaluation system (cf. Frisby et al., 2004). Event organizing committees like VANOC depend largely on sponsorship money to fulfill their goals, and they need efficient systems and procedures for joint decision-making and negotiation in order to optimally meet their objectives with their sponsors (Babiak, 2003). Such structural considerations as having compatible goals with corporate partners, human-resource management, control and non-contract support, as well as flexibility are crucial for the partnership management stage. These are discussed below.

***Compatible Goals.*** Lorange and Roos (1992) found that in the formation of a partnership, objective-setting processes must ensure that goals are congruent among all relevant parties. Achieving shared goals with different types of organizations involves elaborating particular business objectives among alternatives.

***Human-Resource Management.*** Entering into partnerships, partners need to divert time, energy, and expertise of staff, including top executives, into joint activities to manage the partnership. The failure, or under-managing, of partnerships can result in staff dissatisfaction and burnout, due to insufficient training and time devoted to the partnerships, or difficulties negotiating competing values throughout the process (Frisby et al., 2004). Appropriate human-resource management policies and practices can foster a shared corporate culture in the pursuit of multiple partners' strategic objectives (Child & Faulkner, 1998). Nevertheless, the different organizational cultures, values, and practices that each partner has can make sustainability decisions difficult. Human resource

management issues like recruiting and training staff also complicate partnership management (Babiak, 2003).

***Control (Legal Contract).*** Huxham and Macdonald (1992) found that insufficient control results in the reduction of partners' ability to protect and effectively use the resources they provide to the partnerships. Loss of control may seriously damage the confidence of partners. The control of financial and human resources is a critical issue in joint ventures and other forms of equity alliances in the business sector (Culpan, 2002; Lorange & Roos, 1992). This is also applied in the public and not-for-profit sectors (Babiak, 2003; Huxham & Macdonald, 1992).

***Support (Non-contract Support).*** As many firms have learned, depending on legal contracts does not always work well in creating synergies. Non-contract support refers to the provision of production expertise, marketing assistance, management system, and operational training without any contract or fee in the areas of joint-venture management. This strategy has the most impact on operational activities (Child & Faulkner, 1998). Until recently, this concept has received rather little attention in the sport sponsorship literature. However, the phenomenon is quite visible in the case of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games Partner Club. Established in February 2005, this club was BOCOG's new approach to strengthening not only its cooperation with the Beijing Olympic partners but also facilitating the process of experience exchange and collaborations among partners themselves (Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, 2005).

BOCOG used the club's quarterly events to advance CSR practices. For instance, BOCOG and the host, China Mobile, a Beijing Partner, organized a themed discussion of how corporate partners could support the Beijing 2008 Games further by undertaking economic, social, and environmental responsibility in order to build a more harmonious society. To realize this objective, BOCOG requested that all partners sign a social responsibility agreement that encouraged corporate partners to address disadvantaged people, protect the environment and build a sustainable development plan in their businesses (12th Beijing Olympic Partner Club event, 2007). This process involved "learning for sustainability", as Senge et al. (2006) argue, which requires pooling all members' resources from a variety of industries to create synergies.

***Flexibility (Non-equity Alliance).*** As illustrated by the above example, because the development of partnerships brings new organizational structures to handle the new relationships, partnerships should maintain some degree of flexibility to meet the changing needs of the involved partners. Partnerships, particularly cross-sector inter-organizational interactions, are subject to change, complexities, and inter-organizational dynamics (Babiak, 2007; Thibault et al., 2004), and therefore rarely are static (Huxham & Vangen, 2000; Kanter, 1989). Rather, they continually change over time to meet new objectives. In practice, a concern may arise about the appropriate level of flexibility. To address this question requires a balanced approach to partnership management, as low-level intensity (under-management) leads to problems in or failures of partnerships, while

high-level intensity (over-management) can limit the potential to create synergy for high achievement (Shaw & Allen, 2006).

In reality, however, while achieving collaborative advantages is the goal of partnerships, collaborative inertia often results, which slows the rate of output (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). Moreover, the difficulty of reconciling partners' interests frequently results in conflicts within alliances. In order to avoid inertia and solve conflicts, Huxham and Vangen (2005) suggested that partnership actors must nurture the collaborative processes, in which communication, commitment, mutual learning, and transparency are essential components, to achieve mutual benefits. Processes identified by Frisby et al. (2004) include commitment, communication and consultation, coordination, and supervision, as well as proper evaluation strategies. For Olympic organizing committees like VANOC, making fast responses to external pressures and changes are prerequisites for meeting the strict timeline to stage a successful Olympic Games.

### **2.6.3.2 Elements of Partnership Process**

Kanter (1989) argued that process is more effective than structure in making partnerships work because most conflicts can be resolved during day-to-day operations. The process considerations in this study can be conceptualized in terms of five main determinants: communication, commitment, organizational learning, transparency and trust, although others also are important. The following sections discuss each of the five factors in relation to sport sponsorship, and suggest appropriate managerial actions.

***Communication.*** Communication is a critical attribute to partnership success because it underpins most aspects of operational and managerial processes, through which collaborative advantages can be achieved (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b; Mohr & Spekman, 1994; Shaw & Allen, 2006). Without effective communication, the success of cross-organizational partnership is placed in doubt (Frisby et al., 2004).

In the sport sponsorship literature, Farrelly and Quester (2005b) argued that “communication was seen as vital to bridge what were often quite contrasting organizational cultures between the sponsor and the property” (p. 235). While formal, structured communication is identified as an essential factor to explore key issues and opportunities (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b), it also is seen as hindering “the partnership to fully achieve the possibilities” if it is not accompanied by informal communication (Shaw & Allen, 2006, p. 223). Informal communication therefore is considered useful and necessary for conflict resolution or tension easing within the partnership. In contrast to the reporting procedures, informal communication, including casual conversations, telephone calls, and emails, is frequently utilized as an important vehicle to help build trust and maintain partnership relationships (Shaw & Allen, 2006).

Along with the relational construct, there always is the potential for conflicts to exist within inter-organizational relationships due to partners’ different professional perspectives and expectations (Frisby et al., 2004; Mohr & Spekman, 1994). Another reason, as Shaw & Allen (2006) specifically indicated, is “the lack of formal communication dynamic within the managerial structure of the partnership” (p. 220).

Given that conflict is inherent in collaborative relationships, an understanding of how effective communication strategy can be used to solve these conflicts is important.

***Commitment.*** Morgan and Hunt (1994) demonstrated that commitment is the key to making relationships work. Commitment refers to the partners' willingness to dedicate time, effort, and/or money to relational bonding for perceived benefits in the long term (Mohr & Spekman, 1994). In the sport sponsorship literature, "commitment to the alliance in the form of leveraging expenditures was a basic requirement from both parties" (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b, p. 236). In particular, Chadwick (2002) noted that sponsors continue to capitalize on a sponsorship contract by building, maintaining, and developing the relationship with sport properties in a reciprocal way. The partnership commitment, Chadwick (2002) argued, is more likely to generate broader relationship benefits than exchange for the placement of a company logo in return.

In the case of Vancouver 2010, the issue was how VANOC could contribute to partnership management to maximize the opportunities afforded by the Games to achieve VANOC's sustainability goals. Both VANOC and the corporate sponsors were likely to be motivated to use opportunities afforded by the partnerships in mutually beneficial ways. Because of time pressures, mutual learning about the potential benefits of sponsorship packages arguably need to be part of the relationship management process.

***Organizational Learning.*** Successful partnerships widely employ organizational learning as a managerial process to help adapt to external environments and enhance internal capacity (Child & Faulkner, 1998; Lorange & Roos, 1992). Such a process is

extremely important for developing and maintaining a competitive advantage as well as an effective relationship (Amis, 2005). There are three approaches to organizational learning in a partnership context. First, such learning involves access to the partners' technology, management knowledge, and skills. Such collaborative learning typically is seen in the business sectors where two companies implement mutual learning through technology or knowledge transfer (Lorange & Roos, 1992). Another is to expand collaborative capacity by learning from their experience about how to manage the partnership (Child & Faulkner, 1998). Third, such a process involves members' dedication to constant improvement through synergistic learning (Haak, 2004).

In the case of sport sponsorship, organizational learning typically involves coping with cultural differences and tackling managerial complexity in the emerging global business place (Amis, 2005). Although the benefits from organizational learning are increasingly significant, some barriers to such an approach are identified in partnerships. These include low priority of learning activities and a lack of mechanism to stimulate learning within alliances (c.f. Child & Faulkner, 1998, p. 300). In order to handle these problems, an increased willingness to learn is crucial to partnership management (Lorange & Roos, 1992). The key is to build a learning mechanism that motivates partners to learn and achieve synergistic effects across traditional business functions. Senge (1990, 2006) has termed this systemic thinking process as "the fifth discipline" (in addition to planning, organizing, lead and control), to stress the importance of organizational learning in the management field. He stated,

Without a system orientation, there is no motivation to look at how the disciplines interrelate. By enhancing each of the other disciplines, it continually reminds us that the whole can exceed the sum of its parts (2006, p. 12).

This mindset is particularly important for an Olympic organizing committee, such as VANOC where the concept of sustainability adopted by the OCOG is unprecedented (*Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Report 2005–06*). Adopting “triple bottom line” principles, VANOC and its management team were forced to consider not only economic responsibility to the host city, including a balanced budget and business opportunities created by the Games, but also social and environmental impacts. These considerations require cross-functional collaborations, sophisticated approaches, and transparency on all related issues in the Olympic context.

**Transparency.** Until recently, transparency issues arising in strategic alliances have received little attention, despite evidence that many performance problems in alliances stem from inadequate transparency. According to Child and Faulkner (1998), a lack of transparency results in increased barriers to organizational learning. Less openness of one partner to the other(s) and a lower degree of willingness to transfer knowledge are identified as issues that delay the trust-building process in partnership management (Haak, 2004). Increasing transparency is the key to the smooth functioning of such collaborations.

Transparency is also considered an essential element in CSR practices and reporting. *GRI Guidelines* (2002) claim that full disclosure of progress, processes,

procedures, and assumptions in CSR practices and reporting preparation is vital to credibility, although this also has potential to cause conflicts where standards are not met. The *GRI Guidelines* (2002, 2006) provide a generally accepted framework for economic, environmental, and social performance disclosure.

In bold terms, transparency of reporting affects all aspects of interactions between partners and stakeholders, because performance areas such as environmental and social impacts, become a focal point and cannot be overlooked or avoided. This emphasis on information can stimulate new thinking and new solutions. Indeed, transparency catalyzes learning in a situation in which innovation and change are seen as necessary and desirable.

**Trust.** Research has found that trust is “a basis for mutual benefit” and it is significantly associated with satisfaction and with desired expectations, such as profit or non-economic outcomes (Child & Faulkner, 1998, p. 58). It usually facilitates the process of cooperative relationships between organizations. In the sponsorship literature, Farrelly and Quester (2003, p. 536) defined trust as “a psychological orientation comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of the other party in a sponsorship dyad.” In this sense, corporate sponsors believed that the sponsored property could fulfill its promises and meet their expectations for the sponsorship relationships (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b).

More specifically, they argued that trust has two researched attributes: credibility and benevolence (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b; also see Ganesan, 1994). The credibility component of trust in sponsorship relationships demonstrates that partners understand

each other's objectives and strategic rationale behind the relationship. In their research, corporate sponsors stressed being confident that the "[sponsored] property had both the intent and the ability to meet their obligations and fulfill their (promised) contribution to the alliance" (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b, p. 236). The benevolence component of trust in sponsorship relationships refers to the "soft side" of the relationship, where partners have "shared mentality and cooperative chemistry" to serve each other's best interests (Farrelly & Quester, 2005b, p. 237). Overall, they argue that trust is vital to the sponsorship relationship.

#### **2.6.4 Phase Three: Partnership Evaluation**

The third and final phase of the sponsorship relationship is the evaluation stage. Assessing outcomes has traditionally relied on how well the partnership achieves the expected objectives and goals set by the partners at the formation stage (e.g., Babiak, 2003; Mohr & Spekman, 1994). In conjunction with sponsorship relationships, corporate sponsors initiate a sponsorship agreement, which identifies and has the potential to fulfill corporate goals and objectives (Cornwell, Roy, & Steinar II, 2001). The evaluation of sponsorship becomes a case of how well the sponsorship agreement accomplished sponsored organization and corporate objectives (Babiak, 2003; Stotlar, 2004).

In the sponsorship literature, from a corporate sponsor standpoint, the measures of effective sponsorship based on marketing objectives include increased sales and market share, image enhancement, media exposure of sponsor image, recall, and purchase intention which are commonly associated with impacts on sales (Coppetti, Wentzl,

Tomcza & Henkel, 2009; Crompton, 2004; Meenaghan, 2005; Miyazaki & Morgan, 2001). In addition, Olympic sponsors also rate employee moral enhancement, community engagement, and social responsibility as main objectives for sponsoring the Olympics (Apostolopoulou & Papadimitriou, 2004). This implies that the measurement of sponsorship also needs to consider whether or not these goals are achieved because “the usefulness of an evaluation to a company will be strongly influenced by the original specification of its sponsorship objectives” (Crompton, 2004, p. 269).

From an organizing committee’s perspective, research conducted by the IOC reported that sponsors activities related to the Games had provided a positive impact on spectators’ Olympic experiences during the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Games (Stotlar, 2004). An OCOG like VANOC has multiple sponsorship relationships with its corporate partners, and the identification of critical factors associated with the success of these partnerships significantly affects the development of effective relationships in the evaluation stage. Farrelly and Quester (2005a) argued that strategic compatibility and goal convergence are crucial factors that influence the outcomes of sponsorship performance and are key attributes for assessing what the sponsorship will accomplish. Synergistic effects are part of this framework, “as with sponsorship, theorists and practitioners form a symbiotic relationship where joint efforts are greater than the sum of the parts (Stotlar, 2004, p. 63). As Urriolagoitia and Planellas (2007) suggested, at the outcome stage of sponsorship relationships, the conditions may change from the formation and operation stages, as the characteristics sponsorship relationships appear.

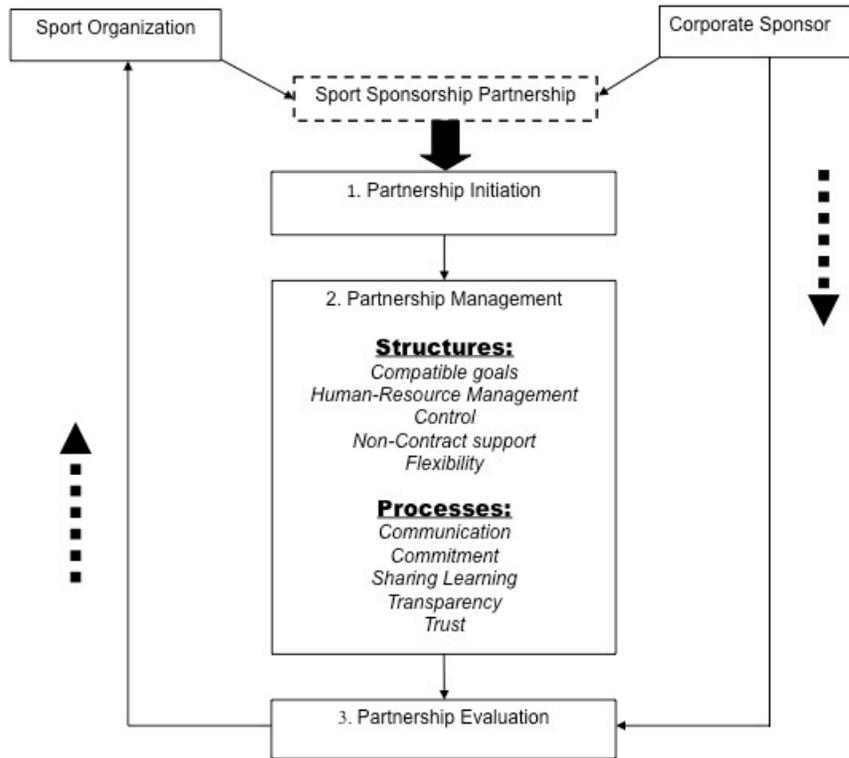
If the relationship proceeds normally, however, the synergistic potential attainable through a sponsorship relationship is realized during the outcome stage. Indeed, goal congruence and synergistic benefits can effectively be generated since sponsor and sponsored organizations have learnt how to interact and apply their know-how mutually (p. 163).

In addition, the relationship value is viewed as an intangible asset that is difficult to measure by profit (e.g., Amis et al., 1997; Farrelly and Quester, 2005b; Yang et al., 2008). Building on this, a particular consideration is whether or not an organizing committee like VANOC and its sponsors both perceive that synergistic benefits can be identified and their congruent goals can be achieved through the relationships they have formed. One way to represent this is to define the evaluation dimensions in terms of Return on Objectives (ROO), which means measuring success based on the mutual objectives set by the sponsorship partners. The purpose of pursuing this line of criteria is not only to measure empirical effectiveness of partnerships, but to probe what elements were considered to be important to make them successful.

With increasing sensitivity to environmental and social issues, the Olympic Games have become platforms for some corporate sponsors to showcase their commitment to environmental and social issues and the efforts they are making to support related goals in the way they do business (Payne, 2005). As already noted, the three phases of sport sponsorship presented in this chapter provide an overview of the essential steps and factors involved in the process of assessing inter-organizational relationships and interactions between sport organizations and corporate sponsors (see Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2. 2 A Conceptual Framework of Managing Sponsor Partnerships to**

**Achieve Sustainability**



The sponsorship relationship life cycle can be managed through a partner satisfaction feedback loop for adapting to changes. Both a sport organization and its corporate partners need to consider each other’s feedback and adjust their objectives and strategies to achieve sustainability goals. As VANOC CEO John Furlong states, “With any project that takes seven years to deliver, changes are inevitable. Each day new information becomes available. We continue to assess and analyze, find innovative ideas and make informed decisions” (*VANOC Business Plan and Games Budget, 2007*). The structural and procedural elements outlined in this chapter are considered the most

important factors in the literature that may influence the evaluation of corporate-sport partnerships.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter reviews the methodology used to address the research questions. The chapter begins with a discussion of the research traditions that informed the study and then provides an explanation of the methods including sampling, data collection and analysis. Finally, limitations and ethics are also discussed.

#### **3.1 Interpretivism**

Relationship management and inter-organizational goal setting and achievement are all forms of human interactions. To appreciate as well as account for these interactions, it was helpful to conceptualize the study at the outset in interactionist terms, which is to say in terms of an interpretivist framework. Interpretivism is a qualitative research approach that has emerged “in contradistinction to positivism in attempts to understand and explain human and social reality” (Crotty, 1998, p. 66-67). It shares the constructionist view of human subjectivism that claims “meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting” (Crotty, 1998, p. 43). This methodological approach aims to “study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Densen & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3). Building on Max Weber, interpretivism aims to understand human sciences in real ways rather than to seek isolated variables in

decontextualized situations (e.g., experimental lab). Positivist approaches assume that people are relatively insulated from the social phenomena under investigation and search for facts and causality entirely independent of peoples' opinions about, and the contexts of, these phenomena (Neuman, 2003). Positivist research methods tend to rely on quantitative data, hypothesis testing, and statistical analyses to describe relationships between variables (Densen & Lincoln, 2005; Palys, 2003; Silk, Andrews & Mason, 2005).

In contrast, interpretivism which is quintessentially a qualitative approach, emphasizes the intimate relationships between researchers and their subjects, as well as the contexts that shape the inquiry (Jackson & Verberg, 2007; Neuman, 2003). It involves capturing a wide range of empirical materials that interconnect with interpretive practices. Such practices, which are embedded in lived experiences, can be identified using a number of research methods including case studies, interviews, texts, and observations (Crotty, 1998; Densen & Lincoln, 2005).

Although the positivist paradigm has dominated social science research for decades, interpretivism sits well within the broader context of sport studies (Silk et al., 2005) and organizational studies (Wolfe et al., 2005). Indeed, according to Silk et al. (2005), the development of qualitative methods in sport studies draws on two main insights from interpretivism. The first is the manner in which the 'interpretive project' constructs and constitutes social relations or knowledge for a subject. More specifically, interpretivism demonstrates that the complex network of political, economic, and social linkages shapes the sporting context and people's understanding of that context. The

second insight concerns the role of human agency in this process. Interpretivism invites us to examine “the particular behaviors, meanings and realities of individuals within particular social settings” (Silk et al., 2005, p. 7), in order to bring a more concrete understanding of the roles of individuals as social subjects.

According to Silk et al. (2005), the interpretive paradigm in sport studies recognizes the complexity of the social world, and the importance of qualitative values and meanings of knowledge generation at both the individual and collective levels. The case is similar with organizational studies. For example, Frisby et al. (2004) reveal the organizational dynamics and complexities of under-managed partnerships in leisure service departments of local governments by using qualitative interviews with managers and staff from ten large Canadian cities. Significantly, it is at the level of individual practices that internal institutional and external environmental changes may occur, for example, as a result of problematic practices being identified and corrected. In this sense, qualitative approaches take an analytical perspective that underpins Frisby et al.’s (2004) inductive theoretical framework for examining under-managed partnerships.

More importantly, interpretivism can avoid the limitations or pitfalls of positivist approaches, which often provide overly simplistic accounts of sponsorship relationships and ignore the complexities of such interactions (Slack & Amis, 2004). For example, such research commonly employs consumer surveys of sponsor recognition and recall to measure effectiveness of sponsorship (e.g., Boshoff & Gerber, 2008; Smith, Craetz, & Westerbeek, 2008). Survey sponsors are then statistically analyzed based on social-

demographical and physiographical variables of the respondents. Although this is useful to inform sponsorship communication strategies, recall and recognition measures have real limitations because of the complex interplay between memory of the event of the sponsor, their insensitivity to the social networks of the consumer, and their social interactions with the sport, the sponsor and the event. Seeing a company's signage on-site, for example, is unlikely to trigger awareness of the sponsor in and itself. And state of arousal during an event may positively or negatively affect brand memory (Pham, 1992). Sponsorship is platform for multiple actors and communication tools to deliver messages, and it is a challenge to examine sponsorship relationships in uncontrollable environments (Crompton, 2004), as with people's association with their social context during the event (e.g., Chalip, 2006; Parent, 2008; Parent, 2010). The application of an interpretive paradigm in sport management studies recognizes the complexity of social networks and relationship interactions between consumers and sport events, just as it does between sport event organizations and the event's corporate partners. It is primarily the latter case that is of interest in this dissertation.

### **3.2 Case Study Approach and Unit of Analysis**

A goal of this research was to document and analyze the managerial approach taken by VANOC to build on the CSR-related objectives of its sponsors to help achieve sustainability goals set jointly by the OCOG and the sponsors themselves. Fundamentally, this entailed capturing the organizational knowledge and practices, and the multiple

perspectives, relationship contexts, and groupings/ partnerships at play between the organizing committee (VANOC) and corporate partners overtime (Hartley, 2004; Stake, 2005). This means that the study fit the criteria for a case study design. Yin (2003) argues that the case study has a distinct advantage when “a ‘how’ or ‘why’ question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control” (p. 9).

Hartley (2004) stated that, “The case study is particularly suited to research questions which require detailed understanding of social or organizational processes because of the rich data collected in context” (p. 323). Yin (2003, p. 13) defined the case study approach as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context.” It is particularly useful to explore how organizational activities influence social processes (Hartley, 2004).

However, one of the most challenging endeavors facing case study researchers concerns the selection of the appropriate unit of analysis. Babiak (2003, p. 61) argued that “the choice of units and levels of analysis must be carefully and consciously made and not left to the beliefs and habits of the researcher, or to empirical convenience.” Yin (2003, p. 24) emphasized that selection of the appropriate unit of analysis depends on the primary research questions. The process of selection is simplified when the scope of research questions is clearly and accurately specified. Following these principles, the unit of analysis in this study was defined as the *sport sponsorship relationships*, between VANOC and its six National Partners, Bell, HBC, RBC, GM Canada, Petro-Canada, and

RONA, relating to sustainability and CSR. In order to better understand the inter-organizational relationships underlying the sport sponsors' support of sustainability, the study examined the governance of the focal organization (VANOC) and the partners' corporate CSR practices relating to VANOC's sustainability goals.

The process of partnership initiation, management, and evaluation with respect to fulfilling these goals were the main areas of emphasis. Since I was not able to be involved as a participant observer in these processes, my point of view is that of an independent researcher who investigated and evaluated this sponsorship implementation using information obtained from interviews and document analysis.

Although the case study design for this research was developed in relation to the research questions as Yin (2003) suggested, the case study approach also allows for an emergent and evolving research design (Hartley, 2004). This is advantageous because new information may arise during the process of sample selection and data collection that influences the direction and focus of the study. As a result, a deliberate effort was made to remain flexible during the research and open to new interpretations, with the goal of capturing the full range of experiences and decision-making by the various actors and organizations involved (Stake, 1995). As noted by Orum, Kavanaugh, and Knafl (1991) because a case study ideally "provides information from a number of sources and over a period of time, a good case study can provide a full sense of actors' motives that eventuate in specific decisions and events" (p.10).

### 3.3 Case Context

A case that is studied is not an entity isolated from its environment. On the contrary, it is “a complex entity located in a milieu or situation embedded in a number of contexts or backgrounds” (Stake, 2005, p. 444). It is important to identify internal features within the case, as well as significant external features, such as the context. As Hartley (2004, p. 332) argued:

The key feature of the case study approach is not method or data but the emphasis on understanding processes as they occur in their context. ...The emphasis is not on divorcing context from the topic under investigation but rather to see this as a strength and to explore the interactions of phenomena and context.

To understand the complexities and uniqueness of the case, the context and the nature of the unit of analysis need to be clarified and presented in an understandable way. In this section, the context and the nature of partnerships established by VANOC and its six corporate national sponsors are discussed.

As noted, the focus of this research is the relationship between the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) and the national-level corporate partners, with specific emphasis on how the partners’ CSR programs were mobilized to help support VANOC’s sustainability goals. The focal organization, VANOC, was responsible for preparing and staging the 2010 Winter Games, which were held in February and March in Vancouver and Whistler, British Columbia, Canada. Vancouver 2010 was the first Winter Games obligated to submit an Olympic Games Impact (OGI) report as part of its Host City Contracts with the IOC. Detailed

commitments for the delivery of social, economic and environmental outcomes and benefits were made in the Host City Contract with the IOC in the bid (*Vancouver 2010 Bid Book, 2003*). Major challenges facing VANOC included how it could fulfill the promises made during the bid, meet the expectations of the community and the IOC, and stage a sustainable Olympic Games. Analyzing how it realized these sustainability goals with corporate sponsorship support was a core question for this study.

To examine the role corporate partners' CSR programs played in achieving VANOC's sustainability goals and to account for the inter-organizational relationships that underlay them, it was necessary to specify the key actors and to delimit a reasonable scale and scope of inquiry. The rationale for selecting the national partners was, in part, to be able to consider Olympic sponsorship at a national level, and to take into account the role this particular group of six corporations played in planning and staging the Games. A brief profile of the six National Partners is listed in Table 3.1.

**Table 3. 1 Profiles of National Partners**

<b>Company Name</b>	<b>Sponsorship Fee (Canadian Dollar)</b>	<b>Investment Project</b>
Bell Canada	\$200 million (including \$90 million cash)	In-kind provision of telecom, broadcast support Internet portal
RBC Royal Bank	\$110 million (including \$70 million cash)	In-kind banking services, investments, Paralympics support, First National community development and Olympic brand marketing
The Hudson's Bay Company	\$100 million	Commitment to outfit 2006–2012 Canadian Olympic Team and sell licensed merchandise
Rona	\$68 million	\$7 million contribution to sport initiatives: Rona Youth Aspiration program, Own the Podium program
Petro Canada	\$62.5 million (including \$18 million cash)	\$35.5 million in petrochemical products and \$9 million in athlete support

<b>Company Name</b>	<b>Sponsorship Fee (Canadian Dollar)</b>	<b>Investment Project</b>
	million cash)	
General Motors Canada	\$53 million (including \$14 million cash)	Contributions to Own the Podium and the in-kind provision of vehicles, servicing and marketing support.
Total	593.5 million	

(Adapted from “2010: Who’s sponsoring what”, *Vancouver Sun*, February, 2007)

According to the IOC principle of Olympic sponsorship exclusivity, the six companies represent six different industries in Canada. As such, this diversity of the national partners afforded an opportunity to capture a wide range of potential interests, programs, and motivations for entering Olympic sponsorship in relation to VANOC’s sustainability objectives and a diverse range of perspectives on managing relationships with VANOC.

### **3.4 Data Collection**

As noted, an interpretivist approach to data collections and analysis was employed in this study. This approach was selected because of its emphasis on meanings and social interactions, and its ability to capture the rich qualitative character of people’s statements and written materials. In addition, such an approach is considered ideal to provide insights into complex social processes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The methods of data collection for this study included document analysis and semi-structured in-depth interviews.

### **3.4.1 Document Analysis**

The first step in the research involved the review and analysis of relevant organizational and policy documents. Based on the research questions in the study, the materials collected related to VANOC's sustainability goals, its' national partners, and their corporate sponsorship programs. These documents included website materials, strategic plans, corporate responsibility/ sustainability reports, progress reports, brochures, internal files, and newspaper articles (Yin, 2003). I collected similar documents from the focal organization (VANOC) and each of the partner organizations wherever possible for document triangulating (Stake, 1995). A total of 128 documents were obtained through diverse channels, including personal exchange, industry workshops, library newspaper archives, and the Internet. The analysis of these documents contributed to the identification of specific sustainability objectives, sport sponsorship spending, and CSR practices concerning the organizations.

The document analysis had two goals. One was to identify specific information about the programs as well as determining whether there were thematic consistencies across the programs and practices. A second related goal was to identify information in order to prepare me to conduct the interviews. After the interview, I compared the document information to the interview data.

The document analysis proceeded by grouping related texts on Vancouver 2010 and sustainability and then isolating key themes and findings through repeated readings

(Neuman, 2003). In addition to reviewing organizational and policy documents, I undertook a retrospective analysis of media coverage that combined a keyword search with readings in order to collect information about VANOC's sustainability programs in relation to the corporate partners. This encompassed the *Vancouver Sun* and the *Canadian NewsStands* database for the period from January 1998 to December 2007. The start date corresponds to the period when Vancouver was awarded the right by the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC) to make a bid to the IOC for the 2010 Winter Games, and encompassed the bid and subsequent implementation of the sustainability initiatives promised in the bid (VANOC backgrounder, 2007). I intended to establish a basis from which to discuss Olympic sustainability objectives with the interviewees in terms of media and public attention. This data triangulation, a process of using multiple sources of evidence and multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, helped corroborate the findings and situated them within the case study (Stake, 2005; Yin, 2003). I used documents both for initial analysis and as a resource to substantiate findings from the interviews which were the primary source of data about partnerships prior to the interviews. In particular, I reviewed materials such as corporate responsibility reports and related information that was available on their websites in order to show interviewees that I had done my 'homework' before conducting the interviews thereby increasing my credibility. This assisted me to use the limited time with interviewees to my best advantage and build rapport to start the conversation.

These separate document searches were conducted. First, a structured key word search with the terms “Vancouver 2010” and “sustainability” was conducted using the *Canadian Newstand* database for the period from January 1998 to December 2007. This source generated 36 articles. Each article was printed out and placed in chronological order in a database.

Second, contents from the *Vancouver Sun*, a local major daily newspaper, were collected from February 13 to December 13, 2007. This yielded 143 newspaper articles relevant to Vancouver 2010, among which 62 clippings were reviewed and considered as related to the topic being discussed and then entered into the database. The two sources achieved data saturation because same information repeated appeared in multiple articles.

Finally, 23 key documents from VANOC websites were reviewed, including VANOC’s business plan, sustainability reports, bid book, quarterly reports, and feature stories pertaining to sustainability management. Seven corporate responsibility reports from sponsor websites were also analyzed. A total of 128 documents were collected, grouped, and analyzed to better understand how VANOC intended to use a CSR approach and its relations with its corporate partners to help accomplish its sustainability goals. Document passages and interviews contained in media coverage were also entered into the database. These results were subsequently crosschecked with primary data (interviews).

Importantly, the document analysis did not provide a clear picture of how partnerships were being managed by VANOC and its corporate partners in terms of

achieving Vancouver 2010 sustainability goals, and interviews with those who were actually working in the sustainability area were needed to obtain this information. This was in keeping with the overall goals of the study, which were to integrate real world information from the case study with ‘best practices’ research to contribute new knowledge about how to manage corporate-sport relationships optimally in terms of appropriate structures, processes, and evaluation strategies in the sustainability field. The results of the study are intended, in part, to help Olympic management practitioners and policy-makers engage social responsibility issues more effectively in planning and staging the Games, as identified by the Olympic organizers and corporate sponsors themselves.

### **3.4.2 Interviews**

The second approach to data collection involved semi-structured in-depth individual interviews. As a principal method of data collection for qualitative researchers, interviewing can be “an extremely important source of data” because it provides access to information “both about the events described and about the perspectives and discursive strategies” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 131). Effective semi-structured in-depth interviewing employs open-ended questions that can go “below the surface of the topic being discussed, explore what people say in as much detail as possible, and uncover new areas or ideas that were not anticipated at the outset of the research” (Britten, 2000, p. 13). Yin (2003) added that case study interviews are naturally open-ended so that the investigator can ask key respondents about the facts of a case as well as their opinions.

### **3.4.2.1 Interview Protocol**

For this study, the interview protocol was designed based upon an interpretative paradigm and thus a semi-structured approach to interviewing was selected as the most effective means to elicit participant responses (Amis, 2005b), because it provides a loose structure of open-ended questions in order to pursue an idea or response with in-depth detail (Britten, 2000). However, it was also important to keep the interviews relevant and broadly consistent with the corporate-sport partnership development and Olympic sustainability practices which were the focus of this study.

A semi-structured interview protocol was designed to insure that key themes and topics are raised consistently in the questions asked of all interviewees, at the same time that specific ideas can be explored. In other words, it “combine[d] structure with flexibility” (Legard, Keegan, & Wardet, 2003, p. 141). This combination was achieved by using the interview protocol as a template while also allowing the interviewees to pursue particular lines of thought, and the interviewer the opportunity to probe for greater detail and understanding. Moreover, all the questions were open-ended to allow interviewees’ responses to influence the directions of the interview and the protocol itself. This entailed adjusting the protocol of the interview or creating new questions that emerged from the data, which in turn required me to actively participate and interact with respondents (Kvale, 1996). This supports the view that interviews are “negotiated accomplishments of both interviewers and respondents that are shaped by the contexts and situations in which they take place” (Fontana & Frey, 2003, p. 90).

The interview guides for VANOC, the corporate partners, and third parties were different (see Appendix I). The general aim of the guide for the VANOC executives and staff was to examine their perspectives on the importance of sustainability objectives and how these goals could be achieved through corporate sponsorships. More specifically, the guide included questions about how these goals were connected to a CSR approach, how to collaborate with sponsors to achieve their sustainability goals, and how to evaluate their sustainability performance.

The primary purpose of the corporate sponsor interview guide was for me to gain insight into how they integrated VANOC sustainability goals into their current sponsorship investment. They were asked whether they incorporated CSR/sustainability into their strategy, and whether VANOC's sustainability goals motivated them to sponsor sustainability programs related to the Games. The third-party guide interview focused on questions about how they perceived VANOC sustainability objectives and performance, particularly based on the available *Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Report* for 2005–06 and 2006–07 when the interviews were conducted.

#### **3.4.2.2 Interview Sampling and Access**

A purposive sampling technique that aimed “to generate strategically chosen samples” (Palys, 2003, p. 142) was used to recruit potential interview participants. As Palys (2003, p. 144) has argued, “purposively sampled accounts provide rival or competing explanations of group processes that researchers can use to probe further.” This technique also helps “maximize richness of information obtained pertinent to the

research question” (Miller & Crabtree, 2004, p. 191). This method also was appropriate for the sample size (n=1-2 individuals per organization for a total of 26 interviewees).

Access to these interviewees was expected to be somewhat challenging, because they “[were] used to be treated with a considerable degree of deference in most of their daily interactions” due to “high status (such as senior managers and professionals)” (King, p. 19). Therefore, I made this a focal point of my activities during the data collection period. I attended all available conferences related to Olympic sustainability in Vancouver, partly because these occasions provided fresh information and insights into Olympic sustainability, but also because they offered opportunities to identify and contact key interviewees. For example, having been invited to attend the UBC Olympic Sustainability Conference held in early March 2008, I met the Vice President of Sustainability at VANOC, as well as other members of the VANOC sustainability team. This person, who gave the keynote speech at the conference, suggested that I conduct interviews after April 1, 2008 when VANOC was to release its second sustainability report. I followed her advice and sent out a first group of interview invitation letters on April 4. This was followed by a second wave of invitation requests on April 7. I also used contact information from corporate web sites to reach potential interviewees, but this had limited success. Most of the participants were recruited through contacts I made at the conferences I attended. The rest were found through the network of contacts that developed from the initial people I met.

Participants who were successfully recruited offered multiple points of view related to the sustainability objectives of the 2010 Winter Games. The interview participants included five executives and staff from the VANOC sustainability group and marketing department, six senior Olympic marketing managers and a sustainability manager from the six National Partners, as well as a manager from Teck Cominco. Although Teck is a tier two sponsor, it was included in the study because of the important role it played in organizing the 2010 Sponsor Sustainability Initiative (SSI) meetings, a network through which 2010 sponsors discussed sustainability issues and actions around the Vancouver Winter Games. I will discuss this in detail in Chapter 7. Finally, a third-party group consisting of 13 individuals with positions that gave them insights into sponsor relations also was recruited. This group included senior managers from 2010 Legacies Now, the City of Vancouver, Municipality of Whistler, Province of British Columbia, the IOC, Impact On Community Coalition (IOCC), David Suzuki Foundation, and an Olympic reporter from *the Vancouver Sun*. I viewed these as important individuals to speak with as they were ‘experts’ in the field of sport sponsorships and Olympic sustainability, and because they provided constructive advice about Olympic planning and staging strategies that shaped the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the Games.

Twenty-three individuals were interviewed face-to-face in Vancouver, and two corporate executives were interviewed by telephone because they were not available in Vancouver. Another two corporate executives were interviewed first by telephone and

subsequently face-to-face in Vancouver. In all, four participants were interviewed twice because they only were available 30 minutes during the first interviews conducted in May 2008. This happened because they lacked discretionary time for a non-business task (like a research interview) when the Beijing Games were approaching. In these cases, I was able to conduct a second interview in late 2008. Repeat interviews and telephone interviews were already included in the UBC ethics approval.

**Table 3. 2 A List of Interviewees and Time<sup>6</sup>**

Date/Time	Gender	Organization	Method of Interview	Group #	Code
Apr. 16, 08	Male	IOCC	Face-to-face	3	P 1
Apr. 22, 08	Male	Bell Canada	Face-to-face	2	P 2
Apr. 23, 08	Male	2010 Legacies Now	Face-to-face	3	P 3
Apr. 24, 08	Female	City of Vancouver	Face-to-face	3	P 4
Apr. 25, 08	Male	Olympic journalist, the <i>Vancouver Sun</i>	Face-to-face	3	P 5
Apr. 25, 08	Female	2010 Legacies Now	Face-to-face	3	P 6
Apr. 25, 08	Female	2010 Legacies Now	Face-to-face	3	P 7
May 1, 08 Dec 4, 08	Male	Petro-Canada	Telephone Face-to-face	2	P 8
May 2, 08	Male	2010 Sponsor Sustainability Initiatives	Face-to-face	2, 3	P 9
May 5, 08	Male	IOCC	Face-to-face	3	P 10
May 5, 08	Female	VANOC	Face-to-face	1	P 11
May 7, 08 Nov 25, 08	Female	VANOC	Face-to-face Face-to-face	1	P 12
May 7, 08 Oct. 29, 08	Male	VANOC	Face-to-face Face-to-face	1	P 13
May 7, 08	Female	VANOC	Face-to-face	1	P 14
Oct. 14, 08	Female	IOC	Face-to-face	3	P 15
Nov. 4, 08	Male	BC Olympic and Paralympic Secretariat, Ministry of Finance BC	Face-to-face	3	P 16
Nov. 6, 08	Male	Resort Municipality of	Face-to-face	3	P 17

<sup>6</sup> Group #1 stands for VANOC participants, Group #2 corporate sponsor participants, and Group #3 for the third party participants. Code P 1 stands for the first participant, P 2 is the second participants, and so on. P 19-1 and P 19-2 refer to two participants came to my interview from the same organization.

Date/Time	Gender	Organization	Method of Interview	Group #	Code
		Whistler			
Nov. 13, 08	Male	RONA	Face-to-face	2	P 18
Nov. 28, 08	Female	Royal Bank of Canada	Conference call	2	P 19-1
Jan. 9, 09	Female	One of the above two	Face-to-face		P 19-2
Dec. 1, 08	Male	General Motors of Canada Limited.	Telephone	2	P 20
Dec. 16, 08	Female	VANOC	Face-to-face	1	P 21
Jan. 6, 09	Male	Teck Cominco Limited.	Face-to-face	2	P 22
Jan. 15, 09	Male	Hudson's Bay Company	Telephone	2	P 23
Dec. 09, 09	Male	David Suzuki Foundation	Email	3	P 24
Mar. 27, 09	Female	2010 Legacies Now	Face-to-face	3	P 25

The length of the interviews ranged from 45 to 90 minutes. One respondent from the third party group answered my interview questions by e-mail. A list of interviewees is presented in Table 3.2. The interviews were conducted in two separate periods: the first was from April to May 2008 and the second from October 2008 to March 2009. As noted, the split occurred because the second group of subjects was involved with the Beijing Games from June to September, and it was impossible to conduct research interviews during that period even though I made contact with them in Beijing. One major disadvantage of this was the unexpected possibility of access to potential interview subjects, because they were committed to the Games business and did not have discretionary time to commit research interviews.

### 3.4.3 Research Ethics

This study received ethical approval from UBC's Office of Research Services and Administration Behavioral Research Ethics Board (BREB) on January 16, 2008 (See Appendix II). The guidelines of the BREB ensured that participants were aware of their

rights before voluntarily deciding whether to participate in the study. Before the interviews were conducted, an Initial Letter of Contact and Invitation (see Appendix III) and informed Consent Form (see Appendix IV) were e-mailed to all interviewees. All participants agreed to conditions of confidentiality and anonymity, as ensured by the consent form (see Appendix IV).

### **3.5 Data Analysis: Coding and Theme Building**

The interviews were recorded using a digital audio recorder. The digital files were loaded onto a computer for transcription of the interviews. Each of these MP3 files was marked with a code (see Table 3.2) before transcribing. I transcribed each interview verbatim and each transcription was reviewed three times to ensure accuracy. At the same time that I was transcribing the interviews, I compared and contrasted the information against the document analysis, current website information, and available sources. This method of cross-comparing the data using multiple sources of evidence was an important step and helped to corroborate the information from interviews, overcoming some of the limitations of single source interviews noted above.

After I completed the transcriptions, I coded the data. Coding is a method of categorizing and sorting qualitative data that involves systematically identifying themes and grouping the data into categories and subcategories (Neuman, 2003). The analysis of data followed the research questions described in Chapter 1 and the conceptual framework for managing sport sponsorship identified in Chapter 2. I created a code list as

a starting point, and then assigned interview passages corresponding codes. The process of coding was iterative and the list of codes was modified several times through the course of the analysis (see Appendix VII). I created tables, matrices, and extensive quotations. Organizational documents were treated in the same way as the interview transcripts. Once all interviews, document passages, and notes were coded, I organized them into themes and subthemes that revealed the patterns. The categories from the theme building were then scrutinized for their relevance and links back to the research questions and the initial conceptual framework of sponsorship management. Major themes regarding the motivations for VANOC to establish sustainability objectives, sport sponsorship relationship management, and perceptions about goal evaluation and achievement were drawn from the data. This was an iterative process. I used MS Word for this task, not dedicated software, since the sample size was relatively small and could easily be accommodated using a copy and paste word processing technique to organize the data thematically.

Having acquired concrete categories and patterns for organizing the data, I then examined and clarified the relationships and linkages among them. At this stage, some thematic concepts were generated along with specifications for what constituted appropriate indicators for these concepts. Major themes and concepts regarding motivations for VANOC to establish sustainability goals and motivations for corporation sponsors to enter Olympic sponsorship in relation to sustainability goals were extracted

from the data. These concepts and themes were then checked against the initial framework in the literature review.

The results of the analysis are organized under major themes and are presented in this dissertation in chapters dedicated to the research questions. A number of direct quotations from the interviewees are selected to explicate the themes because these representative quotations helped to anchor the data and illustrate clearly the relevant concepts and theories were identified in the discussion.

### **3.6 Potential Problems**

Although case study interviews are naturally open-ended, at the same time, they inevitably also encounter the common problem of bias on the part of both the interviewer and interviewee (Yin, 2003). One factor, for example, is that case study interviews amount to an uncontrolled intervention in the lives of others (Walker, 1983), and this can lead to adverse reaction and expression. To reduce this risk, each subject is promised total confidentiality, consistent with Walker's (1983) suggestions. The information obtained in the interviews can help refine the research design as well as provide primary data for the study. As such, if evidence is found adverse reactions to the interview setting or questions, these can be changed to better accommodate the interviewee.

I anticipated a number of potential problems relating to the potential proprietary nature of the information I was collecting and the content of the interviews themselves. The interview questions were designed to avoid requests for proprietary information

related to business strategies that might threaten the interview relationship or result in untruthful responses. In addition, given my geographic location (Vancouver) and the various locations across Canada of the corporate sponsor participants, telephone interviews were employed when face-to-face interviews were not feasible.

Another problem was that some interviewees understandably were cautious in revealing detailed information about their sustainability projects before they announced the information to the media. For example, the VANOC representatives and the corporate participants both expressed concerns that the sustainability programs were still in the planning stages and could not be discussed openly in the first interview (April to May 2008). They advised me to conduct the interviews in September or later when they thought the sustainability projects might be ready for public release. I took their advice and conducted another round of interviews as a second phase of data collection (October 2008 to March 2009), as noted above.

A further problem was that the interview method imposed limits on my access to information of how Olympic sustainability goals could be achieved through corporate sponsorships. I was able to obtain information from those interviewees who were willing to talk to me, but I did not have an opportunity to attend live meetings and observe VANOC sustainability decision-making processes in action. The lack of participant observation limited my sense of context and my ability to fully interpret the interviews, however, interview data were still a very useful source of information.

The limited time for some interviews was a further constraint. For example, it usually took about 60 minutes to conduct a successful interview, and it was very difficult to obtain all the information I needed during shorter interviews. Although the interview guideline covered all the questions I wanted to ask, the limited time constrained my ability to explore the questions more deeply. This was another reason I conducted second interviews with four participants who were only available for a short time in the first interview.

Finally, the limited number of participants in particular may result in a more narrow range of perspectives. For example, interviewing only one person from a corporate partner did not permit me to crosscheck the information from an additional source. In practical terms, this limitation was unavoidable as it was very difficult to access these individuals. Nevertheless, 26 interviews are fairly robust and I felt data saturation was reached. Guess, Bunce and Johnson (2006) pointed out that data saturation is an 'elastic' concept, it represents the point where one's research objectives are achieved. By the end of the interviews, the same themes and subthemes were being repeated by interviewees and little new information was being presented. As such, the interview data obtained became sufficient to answer my research questions and achieve my research objectives (Marshall & Rossman, 2006).

## CHAPTER 4

### SUSTAINABILITY MOTIVATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In this chapter, the main research findings related to the first two research questions are presented. Specifically, the chapter presents the motivations for VANOC to establish its sustainability goals, the motivations for corporate partners to enter into Olympic sponsorship and representative sustainability projects through which the corporate sponsors helped achieve VANOC's sustainability goals.

#### **4.1. Motivations for VANOC to Establish Sustainability Goals**

The results of this study revealed that a primary motivation for VANOC to establish its sustainability goals was to meet its commitments in the bid. VANOC established a vision to “build a stronger Canada whose spirit is raised by its passion for sport, culture and sustainability” (VANOC vision statement, 2009). This vision is the first by an Olympic organizing committee to fully recognize sustainability. VANOC strove to apply sustainability principles to all aspects of the Olympic Games' planning, operations and delivery according to most interviewees (Skiers may have to, 2006). In addition to targeting the bid commitments, this also embraced the Olympic Movement's adoption of sustainability (along with sport and culture) as a central element of its philosophy (Skiers may have to, 2006).

One interviewee explained why the Olympic Movement should incorporate sustainability into its values.

[I]t is very important. ... It is central for the Olympics to adopt sustainability as a core operating and delivery principle. We believe sustainability is much more important than only restricting it to the environment wing, because sustainability is more than just the environment; sustainability is economic and social as well. We think it is a different discussion; it is a different way to look at the Olympics. (Interview with Municipality of Whistler, 2008)

Several study participants believed that placing an emphasis on sustainability is how Vancouver won the bid. They indicated that both Vancouver and Whistler had a historical record of sustainable development before VANOC was formed. From the City's perspective, the representative of Vancouver indicated that "[as the City of Vancouver,] we were important instruments in the development of the sustainability agenda as part of the bid and we are very involved in its implementation." The person clarified what this meant, as follows:

We look at cultural aspects, social aspects, environmental and economic aspects; all are very important to us and were critical to winning the bid. We're very involved in the VANOC Board and in ensuring that [everything] is done to translate sustainability responsibilities through the city programs as a whole city. (Interview with the City of Vancouver, 2008)

From Whistler's perspective, the leadership of the Municipality also played a key decision-making role in terms of integrating sustainability into the bid commitments.

This was prior to VANOC. As a Councilor, I was very clear that the only term under which Whistler should agree to be the partner in the Games would be if VANOC and the partnership followed the principles of

sustainability, because Whistler has very strong values. Sustainability was something [where] Whistler had initiatives that were subsequently adopted by VANOC. (Interview with the Municipality of Whistler, 2008)

These examples reveal that the focal organization VANOC's sustainability goals strategically were aligned with both of the host cities' sustainable development agendas. As sustainability was a core value for Vancouver and Whistler, the implementation of these goals was applied at the most fundamental level in planning the 2010 Games. For example, many respondents recognized that VANOC was committed to making all the venues conform to Leadership in Energy and environmental Design System (LEEDS) certification.

From the IOC's perspective, it was noted that the City of Vancouver itself put sustainable development at the forefront. Also, the IOC interviewee clarified that the Olympic Games Impact (OGI) project, which was an IOC initiative, did not impact VANOC's sustainability agenda because the Vancouver 2010 bid committee had already decided to put sustainable development into its bid commitment prior to the formation of VANOC.

Given the clear motivation to support sustainability, the issues became how these goals could be realized. VANOC made its operating definition of sustainability "to manage the social, economic and environmental impacts and opportunities of the Games to produce lasting benefits, locally and globally" (*Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Report 2005–06*). All interview participants were aware that VANOC's sustainability goals had three pillars: economic, social, and environmental sustainability. The following quote

from the interviews serves to emphasize these goals and clarify some of the sub-goals that were developed.

The sustainability goals are in three pillars. One is on environmental, one of them on social and one of them is on economic. And also in the social, they have a large participation of Aboriginal, inner-city and women and youth. And in environmental, they have a variety of key [environmental] indicators to look at. (Interview with 2010 Legacies Now, 2008)

Within this broader sustainability platform, a number of specific projects that incorporated economic opportunity, social responsibility, and environmental protection were implemented through corporate sponsorship. Examples of how the six national corporate partners helped to achieve VANOC's sustainability goals are presented in the following three subthemes: economic opportunity, environmental protection, and social responsibility.

#### **4.1.1 Economic Opportunity**

Under economic opportunity, several programs were identified by VANOC and the corporate partners as innovative ways to engage economic development through the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games. On the VANOC side, for example, the Buy Smart Program was established with a mandate to identify sustainability attributes, such as inner-city disadvantaged inclusiveness, ethical purchasing, and Aboriginal participation in the locally-based businesses that were selected as licensees. Traditionally, such business selection in prior Olympics went to multinational corporations (Inwood, 2007). The Buy Smart Program was designed to incorporate ethical outsourcing and human

rights policies into VANOC's ethical Licensee Code of Conduct in partnership with the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), one of the National Partners. To fully implement VANOC's ethical purchasing policy, they set up a number of requirements for the licensees of merchandise bearing the Olympic mark to meet credible standards for ethical and social compliance, including that they had to comply with safe, healthy, and environmental workplaces for internal and outsourced contracts.

VANOC's Buy Smart Program was identified as a visible economic opportunity for local small businesses. The 2010 Commerce Centre, an initiative of the Province of BC Secretariat, was established in 2006 under the BC Ministry of Finance, with the goal to educate, equip, and prepare businesses with the proper tools, knowledge, and awareness of how they could take advantage of Olympic Games-related opportunities (2010 Commerce Centre, 2008). Specifically, it was reported that the 2010 Commerce Center created the 2010 Business Opportunities Workshop in which thousands of businesses participated to learn how to maximize their involvement in the multi-billion dollar Olympic Games-related opportunities. The workshop functioned as an educational tool in relation to promoting VANOC's Buy Smart Program across the Province of BC and Canada. The following quote illustrates this point:

That is the education part. The legacy of the Games is that now when the Games [are] over, not only the person that won the contract learns more about social inclusion components and sustainability components, but the subcontractors introduce it as well. That was important for the economic benefits. (Interview with BC 2010 Winter Games Secretariat, BC Ministry of Finance, 2008)

Another critical aspect of this initiative was that the 2010 Commerce Centre helped VANOC and the corporate partners select licensees and subcontractors by identifying businesses with sustainability features and Aboriginal participation in the bidding processes. As the next quote demonstrates, the 2010 Commerce Centre helped create business opportunities for the sponsors and facilitated realizing benefits from the Games.

The responsibility that I personally have with corporate sponsors are when 2010 sponsors want to use our facilities, when 2010 sponsors contact us and want to learn more about how they can buy products and services that are local. We speak to sponsors about how they can get involved in leveraging the Games. (Interview with BC 2010 Winter Games Secretariat, BC Ministry of Finance, 2008)

The 2010 Commerce Centre partners, in cooperation with the various 2010 sponsors, in particular the Royal Bank Canada (RBC), created the 2010 Business Guide called *Striving for excellence: Your guide to business opportunities for the 2010 Winter Games*. To help businesses connect with the opportunities of the Olympic Games, RBC undertook several initiatives, as described in the following quote:

Small business is the engine of Canada's economy, so RBC is dedicated to ensuring that the small business community can take advantage of opportunities for fighting for the 2010 Games. Our 2010 Business Development Initiatives includes seminars, information, and guides for business opportunities in the 2010 Games. We've made it available in all our branches across Canada and online. (Interview with RBC, 2009)

In its implementation, RBC's approach was to work through the Olympic Games-related Request for Proposals (RFP), a document that solicited bids from suppliers as part

of the contract process. RBC helped advise small and medium sized businesses about the sustainability requirements in preparation for their submission to the RFP. While the 2010 Commerce Center's workshop introduced the process and explained why it was important and how the 2010 Olympic Games affected them, RBC's seminars, such as "Demystify the RFP Bid Process Workshop" taught companies how to write an RFP to fit the bid. More specifically, the workshop worked in the following way:

It comes to a breakfast meeting, I spoke about 20 minutes, explained to them what the Vancouver organizing committee's role is, and gave them ideas of what types of goods and services they are going to be looking for as we get closer to 2010. Talking about Olympic family, what are hospitality agencies they might look for? What are they going to need to help work with the sponsors? Torch Relay business opportunities as well, potentially. I really help educate businesses about the opportunities. And then what I also do is to sit down with a business one-on-one, and understand what that business offers, where they're trying to go and we will help them make connections within the Olympic family. So I am the contact because we are an Olympic family member. So I help them with the contacts. (Interview with RBC, 2009)

The quote reflects how a bank sponsor helped businesses raise their awareness of sustainability and leverage economic opportunities as a result of the Olympic Games. In turn, these activities were intended to help businesses before, during, and after 2010. In January 2009, when the interview was conducted, RBC had held about 30-40 seminars since 2005 with 40-50 attendees each. Over this time, the 2010 Commerce Center had built a business database of 4000 plus firms through the 2010 Business Opportunity Workshop. Interestingly, the Minister of Finance BC said at the *8th World Conference on Sport and the Environment 2009*, that without 2010 in its title, there might have been

fewer people interested in their sustainability workshops. This statement implies that the Winter Games were an important impetus in promoting sustainable business opportunities in an innovative way, although future research would be required to determine if the businesses that participated thought they benefitted.

An example of supporting VANOC's sustainability goals, particularly with respect to economic growth, can be seen in the case of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). As the main contributor to the Smart Buy Program, HBC, a National Partner in the outfitting category, helped provide economic opportunities by working with domestic manufacturers and making sure that the products they provided were eco-friendly. At the same time as emphasizing environmental sustainability, this initiative supported economic sustainability. On the latter point, a senior executive from the Hudson's Bay Company explained:

One of the things around economic growth or economic health, I guess, of the Vancouver market is something that we're doing in manufacturing. We partner with manufacturers to help improve the economy in Vancouver. (Interview with Hudson's Bay Company, 2009)

It was reported that as an outfitting sponsor and through its contract with VANOC, the HBC was involved in the design and supply of the uniforms for all 25,000 volunteers, 12,000 torchbearers, and support staff for the Olympic Games and torch relay, as well as all the Canadian athletes' uniforms. For example, since it was important for the Canadian athletes' uniforms to be made in Canada, the interviewee indicated that 90% of the athletes' uniforms would be made by local manufacturers, and other athlete related

items that HBC had offered to the sponsorship program would be 100% made in Canada, if available. He also explained that some items would not be made in Canada because there were no Canadian manufacturers that could produce the required products.

By January 22, 2009, half of the VANOC's spending went to locally based suppliers in Vancouver and the Sea to Sky Corridor. An additional 43% went to BC and other non-BC Canadian companies. In total, approximately \$8.8 million of the contracts were to Aboriginal businesses according to document analysis (VANOC Adheres to Rigorous, 2009).

Another example often mentioned by the participants in this study was that Bell invested \$2 million into a program called "Building Opportunities with Business Inner City Society" (BOB) as part of its Olympic sponsorship commitment. This program focused on the economic development of the Vancouver Downtown Eastside, by providing business mentoring, employment training, and small business loans. Some interviewees thought this financial contribution was the most important determining factor in strengthening the social well-being, health, and security of the disadvantaged people like inner city residents and at-risk youth who otherwise do not have such opportunities. As an executive of Corporate and Olympic Marketing in Bell Canada, stated in an interview, "We try our best in the Downtown Eastside to use our dollars to facilitate economic growth - job creation, opportunities for training." In addition, he indicated that it was not just a sponsorship, Bell Canada wanted to add social value as this fits with their shared goals with VANOC.

Both Bell Canada and VANOC sat on the BOB's Board of Directors to ensure that a wide range of social benefits were generated. On March 31, 2009, the BOB set a target of 800 inner-city individuals for skill training opportunities. This was sponsored by the business development fund that encompassed \$2.6 million, and provided employment opportunities for 590 people (Building Opportunities with Business, 2009).

#### **4.1.2 Environmental Protection**

In relation to environmental protection, VANOC was committed to making all the venues and buildings conform to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System certification. RONA, a National Partner in the construction category, helped VANOC achieve its LEEDS standards in several ways as noted in the following quote:

So environmental standards like LEEDS, we're providing non-VOC<sup>7</sup> paint; there are non-volatile organic compounds in the paint, so that assists VANOC reaching its LEEDS standards. Some other great stuff we're doing, we're providing some projects FSC certified lumber—Forest Stewardship Council certified lumber.<sup>8</sup> Centrally, what that means is that lumber came from the sustainable management of forests. (Interview with RONA, 2008)

In addition, VANOC strived to avoid the destruction of biodiversity in the venues construction, so that it could reduce the impacts on the landscape. A couple of examples were presented in the interviews and documents that illustrate the high value of the native

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<sup>7</sup> [Non-VOC=non Volatile Organic Compounds]

<sup>8</sup> About the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) – the FSC is an independent, non-governmental, not for profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests. November 18, 2008, from <http://www.fsc.org/about-fsc.html>

biodiversity. One example is where the Olympic alpine course at the Whistler-Blackcomb ski resort was shifted away from Boyd's creek in a couple of places, because the coastal tailed frog, listed as a special concern by the Canadian Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife, lives in the creek adjacent to the alpine course. Another example was that plans to cut down a number of trees on the ski run were delayed until wildlife experts confirmed that all bird's nests were no longer in use (Mertl, 2006, July 28).

In terms of corporate sponsors who contributed to the environmental sustainability goals, both VANOC and the corporate partners most frequently reported that General Motors (GM) of Canada, which provided all the vehicles for VANOC's transportation requirements, worked hard in the reduction of carbon emissions. The following quote illustrates this point:

I would say that we absolutely have [a lot of effort] in respect to the Olympics doing a tremendous amount of research and development regarding how we can make our vehicles more fuel-efficient; how we can minimize the emissions. We [have been] work[ing] on that for many many many years. So it's certainly the environmental piece in reducing our impact on the environment. It is one of our key goals. ... When it comes to the Olympics, we ensure that we minimize the footprint through the vehicles that we supply them. (Interview with General Motors of Canada, 2008)

According to information obtained through the interview, GM had been working on environmentally friendly vehicles since the 1970s, and has focused on the reduction of greenhouse gases. In particular, for the 2010 Olympic Games, GM had a target to provide 4629 vehicles to VANOC during the Games. GM's goal was to supply 30% of the fleet

with hybrid vehicles. GM was also investigating alternative fuels, such as bio-diesel. As the representative from GM stated, “we also supply a larger portion of other vehicles which are E85 ethanol compatible, which means vehicles can run on gasoline or they can run E85 ethanol. E85 is [essentially] 85% pure ethanol in gasoline.”

The GM example illustrates the impacts an automobile sponsor can have on environmental goals, in their case on VANOC’s carbon neutral targets. Since the transportation sector has a major impact on carbon emissions, GM’s contribution to environmental protection was potentially important for VANOC’s carbon neutral objectives. This example also suggests that GM supports alternative fuels and reduced dependence on fossil fuels. Nevertheless, the portion of hybrid vehicles was still relatively small (30 percent of VANOC’s fleet), and it was not clear how much the environmental impacts would actually be reduced during Games time.

Another example of environmental sustainability included in this case study was the role of Petro-Canada as a National Partner in the oil and gas category. Its responsibility was outlined as follows:

Our responsibility as a sponsor, first and foremost, [is] to what I call “Fuelling the Games”. We are providing all the fuels to the organizing committee that they are going to require for their fleet or light trucks, also for all of the various buses and all the other fuels that are required for sponsors, broadcasters, and other people that are associated with the Games. (Interview with Petro-Canada, 2008)

While GM provided the Games with environmentally-friendly vehicles, like those that were E85 compatible, Petro-Canada supplied the eco-friendly fuels, such as ethanol

E85 and bio-diesel for VANOC's fleet. In addition, Petro-Canada also supplied a clean gasoline that was intended to reduce carbon emissions. As an executive from Petro-Canada described in one interview in 2008:

We do have a number of things that we work with VANOC on that fit under our corporate responsibility realm. We are supplying them with the very best fuels that we have, so they use super clean gasoline, which is a gasoline that has the highest clean property in any fuel we make. And also it burns cleaner than the other fuels we sell. They have a 50 percent reduction of emissions, because they use our very best fuel. (Interview with Petro-Canada, 2008)

Contributions to VANOC's sustainability objectives from these National Partners varied according to the nature of their business, but the goal was the same: to support the Vancouver 2010 sustainability goals.

#### **4.1.3 Social Responsibility**

The participation of some Vancouver inner-city residents and Aboriginal peoples in the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games was highlighted as an integral component of VANOC's sustainability mandate. Interviewees from the IOC, VANOC, Municipality of Whistler and the corporate sponsors, for example, emphasized the importance of the official partnership with the Four Host First Nations (FHFN). Comments from the Resort Municipality of Whistler representative supported this perspective:

On Aboriginal participation, I think that it is the first Olympics where the local Aboriginal groups have had status as full partners. And they are [achieving] significant economic opportunities and celebrations of their culture and arts as well. (Interview with Municipality of Whistler, 2008)

Indigenous people's involvement in the Games and the promotion of their culture were regarded as important elements of VANOC's social responsibility program. The IOC representative described this as follows:

It is fabulous. I think [VANOC] has a really good relationship with ... [the] Four Host First Nations, and a lot of things we have done with them including the athletes' support. I mean VANOC works with them to highlight their culture. An exhibition of culture site is going to be, I think it is currently constructed, up on one of the lands in Whistler which belongs to one of the Four Host Nations. They are definitely inclusive. And ... a lot of [their gifts] come from the Four Host Nations. They have been made by the Aboriginal people. (Interview with the IOC, 2008)

The national sponsors facilitated VANOC's programs. In a collaborative project, for instance, Bell Canada contributed \$3 million to the Whistler Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre to advance Aboriginal culture and traditional knowledge on the world stage, according to the interviews who thought the Cultural Center is a lasting legacy for these communities.

Another example is that Petro-Canada donated two-pieces of land in Vancouver and Port Moody respectively (worth \$3 million) to the Urban Native Youth Association to build facilities, including a drop-in center for disadvantaged Aboriginal youth, to learn skills. Also, a Totem Pole project with the Four Host First Nations was underway, as described by the representative from Petro-Canada:

We have a wonderful artist, whose name is Klatle-Bhi<sup>9</sup>, who is building a

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<sup>9</sup> Petro-Canada has commissioned British Columbia-based Aboriginal artist Klatle-Bhi (pronounced Cloth Bay) to carve a 22-foot totem pole. The totem pole will commemorate Petro-Canada's sponsorship of the Games, and

25-foot Olympic legacy totem called ‘Sea-to-Sky’. That totem pole will be displayed at the Four Host First Nations’ Pavilion in Downtown Vancouver during the Games. ... [T]hat will help profile the Aboriginal art community in BC and their ability and potential to generate some economic benefits for them. (Interview with Petro-Canada, 2008)

This quotation reflects some projects originally started to generate a positive social impact that also eventually created economic benefits for the host community. This case is not isolated. Many examples show that the three areas of sustainability often interact and interweave in one project on a basis of the ‘triple bottom line’ platform.

Last but not least, a well-known program was the RONA Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. This shop provided carpentry-training opportunities for some at-risk youth. It was designed to enable them to gain work skills, obtain employment, and contribute to the Games. This point is illustrated in the following interview quote:

If you look at the Fabrication Shop, it is aligning with a number of initiatives that VANOC has. Number one primarily is the social aspect of sustainability. And our commitment there is, I believe, over \$3 million working with VANOC on that Fabrication Shop. These young men and women get the training; they get the Olympic experience, and are building their own podium, making a better life for themselves. When they work out there, they get skills and they can go and work in the construction side. (Interview with RONA, 2008)

This program also illustrates how the three aspects of sustainability are interrelated and reinforce one another. However, the actual numbers of people involved

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promote cultural and economic opportunities made possible by hosting the 2010 Winter Games. Retrieved March 11, 2009, from <http://www.petro-canada.ca/en/olympics/189.aspx>

in the program are small (e.g., 64 students in RONA Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop in 2009) compared to the “problem” of at-risk youth (e.g., estimated 87,000 children in poverty in 2008)<sup>10</sup> in Province of BC (Olympic partners take social responsibility, 2010; BC child poverty rate, 2010).

In the opinion of the interviewees, these sustainability initiatives show that VANOC and their corporate partners adopted tangible social initiatives that benefited the socially and economically disadvantaged who otherwise would not have had these opportunities. A brief summary of sustainability programs is presented in Figure 4.1.

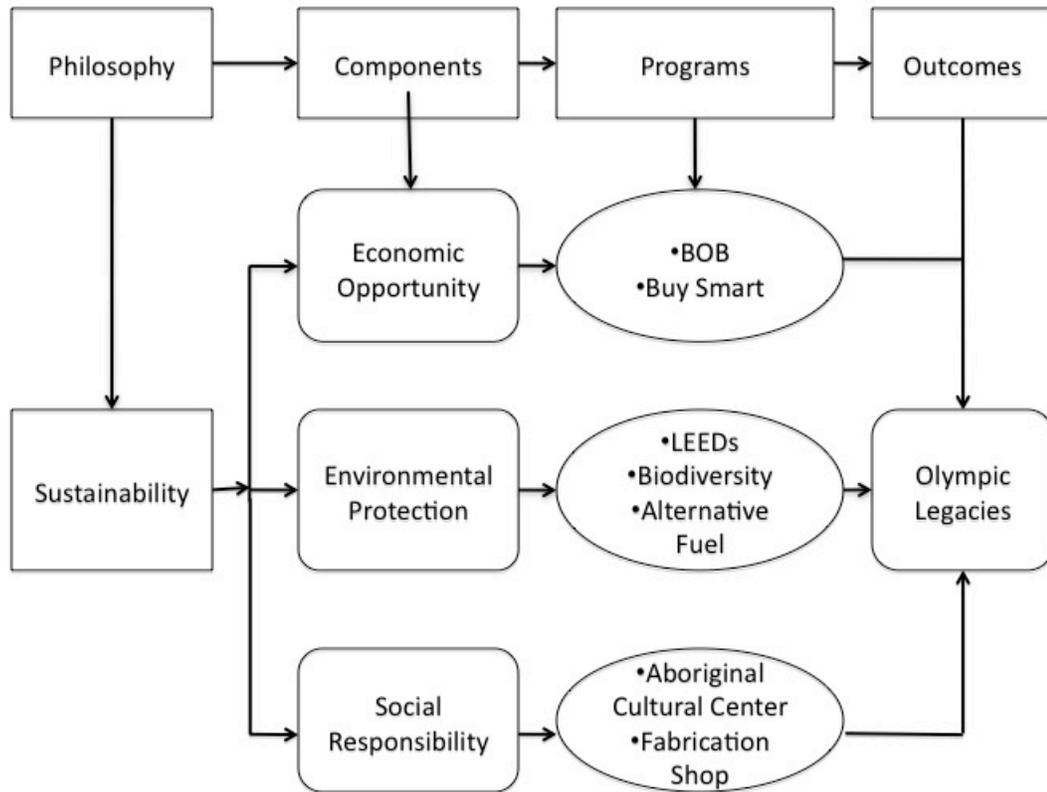
Figure 4.1 illustrates a flow chart of VANOC’s sustainability agenda, beginning with the fundamental philosophy that underpinned its major goals under which a number of operational programs were developed to deliver targeted outcomes. As discussed earlier, their three components of sustainability were economic opportunity, environmental protection, and social responsibility. In keeping with these objectives, interviewees reported that BOB (with Bell) and Buy Smart (with HBC) provided economic opportunities for local small businesses and disadvantaged inner city residents. Next were activities intended to minimize environmental impacts, including venues with LEEDS standards, accommodating wild life habitats, and alternative fuels to help reduce carbon emissions. Finally, VANOC and the corporate sponsors supported social

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<sup>10</sup> An analysis of the latest figures by First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, showed a drop in the BC child poverty rate from 13 percent in 2007 to 10.4 percent in 2008. The number of poor BC children dropped from 108,000 in 2007 to 87,000 in 2008. Retrieved June 29, 2010, From <http://www.firstcallbc.org/pdfs/currentissues/press%20release08stats.pdf>

development through the Aboriginal culture center and fabrication shop. This demonstrates systematic thinking about and activation on the Games-related sustainability plan and on sustainable management practice.

**Figure 4. 1 Summary of Sustainability for Vancouver 2010**



#### 4.2 Motivations for Corporations to Enter into Olympic Sponsorship

From the corporate sponsors' perspectives, the motivations for corporations to enter into Olympic sponsorships were not about the sustainability objectives, as such. They indicated that sustainability characterizes how they do business, but it was not their sole or main objective. Rather, they affirmed that their Olympic sponsorship investments have a strong branding and business rationale. As a corporate senior executive indicated,

“We don’t have direct sustainable objectives for being an Olympic sponsor.” A number of corporate motivations identified in the interview quotations are shown in Table 4.1 which included:

- 1) Showcasing environmentally friendly technology and products,
- 2) Employee engagement (including volunteer opportunities in the Olympic Games),
- 3) Community engagement and social responsibility,
- 4) Taking/showing a leadership role in sustainability,
- 5) Brand differentiation by sustainability initiatives,
- 6) Corporate history of Olympic engagement,
- 7) Raising awareness of sustainable living, and
- 8) Providing partnership business opportunities with other sponsors.

**Table 4.1 Corporate Partners’ Representative Quotations for Motivations**

<p><b>Showcasing environmentally friendly technology and products:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. We look to the Olympics as a platform for us to showcase our environmentally friendly vehicles, our advanced technology of vehicles, and our alternative fuel vehicles. (General Motors Canada)</li></ol> <p><b>Employee engagement and volunteer opportunities in the Olympic Games:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2. It provides us an opportunity to really engage our employees. There are 6,000 of our employees. They like that we’re an Olympic sponsor. It is something good Petro-Canada is all about. And it also provides us an opportunity to differentiate ourselves from other oil and gas companies, when they come to attracting and retaining really good people and really good talents within our company. (Petro-Canada)</li><li>3. The fourth pillar of our sponsorship is the volunteer program that is structured through the Vancouver 2010. We got all of our employees across the country involved and then we have 100 volunteer positions as part of our sponsorship. We will be providing 100 of our employees from across Canada the opportunities to</li></ol>
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leave their jobs in RONA for three weeks, come to Vancouver, be part of the Games here in Vancouver and be volunteers of the Games in Vancouver. RONA will pay their salary, travel costs, accommodation costs, and all the fees associated with it. Those 100 employees will be working at the Games and leaving a truly Games experience. (RONA)

**Community engagement and social responsibility:**

4. We also have a program called “Making Dreams Possible”, which is a playground program we developed, which provides funding grants to local community sport organizations across the country. We give out 100 grants per year for local communities to help them with the development of coaching staff and we also provide grants to high performance athletes as well. (General Motors Canada)

**Taking/showing a leadership role in sustainability:**

5. We will be a leader in sustainable development that is not only across the environmental standpoint but also the social and economic, all of these three pillars. (RONA)

**Brand differentiation by sustainability initiatives:**

6. The next pillar of our sponsorship is what we called the RONA Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop. The fabrication shop is a unique partnership for both RONA and VANOC, and the ITA, the local agency. (RONA)

**Corporate history of Olympic engagement:**

7. One is that we have a 20-year history of legacies for being a sponsor because we played a very premier role back in 1988. We were the Olympic Torch Relay sponsor and organizer. The sponsor actually organized the Torch Relay. It was an extremely successful relay, considered the best in its time, the best all the times after that. ... We think that our connection to the Olympics has played a big role in the stimulating of our reputation that Petro-Canada can enjoy. (Petro-Canada)
8. RBC has been sponsoring the Canadian Olympians since 1947. (RBC)

**Raising awareness of sustainable living:**

9. I think there is an opportunity for the Games branding themselves and raising everybody’s awareness around sustainable living. (Teck)

**Providing partnership business opportunities with other sponsors:**

10. We have a chance to do business with other sponsors, both nationally and internationally. It’s opened up doors that would not otherwise perhaps be open. So

today, for example, I have a Blackberry that is a Bell. Before the Olympics, it was a Rogers. All the Bell vehicles West Canada drives around have Petro-Canada fuel. Before the Olympics, they didn't have Petro-Canada fuel. (Petro-Canada)

In addition, some corporate participants emphasized that they have made some tangible investments, such as in venue construction and infrastructure building, based on the nature of their business. The seven corporate partners (six National Partner plus Teck) that I interviewed are leading companies in the area of sustainability in Canada, and all of them expressed the view that they were socially responsible corporate citizens and wanted to give back to the communities in which they operate.

All the participating corporations provided annual corporate responsibility reports (Petro-Canada, GM), CSR reports (Bell, RBC, HBC, RONA) or sustainability reports (Teck), respectively. VANOC and the corporate respondents indicated that VANOC's sustainability goals were "absolutely" connected to CSR. This is consistent with Speth's (2008) discussion on the topic of sustainability that emphasized sustainability and CSR are interchangeable in industry practices. The findings that revealed how VANOC initiated, managed and evaluated the partnerships with corporate sponsors to help achieve VANOC' sustainability goals are presented in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 5

### MANAGING CORPORATE-SPORT PARTNERSHIPS

This chapter presents the main findings related to partnership initiation, management, and evaluation. These findings are intended to answer the research question number three in Chapter 1: How could sport sponsorship relationships be managed to achieve the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games' sustainability goals?

#### **5.1 Partnership Initiation: Selection of Corporate Sponsors**

When this study interviews commenced in April 2008, the six National Partners had already been chosen and their sponsorship agreements had been signed with VANOC. Each of those agreements included programs features relating to sustainability. Responsibility for sponsor selection was delegated primarily to the director of marketing as noted in the following remarks by a VANOC interviewee.

[VANOC's marketing director] is responsible for finding sponsors. When he's got on it and talked to the sponsors, he is very much engaged in those who are interested in our vision of Games that are sustainable. He completely influences whom we choose as a sponsor. And the sponsors who are chosen are getting involved with many of [our sustainability objectives], so they can highlight the innovations in the area of sustainability. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

Despite the advantages of Olympic sponsorship, corporate participants indicated that their sponsorships did not change the way they did business around sustainability and

corporate social responsibility, as captured in the following interview statement from a corporate sponsor:

[The] Olympics [were] a partnership where many people had interests. ...I think the sustainability question is more around how we operate. When we look at our business objectives, ...we operate with that partnership as an example of making sure that when we did our agreement with VANOC that certain components of our agreement actually have added value to the economic, social and environmental well-being in our communities where we are operating. (Interview with Bell, 2008)

When they entered the partnership, Bell made sure that their relationship with the Games would add value to their existing programs. In this sense, their approach insured a good ‘strategic fit’ between the core values of the sustainability components of the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games and their corporate social responsibility objectives. This was true for the other sponsors as well.

## **5.2 Partnership Management: Partner Satisfaction Feedback Loop**

During the interviews, VANOC and the National Partners were in a partnership management phase. In this section, I describe the key managerial factors involved in the sport sponsorship relationships between VANOC and its partners using constructs from Frisby et al. (2004). I also describe the efforts made through these relationships to achieve VANOC’s sustainability goals.

### **5.2.1 Elements of Partnership Structure**

The research findings demonstrated a series of structural components in the relationship between VANOC and the partners, including shared goals, assigned

personnel, a well-organized structure under contractual relationship, non-contract support, as well as flexibility.

#### **5.2.1.1 Shared Goals**

According to Lorange and Roos (1992), one of the key aspects of partnership management is shared goals among the partners. In this study, this was a prerequisite when starting to work together, as a corporate partner described in an interview in December 2008:

I think [you] have to start with a clear understanding and appreciation of what is in your agreement. I think you have to have a relationship with the people – the managers, the directors, and all the people you work with in VANOC. They started to understand each other's businesses. You also understand what each other is trying to accomplish and what your objectives are; you become aware of where there is a kind of common ground where you can work together to create some initiatives and activities that will become kind of win-win for both parties. This helps them achieve their objectives and helps achieve our objectives. I think it has always been proactive, 'look for the right opportunities.' You have to do that through a good relationship. You need to understand each other's businesses and objectives. (Interview with General Motors Canada, 2008)

This study also found that the management phase was a domain where tension, disagreement, and confusion could arise regarding each other's expectations. Even though the sponsorship agreement was signed, negotiations between VANOC and its corporate partners in terms of using the Olympic marks were always an ongoing process before and leading up to the Olympic Games. Finding 'common ground' in managing the relationships was perceived to be one of the key elements to fulfilling corporate sponsorship goals.

In the area of sustainability, for example, Bell gave VANOC US\$200 million to become one of the Vancouver 2010 national partners, and its main purpose was to capitalize on the Olympic brand and marketing opportunities. Of that amount, \$6 million went to VANOC's sustainability initiatives (Phinney, 2007). VANOC aimed to stage a sustainable Games so it considered options of spending the sponsorship money in support of First Nations' education, sport and economic development and on inner-city residents of Vancouver, in addition to environmental goals. The challenge was how to achieve their goals without compromising some for the sake of others.

The IOC does not allow advertising inside of the Olympic venues (Payne, 2005). Traditional sport sponsorship relies on venue advertising, such as placing corporate logos on banners, rink boards and other internal and external signage. In contrast, Olympic sponsorship has no commercial signs in venues. This forces sponsor marketing executives to devise innovative programs outside the venues, some of which could potentially build on CSR opportunities.

Given that CSR promising practices can contribute to brand image, investment in CSR initiatives had the potential to yield a positive return for all parties. For example, Bell invested \$2 million in the Vancouver Downtown Eastside to help develop employment opportunities for at least some inner-city residents. This was part of their corporate philanthropy to add to corporate reputation according to the interview with Bell. The corporate sponsor reported that this was one way they made a community investment that contributed to its corporate objectives. The representative from Bell stated that the

firm would continue to make such investments in the communities they served. Thus, this case exemplifies that a key factor in the success of achieving these objectives was to manage the relationships between the organizing committee, corporate partners, and the diverse community in which they operate.

#### **5.2.1.2 Assigned Personnel**

Research has found that human resource management functions, like recruiting and training staff, can complicate partnership management (Frisby et al., 2004). Nevertheless, in this study, it was found that assigned personnel, who are dedicated, proactive, and professional with respect to relationship management, could contribute to a successful partnership in the pursuit of each partner's objectives.

From the VANOC side, a Marketing & Client Services Division was set up within the Department of Revenue, Marketing & Communications, and a professional account management team was formed within the Client Services Division. These account managers (nine of them in total, when the interviews were conducted) were responsible for building and reinforcing relationships with corporate partners to ensure their satisfaction. The two account managers that I interviewed had very strong sport marketing backgrounds and Olympic marketing experience. Correspondingly, companies had their Olympics-related division and staff as well. For instance, Bell had a division of Corporate & Olympic Marketing, RBC had an Olympic Business Development division, Petro-Canada an Olympic & Community Partnership, General Motors an Olympic Partnership, and RONA had Business Development for the Olympics. Each partner,

therefore, had a functional structural division with a head and group of professional staff to deal with Olympic relationships.

To put VANOC sustainability objectives into action on a daily basis, the Human Resources and Compensation Committee was converted into the Sustainability and Human Resources Committee (S&HR Committee) in November 2006. The VANOC Board Committee on Sustainability and Human Resources was made responsible for reviewing VANOC's sustainability performance. A Sustainability Team of ten, headed by the Vice President of Sustainability was established under the Sustainability and Human Resource Department in 2005 to promote sustainability within VANOC and the corporate sponsor's family. All corporate participants stated that they knew the Vice President of Sustainability and the operation of the sustainability team well. A Board Advisory Committee on Sustainability Performance (BACSP) held regular meetings (twice a year starting 13 June, 2010) to obtain external inputs on VANOC's sustainability policy, commitments and performance with respect to meeting VANOC's sustainability objectives, and to make recommendations to the VANOC Board of Directors (*Vancouver Sustainability Report 2005–06*, p. 18).

From the corporate sponsors' side, it was noted that success could be achieved by a dedicated group of people assigned to manage the Olympic partnership. In addition to a relatively small group of dedicated professionals who managed the Olympic partnership, it was reported that each of the six National Partners had approximately 100 people working with VANOC at the beginning of 2009. As the 2010 Olympic Games

approached, they said that there would be more corporate support staff and volunteers joining in the regime during Game time to make the Vancouver 2010 Games happen. As such, human resource qualities, like staff interpersonal skills and expertise that were context-relevant, could assist with the management of partnerships and in controlling operational areas where partners' interests were invested, similar to Child and Faulkner's (1998) findings reported on earlier.

### **5.2.1.3 Well-organized Structure under Contractual Relationship**

VANOC introduced an anti-ambushing law in March 2007, claiming that it had contractual obligations to the IOC to prevent ambushing practices in Canada. Its website contained details of related policies that highlighted the importance of protecting the Olympic Brand against unauthorized use, as part of its effort to stage a well-organized and financially successful Games. Indeed, to guarantee the exclusive use of the marks, symbols, and phrases by its corporate sponsors, VANOC set strict limitations on a number of terms, including TOP, Sea to Sky, Driven by Dream, and 143 other items (Lee, 2007). By the end of 2006, VANOC had dealt with approximately 250 cases of infringements of the Olympic Brand Protection Act, and over 80% of them had been successfully closed (Shaw, 2006). Unless ambushing disappears, Olympic brand protection is unlikely to stop.

For VANOC, anti-ambushing measures to safeguard their corporate sponsors' identities and rights were part of their management strategy to achieve their sustainability

goals. Internally, VANOC set clear guidelines for using Olympic marks for corporate sponsors to follow, as an Account Manager at VANOC stated in an interview in 2009:

Anytime the sponsor wants to use any aspect of the Vancouver 2010 Games brand or Canadian Olympic Committee brand, we have to approve the use of that property. ...For example, any use of our brand in any kind of marketing whether it's radio, TV, print, PRs... I approved it based on the guidelines we set forth, and all the Account Managers try to follow the same guidelines, so we will give the same directions to all the sponsors. (Interview with an Account Manager at VANOC, 2009)

This demonstrated that VANOC had maintained very stringent procedures to protect corporate sponsors' rights and benefits under well-organized contractual relationships with corporate partners. It is particularly important to avoid unnecessary conflicts and the misuse of Olympic property when corporate sponsors work together under the control of VANOC's authority.

Another aspect of the partnership management structure was that corporate partners would be tasked with respecting one another's rights in terms of using Olympic property in the process of sponsorship activations. A representative from Petro-Canada described how they accommodated the 2010 torch relay sponsors while still promoting the glassware from the 1988 Winter Games.

The things that we want to do to promote and sell our new glasses that VANOC won't feel comfortable with, because those glasses were sold largely as mementos for people from Calgary in 1988, but they carry a logo that is a torch that Petro-Canada bears from the torch relay back in 1988. We have to be very careful how we promote our new glasses today. I am not trying to imply that, because we did this before, because they were called torch glasses, ... people would think that we were actually a sponsor of the 2010 Relay. Because we are not, we have to be mindful of

that. We have to be respectful for RBC and Coke and their lines today.  
(Interview with Petro-Canada, 2008)

This example shows that corporate partners were concerned with protecting the interests of VANOC and other corporate partners. This could be present in other forms of brand protection and is not unique to partnership management. The empirical evidence on brand protection from ambushing could, however, be made more complicated in an Olympic partnership by the presence of multiple partners. This finding supports Séguin and O'Reilly's (2008) argument, which emphasizes that the IOC and its corporate partners should "clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each party in dealing with ambush marketing" (p. 81).

#### **5.2.1.4 Non-contractual Support**

The findings in this study revealed that non-contractual support, like the 2010 Sponsor Sustainability Initiative (SSI), could help realize Olympic sponsorship potential. The 2010 SSI was a collaborative network for all Vancouver 2010 sponsors that was external to VANOC but operated by sponsors for sponsors. However, the VANOC sustainability group was also deeply involved in the progress of 2010 SSI, as the following comment illustrates:

I am the senior person at VANOC who engaged with the 2010 Sponsors Sustainability Initiative. ...To this point, we have consulted with them about our programs. We should inform them of any of our programs. Now moving forward, we are consulting with them about how they want to activate around sustainability in order for them to activate [successfully] on sustainability around the Games. We need to make sure that what they do links to one of our six-sustainability performance objectives.  
(Interview with VANOC, 2008)

Although it was optional for corporate sponsors to participate in this initiative, all six National Partners were advised to become actively involved. Both VANOC and the corporate interviewees believed that this network served as a catalyst to explore opportunities and create synergies in terms of achieving both VANOC and corporate objectives through an ongoing relationship. More detailed examples and empirical findings on how corporations capitalized on this network are presented in Chapter 7.

### **5.2.1.5 Flexibility**

The research findings show that flexibility was a key element for maintaining a successful partnership. From VANOC's perspective, flexibility was demonstrated in the collaborative communications between different functional departments within VANOC to address issues or concerns that corporate partners may have had.

It is very collaborative. ...I mean it is a formal process that we need to be flexible and adaptive, so something might come to me [sustainability team]. I know I should talk to [the marketing team], so everybody knows what is going on or vice versa. We need to establish this bi-weekly meeting process. It just makes sure that we were touching base regularly enough, but if something comes up between that, ...we just send emails or have phone calls, and say, 'Did you know about this or what we should do about that?' So it is an ongoing relationship and explores opportunities and operation issues. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

This statement of the role of collaboration and what it meant to VANOC fits with Huxham and Vangen's (2005) concept that partnership actors must nurture their collaborative processes to obtain mutual benefits. Such a flexible approach also enabled VANOC and its partners to respond rapidly to changing conditions. It was an effective

vehicle for disseminating information within the partnership family in order to capture opportunities to reduce uncertainty and create synergies (see Child & Faulkner, 1998).

## **5.2.2 Elements of Partnership Process**

The process considerations in this study were identified in terms of five main determinants: communication, commitment, sharing learning, open relationships and a willingness to determine a solution. Each of these elements played an important role related to the connections with others in the process of partnership management.

### **5.2.2.1 Communication**

Interviewees emphasized that communication was an essential element in maintaining a good relationship with the partners. In general, while official, structured meetings, such as the Vancouver 2010 Sponsor Workshop (once a year), and Marketing Club Meetings (three times a year) were held regularly to gain a better understanding of partners' objectives and promote VANOC's sustainability policies, it was noted that many one-to-one communications were held daily.

Corporate partners stressed that two levels of communication occurred between VANOC and the corporate sponsors at the operational level. One was the senior level (decision-making at the VP level), and the second was the daily operational level between account managers and corresponding corporate sponsorship managers. However, in some cases, corporations with a small Olympic partnership team combined the two positions into one. That is, while some corporate senior executives could directly contact the VANOC CEO or senior Marketing Executives if needed, they also dealt with the daily

operations with VANOC account managers. Respondents stressed that the account managers were the first line of contact by corporate sponsors, because VANOC was trying to set up a single point of contact. The following two quotes from the interviews captured the main process of communication:

We were both the goalkeepers for our respective companies. Behind the scenes, it gets big, right? Of course, you've got all operation's people in VANOC needing to talk to operational people in Petro-Canada. After they met a few times, they got to know each other, and they started dealing directly with each other. But [the VANOC account manager] and I are all involved in almost all ... conversations that take place. So [the VANOC Account Manager] would know we have a high level of knowledge of everything Petro-Canada is doing with VANOC and I have knowledge of everything that Petro-Canada is doing. (Interviews with Petro-Canada, 2008)

I am the matchmaker. I connect people internally with our external clients depending on what their need is. ... Yeah. I introduce the sponsors to the different function groups depending on what their need is. (Interview with VANOC, 2009)

Proximity was considered important to build and maintain strong relationships.

The communication methods included phone calls, emails and in-person meetings.

Emails were regarded as a formal communication device, because they are written records. Interestingly, in this study, informal communications, such as family dinners or other social gatherings between senior management, were regarded as an effective way to determine innovative solutions to business issues in casual and relaxed circumstances.

This approach was widely shared among the partners and VANOC.

### 5.2.2.2 Commitment

Commitment in the sponsorship relationship was investigated along with its two most commonly associated dimensions: 1) time spent on the relationship and 2) sponsorship activations (around sustainability) through the Olympic Games. When I asked, “How much time do you spend on managing relationships with corporate sponsors?” VANOC account managers expressed a clear sense of their commitment to accommodate their clients – sponsors’ expectations.

All of my time. ...It is 24/7. Technically, I am available at any time. You do work from home, and you do work on the weekends now. Certainly we get calls because you deal with international partners, so the hours are different. You simply make yourself available. That is what I do.  
(Interview with VANOC, 2008)

Corporate sponsors also stressed the importance of personal time commitments to the sponsorship relationship along with corporate commitment to establish and maintain rapport, and to ensure that bilateral goals are achieved. The following interview passage illustrates this point:

Personally, 100% of my time is committed to supporting the Olympic Movement, RONA’s activation on Olympics, putting on the Games. You know, we invested a lot of money, as you said, \$68 million. We need to ensure that we’re doing everything that we can to get our ROI—Return on Investment and also to make sure that VANOC gets everything they need and puts on the best possible Games. (Interview with RONA, 2008)

According to Farrelly and Quester (2005b), sponsorship commitments require both the sport and the sponsors to contribute to activation expenditures. The findings of

this study revealed that some sponsors felt that the lack of an activation budget on the part of VANOC limited VANOC's role. In the words of one of the corporate respondents:

They have no activation budget. ...I wish they could do more to promote the Games themselves. And I wish they could do more to promote the roles the sponsors play. You know, I find that is not as good as I thought it could be. ...I think it is very much like up to the sponsors to do that for themselves. And by doing that, they also help promote VANOC. It needs to be a little more, at least a two-way street in my point of view.

Corporate partners also examined the possibilities for creating synergies through sponsorship with VANOC on a number of social initiatives, such as Aboriginal involvement and inner city engagement. The findings of this study revealed that both VANOC and the corporate sponsors were motivated to use opportunities offered by partnerships in an innovative way, which included activations on sustainability. Mutual learning about the benefits of sponsorship packages can become part of the relationship management process.

### **5.2.2.3 Sharing Learning**

As noted previously, partnerships create learning opportunities, especially if partners like an Olympic organizing committee and different corporate sponsors possess somewhat different knowledge, experiences and capacities (Child & Faulkner, 1998; Lorange & Roos, 1992). Respondents noted that the mutual learning, or inter-organizational learning processes, between VANOC and different corporate partners could convert partners' distinctive knowledge into collective resources, such as

sustainability practices or initiatives. The following two quotes illustrate the nature of sharing learning between partners:

I believe it is two-way learning. The corporations have been doing a lot of things for a long time compared to the Olympic organizing committee. If you look at someone like RONA, Bell, which have existed for years. They have programs going around sustainability. So they learn from each other because VANOC comes, they are time sensitive and Games specific, and they have specific needs. Corporations can bring their history of learning, so they put it into that context. So they are learning from each other. The meetings I've been at with the sustainability group and the corporate partners, it is definitely a dialogue of sharing and growing together. (Interviews with 2010 Legacies Now, 2008)

Because of corporate sponsors being around for a lot longer than we have, you know, you deal with various very experienced people, so clearly we learn from them. Because we have the Games context, they can also learn from us about what is possible and what a good idea around the Games is. So again, it is very mutual, exchanging information and learning things. It is definitely a two-way street. (Interviews with VANOC, 2008)

The corporate sponsors also felt that sharing learning was a natural attribute of their relationship with VANOC, because they are critical to delivering the Olympic Games. As an example, one of the interviewees stated that “they share learning because the more time you would be likeminded talking together, the more likely there would be something that comes up with value.” To do so requires an open relationship, as repeatedly pointed out by many of the interview participants.

#### **5.2.2.4 Open Relationship**

While there are barriers in many partnerships to sharing or organizational learning, as described in the literature (cf. Child & Faulkner, 1998; Lorange & Roos,

1992), participants in this study highlighted that an open relationship was an extremely important feature in the partnership between VANOC and their corporate sponsors. The following two quotes from the interviews illustrate these aspects of the relationship process:

So it is the open relationship. The open element is the key. So you can actually exchange information if you have a good discussion with all information you need. So you can achieve mutually positive outcomes for whatever the project initiative might be. Open relationship. ...I mean we have to work together on this. Without the corporate sponsors, we cannot put on the Games. The organizing committee cannot do it on its own. So, as evidenced by people who actually work in our offices, you have to work as one team. It is really about being one team. It is one team. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

There are no issues, because we have a very open relationship. We have a great deal of trust in each other. I've found that when I bring logic to my debate, we get what we want. We were successful. Likewise, they need us to look at something differently. If it is logical, we do. It is a great partnership that way. Very open, both at this level [daily operations] and this level [decision making]. They are always trying to make us happy. We've spent a lot of money. They try to find ways to please us and they do a very good job at that. (Interview with Bell, 2008)

When I conducted interviews with the VANOC participants, I found that many corporate sponsors (e.g., RONA and Petro-Canada) had set up offices in the VANOC building. VANOC and the sponsors worked side by side as one project team. This finding is new in the sponsorship literature. Although some issues arose in the implementation of sustainable practices, on the whole, respondents from both VANOC and the corporate partners felt that an open relationship was vital to a smooth and workable partnership.

### 5.2.2.5 Willingness to Determine a Solution

In this study, the willingness to determine a solution to sponsorship activation was perceived as a critical element to facilitating the partnership by a majority of VANOC and corporate participants. From the VANOC side, account managers felt that they should be proactive in bringing opportunities to the corporate sponsors as an ongoing relationship, rather than negotiate contract arrangements with them. For example, in the words of one of the VANOC participants:

I wouldn't call it negotiating really.... We are here to find solutions. We don't want to put up our roadblocks. We are looking for any way possible for them to activate and let them tell the story. So it is our job to help facilitate that. I didn't propose to make it difficult for them, so I wouldn't use the word "negotiate" that's really not [accurate]. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

In some cases, the corporate sponsors mentioned the challenges facing them when VANOC's decisions could potentially make it too difficult for them to activate their objectives. In these situations, the corporate sponsors had discussions with VANOC to help determine the best solutions. The corporate sponsors felt that VANOC was a very good organization to work with. They thought this meant that this was a very important aspect of conflict resolution, when disagreements occurred.

Surprisingly, transparency was not mentioned by either VANOC or the corporate sponsors when looking inside the relationship, even though it was identified as one of the key processes in the literature (cf. Child and Faulkner, 1998; Haak, 2004). The document analysis, on the other hand, suggested that, publicly at least, VANOC was sensitive to

media pressure to be more transparent, and endeavored therefore to release non-proprietary information about their business plan and performance where possible.

One reason transparency to the public was described as important was because the Olympic Games were seen as an opportunity for a global showcase of sustainable solutions by the host city Vancouver. Thus, transparency of the operation in partnership management played a role as an indicator and a monitor to facilitate this process. As a result, transparency ended up being a centerpiece of accountability (GRI, 2006).

### **5.3 Partnership Evaluation: Return on Sustainability**

The findings of this study demonstrated that appropriate structures and processes were essential to create and maintain productive interactions between the focal organization and their corporate partners. As discussed previously in Chapter 2, outcomes are best assessed against objectives set up at the formation of the partnership stage and typically can serve as the basis for partnership evaluation. However, one difficulty in evaluating effectiveness is that new possible outcome that may not have been anticipated at the formation stage can emerge throughout the process that can also be evaluated (Babiak, 2003). During many of my in-depth interviews, the discussion focused on the methods VANOC was using to evaluate their staff services, a key factor in the phase of partnership evaluation. In the organizational documents, I reviewed the Vancouver 2010 Sponsors Workshop presentations by the VANOC marketing director, which were offered as evidence of how effective partnerships and service excellence were identified

by the corporate partners. I then solicited the interviewees' perspectives on evaluation using two questions: "Do you have any measurement to assess whether or not corporate partners are satisfied with VANOC?", and "Do you have any measurement to assess whether or not VANOC is satisfied with your company?" In the following section, the methods used by VANOC to evaluate partnerships and related issues are discussed.

As media relations were essential for VANOC, tensions between VANOC and the media were a key area of interest, especially when the media themselves were a sponsor of the Games. I will address this issue in the last section of this chapter.

### **5.3.1 Partner Satisfaction Review**

The findings showed that VANOC used a partner satisfaction survey conducted by a third party to evaluate their partnerships with the corporate sponsors beginning in 2006. This once-a-year survey helped VANOC improve its services with the goal of keeping their corporate sponsors happy.

We do partner survey research every year. We go out to survey our partners and ask them about their satisfaction with our services. ...It is called the Partners Survey Review, and we do it every year. (Interview with VANOC, 2009)

There is a survey that we fill out on VANOC and on the relationship and our account rep. They ask us questions about "how do you feel if our person serves you?" "What can we do better?" And they take that stuff very seriously. (Interview with Bell, 2008)

The responses from the other partners were similarly supportive. Corporate sponsors perceived VANOC as responsive and attentive to any concerns they had,

indicating that their service was excellent. For example, one corporate sponsor in an interview in 2008 said:

I have an example where there have been areas that haven't performed the way I wanted, then I would send an e-mail saying "I have a little bit of concern about this." Even a little tiny email of concern opens up the floodgates, and they take it so seriously that like "we have a meeting about it everybody together at 6 o'clock in the night." They take our concerns very seriously. It only happens once. But when we have an issue, they are very responsive. (Interview with Bell, 2008)

According to the findings from 2006 Partner Satisfaction Review, corporate partners defined Service Excellence as proactive, responsive, understanding your business, delivering/over delivering on promises, and exceeding expectations (Shaw, 2006). Although VANOC generally received positive feedback from corporate sponsors, they could also get negative responses, such as dissatisfaction and concerns from corporate sponsors. When I asked, "Did you hear that corporate sponsors are not happy with VANOC?" The senior manager of VANOC answered:

Yeah. We had different sponsors at different time, they would express, "we aren't happy with certain sorts of things." And the marketing manager is usually the one that takes the lead with the account manager to get back with that sponsor and try to get past the problem. We don't see that result when next time we do the survey. That is how they use the survey right now. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

This quote shows that the evaluation of partnership relationship coordination, using the Partner Satisfaction Survey once a year, likely contributed to overall outcomes. It served as an important means to enhance conflict resolution and service. The survey was conducted through telephone interviews by a consulting company. Each corporate

sponsor appointed one or two persons as representative(s) to respond to the survey interview. For example,

Each sponsor dedicates one or two people to the interview. In our case, it is [a marketing assistant] and myself because we may have different opinions. VANOC take it very seriously because they know [the importance of] services. ...They need to make sure that you feel we get the most value as possible on their team. (Interview with Bell, 2008)

We have ability to provide feedback to each other. I told them if they were not doing something well, then I certainly would tell them. They'll tell me if I am not doing something well. I don't have any formal measurement process whereby I ask them how we are doing. (Interview with Petro-Canada, 2008)

Similar to VANOC, this shows that corporate sponsors also took this survey very seriously and were willing to give their opinion to help VANOC improve its services. It was reported that the survey was done through the marketing department. Although this survey played an important role to help VANOC improve their services, one account manager reported that this involved a considerable amount of money and led to increases in VANOC's operational costs. In some cases, corporate partners (e.g., RONA and GM) also conducted a self-evaluation to help make the relationships operate more smoothly and productively. Nevertheless, they did not have a formal measurement process whereby they asked VANOC how they were doing.

In addition to the Partner Satisfaction Survey, VANOC also sent out questionnaires to solicit feedback directly from sponsors at the end of every Marketing Club meeting based on corporate sponsors' recall.

Personally, I have done one of those always after the meetings that I go to with VANOC. The Marketing Club meeting in November is an example; I was participating in evaluation of those sessions. They ask for feedback on the session whether it is valuable or whether they should do it differently. Every time they ask, they want to continually improve how they operate. (Interview with Hudson's Bay Company, 2009)

These examples support the conceptual model that I formulated in Chapter 2 Figure 2.2, which illustrates a feedback process circulating throughout a partnership lifecycle in order to better achieve their objectives. While most of the previous Olympic organizing committees evaluated the success of the Olympic program in terms of image and economic impact (cf. Owen, 2005; Preuss, 2004; Reich, 1986), VANOC focused on assessing their performance based on the six sustainability objectives. As such, the partnership evaluation became defined by Wilhelm (2009) as "Return on Sustainability". Despite VANOC's promise to deliver a fiscally responsible Olympic Games based on the *VANOC Business Plan and Games Budget of 2007*, it also focused on two other criteria, their environmental and social responsibilities. This was stated in their annual sustainability reports. With increasing sensitivity to environmental and social issues, the Olympic Games have become a platform for corporate sponsors to showcase their commitment to environmental and social issues and the efforts they are taking to change their way of doing business (Payne, 2005).

### **5.3.2 Issues around Partnerships**

Even though both VANOC and the corporate partners spoke enthusiastically about their experiences of working collaboratively, they also reported having to deal with

serious issues in order to achieve their goals. For example, corporate sponsors sometimes commented on how difficult it could be when negotiating with VANOC about using Olympic rings or logos in their sponsorship activations. The following two interview passages illustrate these issues:

[W]e do things around Making Dreams Possible or try to promote our association with the Olympics or sustainability or sporting initiatives that we have. There are a lot of issues around using the rights you have, use of athletes' images, those areas do get to become some issues. Sometimes it is difficult and it is impossible to resolve. That probably pertains to broad issues other than sustainability, but if you are doing things in sustainability, you try to use particular athletes' images; this sometimes can be very challenging.

Sometimes VANOC made decisions that I don't agree with. That, I think, potentially makes it too difficult for us to activate. As an example, Petro-Canada is the only gas sponsor, ...whereas they [VANOC] are going to allow various licensees ...to approach competitive convenience stores in other oil and gas companies, and... sell merchandises inside their stores. ...Because if Chevron can put their patron stores with a whole bunch of Vancouver 2010 merchandise, and then if I were a consumer, I would think Chevron was the Olympic sponsor because that store is a Chevron store.

The issues listed in these examples were just a small number of the myriad of interrelated matters that faced corporate managers who were involved in managing their Olympic partnerships. On the one hand, VANOC was intended to have recruited as many sponsors as possible to support the Games, while still respecting product category exclusivity; on the other hand, corporate sponsors wanted to eliminate as many competitors as possible. Obviously, such dilemmas would lead to tensions and conflicts between the focal organization (VANOC) and the corporate partners. Of course, a good

relationship could help with finding a way of resolving one issue, but this might lead to the creation of another (Huxham & Vangen, 2005).

Another issue mentioned by both VANOC and the corporate participants was that some of the Vancouver 2010 sponsors had made changes in their staff during the lifecycle of their partnership with VANOC. For instance, an account manager at VANOC struggled with the issue of how to make her client relationships within the network.

[HBC] has seen a lot of turnover, so I see many different people being my point person there. It is hard to build on that relationship on that trust when they have had so much turnover... So that's been challenging.  
(Interview with VANOC, 2008)

They rotate people throughout. I think that makes it more challenging.  
(Interview with a corporate sponsor, 2008)

By contrast, the VANOC account manager felt that the partners who kept stable personnel or contact persons straight from day one like Petro-Canada were easier to handle because of the well-established relationship and high trust level of the client. Similarly, a senior manager from Petro-Canada commented that a stable foundation of people in a relationship was the key to achieving success of the Olympic sponsorship partnership.

### **5.3.3 Tensions between VANOC and Media**

Media exposure is widely used to evaluate sponsorship effectiveness (Meenaghan, 2005), and global media attention is likely to attract corporate sponsorship of the Olympic Games (Payne, 2005; Stipp & Schiavone, 1996). However, the relationship between the Olympic organizing committee (VANOC) and media (*Vancouver Sun*) is

complex and intriguing, especially when the media is one of its sponsors. The findings of this study revealed that at any given time, particular issues and tensions could be at the front of the news process, while others remained in the background.

As indicated in Chapter 3, an Olympic general reporter from *Vancouver Sun*, a local newspaper, was interviewed. In the document analysis phase, I found that almost all of the information regarding VANOC sustainability in the *Vancouver Sun* came from this reporter. Because of the important role the reporter played in the process of communicating VANOC's sustainability performance, he was invited to participate in my research. Because the issue of media relations is central to delivering news to the public, I have paid attention to understanding the nature of the relationship between VANOC and the media in a collaborative setting.

In this particular case, Canwest, Canada's largest media company that owns ten regional daily publications including the *Vancouver Sun*, *The Province*, *Ottawa Citizen*, *Calgary Herald*, *Edmond Journal*, *The Gazette*, *Windsor Star*, *Regina Leader-Post*, *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, and *Victoria Times Colonist*, became a Vancouver 2010 sponsor as the Official Regional Newspaper Publisher on April 23, 2008. My interview was conducted two days after this sponsorship agreement was announced. This sponsorship provided VANOC with value-in-kind allocation of both print and online advertising space through Canwest's ten regional newspapers. Canwest, in turn, received exclusive rights to publish Vancouver 2010 and the Canadian Olympic Team related products and services in its ten daily publications for Beijing 2008, Vancouver 2010 and London 2012

(Canwest partners with VANOC, 2008). The *Vancouver Sun*, of course, was questioned about its standpoint regarding news reporting because it is one of the Vancouver 2010 sponsors. Keeping this in mind, I formulated a series of questions to ask the Olympic reporter during my April 2008 interview about whether or not this sponsorship relationship influenced news reporting. The interview questions and answers by the Olympic reporter's representative quotations are organized and presented in Table 5.1.

**Table 5. 1 Questions and Representative Quotations for Media Relations**

**1. How do you get news about VANOC?**

With some considerable difficulty. VANOC, this is a criticism that I had for VANOC for quite a long time. ...the information that VANOC wants to give to me is not always the information that I want to get out of VANOC. There is a natural tension that exists between the news media and VANOC. ...VANOC will control the information that it wants to give out. They are trying to control the time of information when they release it, how they release it, why they release it. And they would do it in a way that as much as possible mitigates any of the problems they might have when the message goes wrong. ... VANOC would give me information that they usually give to everybody all at the same time. And they give them pre-packaged sort of nice pleasant information through the media relations group. ...If I want to get news from VANOC about issues that I think are important to the public, that is a lot more difficult because they are always trying to make sure whatever they give to me has the least negative impact on them.

**2. Who is your key contact in VANOC?**

My key contact in VANOC always has been the Communications Department. This is part of what I talked with you about, they try to structure the relationships. For the media, they've taken a position that any call by the media is directed into the Communications Department. And from that point on, any request for information goes to the department, for example, if I want to talk to [the Vice President of Sustainability at VANOC] about sustainability issues, the first thing I do is I call the Communications Department, and my contact there is the [Director of Communication]. Another is one of his assistants.

### **3. How do you frame the story?**

Every story that I do with VANOC is framed around what is the news of the events. For me, the story always has to be what I will tell my readers that is new, what is it that is important to my readers?

### **4. Who's the news media sponsor? Does it affect your telling story if *Vancouver Sun* is the sponsor? Why or why not?**

It does not. It has no affect. This week Canwest announced that they had signed what they called official supplier relationship sponsorship with VANOC, and that sponsorship means that the newspaper would provide some advertising spaces and some marketing spaces for the Vancouver organizing committee. What that does not give VANOC is any control of our editorial department. They cannot tell me that I want you to write a story about this or I don't want you to write a story about this. ...we do not provide them with any kind of editorial support. ...There is a very very long tradition in the western world of independence of news media.

In the background, the notion of tension in the process of news reporting in practice reflects that VANOC wanted to control the flow of information (Quotation #1). In the foreground, the reporter indicated that he often wrote something that VANOC did not want to see in the paper. These findings are similar to those of Reich (1986), that the head of the Olympic organizing committee for the 1984 Los Angeles "practiced a highly restrictive information policy....Ueberroth personally approved each news media interview with an Olympic staff member, and, especially, any lunch involving a reporter and a staff member" (p. 16).

That a natural tension or potential for tension exists between an Olympic organizing committee and the media seems obvious. From the perspective of the media, the approach taken by VANOC was to recognize and work with the tensions rather than try to resolve them (Quotation #2 and #3). From the public standpoint, the news control

VANOC applied raises questions about the impact of pre-packaged news releases and how they affect the public's right to know. These statements also show that as a high profile organization, VANOC operated under tremendous pressures from various stakeholders and they were averse to negative impacts from public statements about their operations.

Finally, the findings of this study revealed that the sponsorship status of the *Vancouver Sun* did not influence news media reporting (Quotation #4). This statement was reflected in their news announcement: "The sponsorship is a marketing and advertising partnership and is independent of Canwest's editorial coverage of the 2010 Winter Games" (Canwest partners with VANOC, 2008). Even though this perspective is supported in the western media as indicated by the reporter, the structure of the relationship between VANOC and the media sponsor likely influenced some the editorial contents at least with respect to overall support for the Games. Beyond this, VANOC was able to influence what news resources were made available and which were not. Given that structured relationships play an important role in news production, it is interesting that they were used by VANOC's Communications Department to control information access and flow. Coping with these tensions, this reporter claimed in my interview in 2008 that,

I am not your friend; I am not VANOC's friend either. VANOC, I like them. They are a very capable group of people. But I am a reporter. So when they do something wrong, I would talk publicly about it. When they do something right, I would talk publicly about it. I am not their partner. I

am not even their friend. I am not an enemy either. (Interview with *Vancouver Sun*, 2008)

This quotation shows that the reporter was following a professional code for media producers. This part of the sponsorship relationship has been described by Darnell and Sparks (2005). Journalists are typically conscious of how the complex tensions and relations within their work environment serve to shape their activities and influence outcomes, when at the same time they are striving to maintain independence. In the next chapter, governance and issues around VANOC sustainability are presented.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **SUSTAINABILITY EVALUATION AT VANOC**

This chapter presents the main findings to research question number four: How were VANOC and the corporate sponsors planning to evaluate the attainment of Olympic sustainability goals? It begins with the results about the relation between sustainability and CSR, followed by the governance structure through which VANOC proposed to achieve its sustainability goals, and finally the methods that VANOC used to evaluate its sustainability performance. The chapter ends with a discussion of issues around sustainability objectives.

#### **6.1 Sustainability and CSR**

The representatives from VANOC and the corporate partners all reported that VANOC's sustainability goals were related to corporate social responsibility (CSR). As a manager from VANOC pointed out in one interview: "We built this on the bid commitments and on recognized global standards for corporate social responsibility – [which we transformed into] our VANOC [own] corporate social responsibility." In response to the question, "Are these goals connected to corporate social responsibility? How so?" there were a number of different replies.

From the perspective of VANOC, it was essential to have a broad scope of sustainability programs, which were designed to leave positive impacts on the host

community, and that could also accommodate the realities of a variety of corporate sponsors' diverse CSR programs. An Account Manager at VANOC explained the applicable principles undergirding the broad range of VANOC's sustainability goals in the following comment:

It is definitely connected to [CSR]. ...It is so many different areas, but not every sponsor is going to have the same programs built exactly like VANOC does or has. But they are going to areas where we think we have enough scope that we could probably connect with every corporate sponsor in some areas if not multiple areas. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

The ways that VANOC sustainability goals were connected to CSR relied largely on how corporate sponsors could best fit with VANOC's sustainability objectives. In this sense, VANOC also needed to consider what CSR practices corporate sponsors had that were applicable in order to find common ground. The Account Manager described,

I mean that this is really up to the sponsors, but they would have their corporate social responsibility programs that they have in place. It is then the opportunities for sponsors to see where it fits in to what VANOC is promoting like the platform we've built on. And they have opportunities to pick up with us and can drive that kind of agenda for the Vancouver area primarily, but also can send out to all Canada. So it depends if you have a sponsor who finds that aboriginal participation is the key component of their corporate social sustainability programs, [for example], then there would be some synergies with what VANOC's doing. Or it could be on employment engagement side or it could be on inner city development. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

The idea of taking broader stakeholder interests into its business decision-making process (Crook, 2005; Lodge & Wilson, 2006; Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Wheeler, Cobert, & Freeman, 2003), as discussed in Chapter 2, was seen by VANOC

representatives as a criterion to help promote corporate sponsors' CSR effort at both local and national levels. Appreciating corporate motivations for CSR was also strategic for VANOC because its corporate partners already had CSR programs before VANOC was formed. The following interview passage illustrates this point.

Yes. I would say that corporations start with a mindset when people start talking about 'gee, companies should be seen, companies should give back'. They called it corporate social responsibility or CSR. ...Our goals are very much aligned to ensure that we have positive or we have no negative impact socially. We actually have positive social legacies after we left. We have found that the goals that all our sponsors, if you take the top sponsors – Bell, RBC, HBC.... they all have their own programs that were easily able to fit with us. They are not all social, some of them are more environmental, but certainly Bell has been involved in the inner city. (Interview with a senior manager at VANOC, 2008)

VANOC participants were aware that VANOC's sustainability goals and agenda were aligned with their corporate partners' CSR efforts at a fundamental level. For both the organizing committee and corporate sponsors, the interview responses demonstrate that the principles of CSR were shared, even though VANOC tended to take a broader worldview to develop its sustainability programs. The following interview quote by a VANOC manager reflects the role of CSR in sustainability.

Absolutely. You mean sustainability with corporate responsibility is all about being sustainable. Some of those are environmentally directly, some of them are social directly, and some of them are economic results. To me, I find those terms almost interchangeable. In effect, I think in North America, we use "corporate social responsibility" and in Europe they use the term "sustainability" more. (Interview with a member of Sustainability Team at VANOC, 2008)

The quote implies there were no essential differences in how CSR and sustainability were activated; the two concepts were used nearly interchangeably. This is consistent with current reports of CSR researchers and practitioners (Schäfer, 2005; Speth, 2007).

From the corporate sponsors' perspectives, VANOC's sustainability goals were inherently connected with their CSR efforts. At the intersection, the corporate partners selected appropriate VANOC sustainability programs to match their corporate CSR practices in order to meet both their and VANOC's goals. This, of course, contributes to their own CSR objectives as well as VANOC's. The following two quotes from the interviews capture the importance of the link between corporate sponsors' CSR practices and VANOC's sustainability goals.

Because we have the same vision, we have the same goals, the goals that VANOC has set are proactively aligned with how our company is operated. I mean that is part of the reason why we work so closely. I'll give you an example. They are interested in eco-friendly products, things like that. One of the programs we developed we're offering to the other sponsors. It is a made in Canada 100% eco-friendly clothing line that is BLUE sign approved. It's made in Vancouver, so it helps the economy; it helps the environment. This is one of the ways we are trying to help the environment, we try to help the local economy, and we try to live up to VANOC's sustainability goals. (Interview with Hudson's Bay Company, 2009)

Yes, again, because it is our objective to make sure what we put in place to deliver the Games leaves a legacy. It is done in the most environmental sense and way and that has benefits to the communities in which we serve. (Interview with Bell, 2008)

Corporate sponsors consistently reported that their primary intent was to activate their sponsorship through their CSR programs by sharing similar sustainability goals with VANOC, and eventually to leave a legacy for the host community. The results also indicate that corporate sponsors chose CSR programs based on the nature of their businesses. Corporate participants pointed out that some of VANOC's sustainability policies, such as social compliance and procurement policies, and LEEDS standards, were implemented by the corporate partners before VANOC was formed. This suggests these were a good fit between the corporate partners' CSR practices and VANOC's sustainability goals and agenda. This congruence, in turn, could potentially facilitate synergies between VANOC and its corporate partners. The following two quotes speak to these compatibilities.

I would say absolutely...[For example], in vehicles themselves, what vehicles emission or our facilities, our buildings, our water usage, our use of fuels to steam the facilities, waste goes to landfill sites, we look at all aspects how we impact on the environment. It is certainly part of our objectives to reduce impacts everywhere, and in everything we can. When it comes to the Olympics, it is more specific to ...ensure them to minimize their footprint through vehicles that we supply them. (Interview with General Motors of Canada, 2008)

Yeah. Absolutely. How it is connected back to RONA? Well, when you look at social responsibility, all elements of what we do are connected to being a responsible citizen, a good corporate citizen. Whether it is an element of hiring practices or element of purchasing policies, all of those are aligned strongly with corporate social responsibility. (Interview with RONA, 2008)

Both VANOC and the corporate participants reported that their approach was in keeping with the emerging CSR concept, knowledge, and best practices. While there were apparent agreements between VANOC's sustainability goals and their programs, one corporate participant was careful to not over-generalize.

I mean that some of them are. Some of the products that we use have an environmental upside transmission fluid, which's been used for the construction in Whistler that is connected to our goals. Their Aboriginal community goals are very tightly aligned to ours. Some of the goals are around social inclusion, which will be very much connected to ours. (Interview with Petro-Canada, 2008)

This quote implies that corporate sponsors had their own CSR agendas, and carefully chose some of VANOC's programs that fit in with their own CSR practices. Although the corporate participant felt that "some" of the programs were aligned with their CSR agenda, corporate participants (including this one) felt strongly that VANOC incorporate social responsibility as a key component of its sustainability guidelines, making an important first step in the implementation of its' bid promises.

Corporate partners also emphasized the concept of triple-bottom-line in their CSR practices. This supports VANOC's working definition of sustainability as "managing the social, economic and environment impacts and opportunities of our Games to produce lasting benefits, locally and globally" (*Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Report 2006–07*, p.

1). One corporate sponsor spoke about shared goals and the triple bottom line.

I would say that many of the organizations share the very same sustainability goals. We all want to operate with intelligence. We do want to leave a small environmental footprint and we want to contribute to

communities in which we're doing business. It doesn't matter if it's VANOC or Royal Bank or Coca-Cola, or Teck Cominco, we all share very similar sustainability goals. It is similar around the world right now. It is called "triple bottom line." It has to have a good economic impact, a good environmental impact, good social impact. (Interview with one representative from RBC, 2008)

As potential legacies from the Games, capital investment in transportation and communication infrastructure and in environmental improvements can be worthwhile. However, the degree to which these investments are worthwhile depends on how useful they are, and to whom, after the Games, and whether the benefits outweigh the costs (Owen, 2005). While the Olympic legacy effects in previous Games emphasized three areas: facilities, positive image, and community benefits (Owen, 2005), VANOC focused in addition on sustainability. VANOC's governance for sustainability development and implementation is presented in the next section.

## **6.2 VANOC Governance: Implementing Adaptive Management**

According to the *Vancouver Sustainability Report 2006–07*, VANOC was incorporated as "a not-for-profit company" and was entrusted by the IOC to organize and host the Olympic Games. In addition to the IOC, it has other stakeholders that provide input to its operation and planning. The Province of British Columbia acts as the guarantor to the IOC and is responsible for any financial shortfall of VANOC in hosting the Games. As a project-based entity, VANOC differs from most corporations, because it has a short lifespan and does not operate on an ongoing basis. In its lifespan of seven

years, there are four phases: planning, operations, convening the Olympic Games, and decommissioning / evaluation.

VANOC does not have formal shareholders, but there are stakeholders on the Board to make decisions at both local and global levels. VANOC is guided by a 20-member board of directors nominated by the Canadian Olympic Committee (seven); the Government of Canada (three); the Province of British Columbia (three); the City of Vancouver (two); the Resort Municipality of Whistler (two); the Canadian Paralympic Committee (one); a joint appointment by the Band Councils of the Lil'wat and Squamish Nations (one); and one member nominated by the other 19 members (<http://www.winter2010.com/>).

Interestingly, no member of the board is selected to specifically represent the financial interests of corporate partners. This is an important difference from shareholder-model corporations. VANOC's operational budgets largely relied on cash and in-kind support from corporate sponsors. Although the OCOGs can also get revenues from broadcasting, licensing and ticket sales, these commercial activities are not directly relevant to the topic discussed and out of the scope of this study. As such, this study focused on how these national partners could play important roles in decision-making on VANOC's sustainability projects related to planning and staging the 2010 Games.

To address complex interactions with various stakeholders and to manage the changing process in the Olympic context, VANOC implemented an adaptive management model that involved decision-making via system monitoring to improve

future management (see Ehrenfeld, 2008) in order to operate and realize its goals, including its sustainability goals. As the provincial government had significant involvement in its financial affairs, VANOC was essentially a hybrid, project-based organization representing corporate, government, and non-governmental entities, according to the interviewees. This adds layers of complexity to the case. During my interview, a manager at VANOC discussed the implementation of VANOC's social responsibility goals in term of CSR this way:

The implementation is that the corporate model for social responsibility is being used to implement the public commitments to sustainability that came from the values of the citizens and communities of Vancouver and Whistler. So [CSR] is an implementation tool, it itself is not the goal. I think it is [an] important distinction in the Olympic context, because the Olympic Games are a very unusual corporation. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

In reviewing organizational documents and media reports, VANOC has delimited its sustainability reporting scope to the issues and activities where VANOC has the authority to make decisions (Inwood, 2007, March 15; also see *Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Report 2006–07*). The Sustainability and Human Resource Committee (SHRC) had a mandate starting in 2006 to review its corporate sustainability performance six times a year and produce an annual sustainability report. After consulting with sustainability experts and its corporate partners, VANOC formed a multi-stakeholder Board Advisory Committee on Sustainability Performance (BACSP) in 2007. The board members are independent from VANOC (Table 4.3), and include representatives from

three corporate partners: Bell, RBC and Teck (Board Advisory Committee, 2007). Each member participated in the BACSP meetings as individuals and not their sector representatives (Recommendations to the VANOC, 2009). The BACSP plays an important advisory role by providing third-party inputs regarding VANOC's sustainability performance. This was confirmed by the interview with the VANOC manager.

**Table 6. 1 A List of BACSP Members**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Organization</b>
<b>BACSP Chair, Executive Director</b>	Fraser Basin Council
Assistant to the President	BC Federation of Labour
Director of Planning	District of Squamish
Student	
Community Capacity Coordinator; Active Paralympic Athlete; Founding Member	BC Paraplegic Association; Disability Advisory Committee of 2010 Legacies Now
Hendrik Hoekema	Executive Director, Vancouver Eastside Educational Enrichment Society
Past-President; Co-owner and Managing Partner	AWARE (Association of Whistler Area Residents for the Environment); Coast Mountain Photography
Executive Director	Sierra Club of BC
President and Publisher	Canadian Immigrant Magazine
Director	Corporate Affairs and Sustainability, Teck Cominco
Director	Corporate Responsibility Communications and CEO Speaking Program, Royal Bank of Canada

Position	Organization
Manager Corporate Relations	MetroVancouver
General Manager	Olympic Services, Bell Canada

(Adapted from “Board Advisory Committee,” 2007)

### 6.3 Evaluation of VANOC Sustainability Performance

Several participants mentioned VANOC’s formal monitoring system which is used to evaluate its sustainability performance annually, and which is based on a formal engagement with its partners and stakeholders to ensure its sustainability goals.

VANOC’s Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Management & Reporting System (SMRS) is based on the bid commitments and global standards, by integrating previous Olympic best practices (*Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Report, 2006–07*).

#### 6.3.1 The Sustainability Management & Reporting System

VANOC used the *Global Reporting Initiative* (GRI) Guidelines, an international method for assessing economic, environmental, and social performance, to create a sustainability performance monitoring and reporting system. On June 5, 2007, the *VANOC Sustainability Report 2005–06* was released and became the first sustainability report in the Olympic Movement. The sustainability report was described in an interview in May 2008:

It is our Sustainability Management and Reporting System. We have a corporate sustainability policy, six performance objectives. They are based on the bid commitments and global standards. We have 10 corporate system procedures. We have a system of integrated delivery across the organizations for outcomes in our business plan, structures, target and

procedures. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

To date, VANOC has produced three sustainability reports, with the goal of producing a total of five. Through the sustainability report, VANOC is monitoring its sustainability performance against its goals. In other words, “we are walking our talk and people can see it. It is not perfect...but it is real,” according to the VANOC manager. In terms of accountability, the sustainability report serves as a benchmark to measure what has been achieved. It was described by the manager as a platform and means through which the VANOC sustainability team can obtain feedback and constructive advice from the advisory board and stakeholder groups. Based on the analysis of these reports and interviews, it was found that the reports reflect a net positive accumulated impact of the Olympic Games, because every later report is slightly improved over the earlier one. For example, while the first report used GRI C level requirements, the second applied B level requirements, meaning more GRI indicators were reported (*Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Report, 2006–07*). VANOC’s six corporate performance objectives and 10 SMRS implemented procedures in the last reporting year (2006–07) are listed in Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 respectively.

**Table 6. 2 VANOC’s Six Corporate Performance Objectives**

	<b>Contents</b>
1	Accountability
2	Environmental stewardship and impact reduction
3	Social inclusion and responsibility
4	Aboriginal participation and collaboration
5	Economic benefits
6	Sport for sustainable living

(Source: *Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Report 2006–07*)

**Table 6.3 Corporate System Procedures of VANOC**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Explanation of Contents</b>
1	Sustainability Management Planning Procedure	Completion of bi-annual risk assessments, regular reporting on compliance, and establishing performance measures.
2	SMRS: Roles, Responsibilities and Authority Procedure	Implementation of sustainability management requirements for the Executive Team, senior management and functional areas.
3	Sustainability Education Procedure	Implementation of a workforce orientation training on sustainability values, issues and opportunities.
4	Sustainability Communications, Engagement and Reporting Procedure	Development of the plan, launch of the enhanced sustainability website, annual Sustainability Report, and engagement with stakeholders on the Sustainability Report and key program areas.
5	Sustainability Operating Policies, Procedures and Guidelines	Development of venue and service operations guidelines, management plans for the operations-phase, Games-time, and decommissioning or handover.
6	SMRS-Controlled Documents and Records Management Procedure	Uploading of documents and records on VANOC's internal Intranet and posting of sustainability performance documents and records for 2005–06 and 2006–07.
7	Sustainable and Aboriginal Procurement Procedure	Completion of the pilot phase of the program and completion of stakeholder engagement on the Buy Smart Program.
8	Sustainable Licensing Code of Conduct Procedure	Completion and implementation of VANOC's Code of Conduct requirements.
9	Monitoring, Measurement, and Corrective Action Procedure	Completion of tracking of VANOC's 2005-06 performance information, and establishment and tracking of 2006-07 Sustainability Performance Measures.
10	Sustainability Checking and Management Review Procedure	Establishment of 2007 internal checking activity and preparation for annual SMRS Management Review slated for October 2007.

(Sources: System Procedures. <http://www.vancouver2010.com/en/sustainability-and-aboriginal-parti/accountability/sustainability-management-and-repor/system-procedures/-/32210/m2oqg/index.html>)

An advisory board member reported in January 2009, “I think the earlier [report] was more inspirational and less focused on specific measures. They’ve gotten better in this sustainability report [2006–07].” More significantly, VANOC’s second sustainability report won the 2008 Ceres-ACCA North American Sustainability Reporting Award, becoming the first project-based entity to receive this honor (VANOC wins award, 2009). This demonstrates that VANOC, an Olympic organizing committee, had made sustainability reporting a systematic procedure like most socially responsible corporations, even though further research should be conducted on examining whether or not this system is effective.

Nevertheless, to be accountable, VANOC contracted a third party to assess the final report and ensure whether or not they had realized their objectives. As a senior manager at VANOC indicated in an interview in November 2008:

We’re planning to have a third party validation of our final report, so what that will do is it won’t be just reporting along how we are doing. It would be a third party looking at how we report it to make sure what we said we were doing, [and] what we were doing hasn’t fallen down. So, that is how we’re going to make sure that we are holding ourselves accountable to deliver all of our objectives. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

An additional assessment will be an OGI report from the University of British Columbia (UBC), since VANOC has contracted UBC to produce the first IOC mandated OGI report (Loiacono, 2008). An IOC official indicated in my interview, “we ask for

specific information over the 12-year period, so the period is 2 years prior to when the host city was selected to 3 years after the Olympic Games.” More specifically, the OGI study will document and measure economic, environmental, and social impacts on the host community from 2001 to 2013 at local, regional, and national scales (Loiacono, 2008). The IOC official pointed out that the IOC was also monitoring VANOC’s work from a risk assessment point of view and supporting them when needed, in terms of sustainable development and the Olympic legacy as a newly aligned mandate.

### **6.3.2 Evaluating Corporate Partners: Sustainability Star Program**

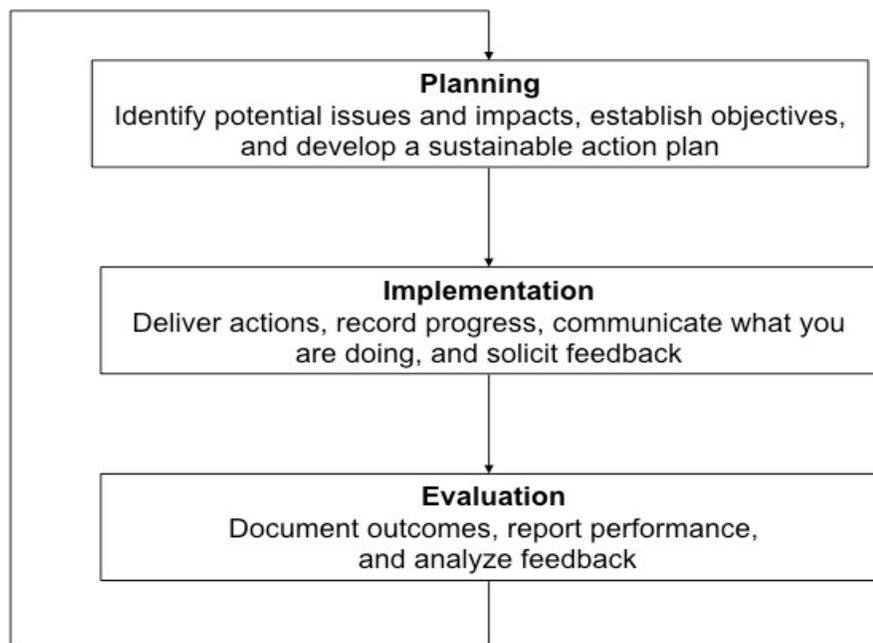
To evaluate VANOC partners’ sustainability performances around the Olympic Games, VANOC launched the “Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Star” awards programs, highlighting partner sustainability innovation in economic, environmental, and social initiatives in March 2009. The first nine winners included the RONA Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop, Teck Going for Gold employee engagement strategy, and Coca-Cola’s carbon footprint and offset program (VANOC launches ‘sustainability star’, 2009). As the interviews were conducted prior to public release of this program, participants did not talk about the program and its influence on their sustainability practices in any detail. So far, RONA is the only National Partner to receive this award. This program was intended to run until March 31, 2010, when the Winter Games ended, and to recognize the achievements of the companies and put sustainability in the spotlight.

I have created a conceptual model to help summarize these findings (see Sustainable Sport/Event Management in Figure 6.1). The feedback loop of three stages

(planning, implementation and evaluation) of sport event management gets replicated multiple times during the event lifecycle. An important aspect of this model is the purposeful monitoring and reflection that occurs by incorporating stakeholder input. This framework exemplifies ‘best practices’ in the sport/event industry as some interview participants indicated. The manager for VANOC sustainability described the basis for this approach in my interview in May 2008, along with some of its implications.

This is a sort of corporate policy across organizations and integrates organizational delivery and audits. We built this on the bid commitments and recognized global standards for corporate social responsibility, our VANOC corporate social responsibility. Most of our partners, they also are suppliers. These are global standards – GRI, ISO2001 and AA1000, all these are described in the sustainability report – how these things are put together. So this is for corporate social responsibility like on human rights and stakeholder engagement. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

**Figure 6. 1 A Conceptual Model of Sustainable Event/Sport Management**



Like every host city and Olympic organizing committee, VANOC had a clear timeline to be ready for the opening ceremony on 12 February 2010. In 2005, the VANOC Sustainability Team was formed, and produced the first sustainability report in May 2006, which defined targets to be focused on. From mid-2006 to late 2008, during the implementation stage, a number of sustainability projects were initiated by VANOC in collaboration with corporate sponsors. The sponsors publicly announced their sustainability initiatives in March 2009 when the *8th World Conference on Sport and the Environment* was held in Vancouver.

#### **6.4 Issues around VANOC Sustainability Objectives**

Although some third party participants felt that VANOC demonstrated promising practices, such as accountability and transparency, others identified issues and difficulties that had arisen around sustainability. Firstly, VANOC's sustainability goals were broad and somewhat vague, particularly on the social side, although they were far reaching. The following interview quote captures some of these issues:

One of the things I think [that] needs to be done is VANOC has to be a little more clear in what their actual sustainability objectives are, what they want to accomplish, what their communication plans are going to be to communicate these initiatives to the public.

Secondly, VANOC's sustainability objectives for corporate sponsors themselves were not as clear as some sponsors would have liked, and in some cases, VANOC's objectives were not aligned with the corporate partners' objectives. One interviewee explained, "I think it is a challenge of [working] with VANOC. VANOC wants to

achieve a sustainability objective that we do not want to achieve.” The interviewee explained this further:

As an example, the VANOC sustainability group would like to really promote the new bio-fuel. This is ethanol, [which] is made from those trees in BC that have been destroyed by pine beetles. We don’t know anything about the product; we don’t make this product. . . . We don’t want people to think that [our] sponsorship for the Vancouver Games is all about developing a new source of making ethanol from dead pine trees, because we don’t know about that or whether it would ever work or not.

This example suggests that VANOC’s proposed sustainability ideal in this instance was not a good fit for the corporate partner. All corporate partners indicated that the Olympics could do more as a catalyst to promote sustainability worldwide.

Lastly, one interviewee thought that VANOC could work with a watchdog group to help meet its commitments. In terms of corporate sustainability, one corporate respondent raised the issue of ‘Greenwashing,’ which is when a corporation or nonprofit organization uses marketing or public relations to create a positive association with environmental issues for an unsustainable product, service, or practices.

There is a lot of Greenwashing. It is something that we’re very aware of and we’re very concerned about. . . . We want to be serious about what we’re saying and we don’t want to pretend to be something that is not true. (Interviews with RONA, 2008)

This implies that the leading companies in the area of sustainability are very cautious about the role they can play in achieving a sustainable development agenda. This also serves as a reminder to researchers to be careful about the authenticity of corporate or organizational sustainability programs when studying them. In the following chapter, I

present how corporate partners organized a network – 2010 Sponsor Sustainability

Initiative – to activate their sponsorship around the Games, followed by a discussion of issues around it.

## CHAPTER 7

### OLYMPIC SPONSORSHIP ACTIVATION ON SUSTAINABILITY

In this chapter, I shift focus from the process of the partnerships of the focal organization VANOC to the collaborative benefits this created for the corporate partners as well as for VANOC through the sponsorship activation programs around sustainability that were undertaken by the partners. This chapter focuses on the 2010 Sponsor Sustainability Initiative (SSI) as a key site for knowledge transfer between the partners and VANOC around how to build sustainability into their sponsorship activation and help achieve VANOC's sustainability goals. The chapter addresses research question number five and six: How can corporate sponsorships be activated using corporate social responsibility programs of the sponsors to support the sustainability goals of the Organizing Committee? In what way(s) can corporate sponsors work together to facilitate this process?

I use the concept of “organizational learning” to help account for the process through which the sponsors “worked together”. As indicated in Chapter 2, organizational learning is one of the three core theoretical frameworks that underpin this dissertation, the other two being a resource-based view and social network theory. My use of the term “organizational learning” is derived from Peter Senge's classic management book *The fifth discipline: The art & practices of the learning organization* which describes a

“learning organization” as a flexible arrangement where people are continually learning together and their collective aspiration is nurtured in order to create desired results (Senge, 1990, 2006).

Activation in sport sponsorship refers to the strategies that sponsors employ to link their product or brand to event audiences (Choi, Stotlar, & Park, 2006). It typically involves a series of communication and sales activities, as well as events, and represents a financial investment over and above the original sponsorship contract (Cornwell, 2008; Yang et al., 2008). At the operational level, Olympic sponsorship has the potential to achieve high consumer awareness levels and consumer appreciation for those companies that fully leverage their Olympic association (Cornwell, 2008; Miloch & Lambrecht, 2006; Yang et al., 2008). Central to sponsorship activation is the use of the Olympic symbols and ideals to increase Olympic and corporate brand equity. Sport mega-events like the Olympic Games have increasingly been used as a catalyst for social development in urban communities (Chalip, 2006; Manzenreiter & Horne, 2005). Whereas traditional sponsorship activation focus on marketing activities like cross-promotions (e.g., Cornwell et al., 2001; Yang et al, 2008), current notions of activation emphasize additional activities like employee engagement, community involvement, social responsibility, and business-to-business partnership opportunities, among others. The change invites us to investigate how sustainability imperatives can be incorporated into the broad possibilities of sport sponsorship activation in an Olympic Games context.

An overriding purpose of this chapter is to explore how the corporate partners activated their sponsorship rights on sustainability in collaboration with the organizing committee and other corporate partners, and to document how each sponsor's individual sustainability performance fit with and helped advance the overall sustainability agenda of VANOC and the IOC.

From a brand marketing standpoint, organizational learning is understood as a mechanism that can improve performance and help build strong transnational brands in competitive markets (Amis, 2005a). There is a lack of research, however, that applies organizational learning principles to sponsorship performance itself, particularly to sponsorship activation. This is especially true with respect to sponsorship activation around CSR and sustainability, which is a relatively new area of sponsorship activity.

### **7.1 The 2010 Sponsor Sustainability Initiative**

The findings of this study demonstrate that the 2010 SSI helped to realize Olympic sponsorship activation on sustainability. The 2010 SSI was a collaborative network initiated in 2007 by the Vice President of Sustainability for Teck, a tier-two sponsor of Vancouver 2010. Its aim was to take a leadership role in promoting sponsors' collaboration around sustainable development through Vancouver 2010. The organizational structure of the 2010 SSI was described by him as follows: "It is a relatively loosely formed collaboration; it creates the space for sponsors to talk to each

other, to talk about what they are doing and what they learn from each other.” In terms of its operation, he explained,

I am the Chair. I am just the facilitator. I actually have somebody that does the facilitating and organizing the meetings. I work with VANOC around the agenda. But it is really the sponsors’ agenda [in terms of] what it does. The initiative is relatively flat in terms of [its] structure. ... Teck covered most of the cost of facilitating the meetings and creating a space.... There is a website, an intranet website that VANOC hosts for people to put information on. (Interview with Teck, 2009)

Evidence suggests that the participating organizations were able, in the context of SSI, to identify and build on what had been successful for their partner organizations. In this way, knowledge was successfully shared through the collaboration.

SSI really indicates how we can collaborate and work together and [give] sustainability a higher profile. Some of the best practices we’re talking about we can take back to our own organization, and modify what we’re doing internally like whether it is looking at our own carbon footprint, looking at reducing [carbon], looking at innovative ways. ... What are the best practices and how can we make this as [optimal] as possible. Working with partners, we’re working together. All of those things come out of the SSI. (Interview with RONA, 2008)

Sponsor participation in 2010 SSI quarterly workshops was strictly voluntary. At the time when the interviews were conducted, about 25-28 sponsors had attended the meetings. The VANOC sustainability group and marketing representatives were also invited, as well as some Games-related NGOs including 2010 Legacies Now. As noted by an Account Manager of corporate Partners for VANOC, “the 2010 SSI is operated by sponsors for sponsors.” VANOC’s sustainability team reported that they had externally interacted with the corporate sponsors frequently as a result of the 2010 SSI. VANOC

was invited to attend the 2010 SSI meetings, however, one corporate sponsor reported, “There is [a time in the] sponsor sustainability initiative meetings [when] we ask VANOC to leave the room and we sponsors can have our own conversation.” This emphasizes that 2010 SSI was a sponsors’ collaborative network, and was not driven by VANOC.

An important point was that all the participating companies had to be Vancouver 2010 sponsors because of the exclusivity of the IOC sponsorship program. Since these companies were not competing with each other, but striving instead to create potential collaborative opportunities between the sponsors for raising the bar in sustainability, this meant that they could be more open about their goals, strategies and practices.

We were all under the tent of VANOC. We were not really competitors with each other. We are not running a risk if something is discussed, maybe something internally, something is the best practice. We don’t run a risk of throwing ourselves out by having a competitor, ... because [there are] a lot of these initiatives that come out of these [2010 SSI meetings]. ... You look at that Fabrication Shop in the Downtown Eastside, very innovative. You bring in the organizing committee, you bring in different levels of government, you bring in the corporate sponsors all together to do something great. (Interview with RONA, 2008)

The possibilities for organizational learning were enhanced through SSI because the partners were essentially in non-competitive industries as a result of category exclusivity in the sponsorship contracts. The 2010 SSI as a consequence resulted in a number of sponsorship activation ideas and programs that not only leveraged corporate brands but also added value to the sustainability goals of VANOC to the Olympic brand.

## 7.2 Business to Consumer Activation

The findings indicate that corporate sponsorship activation on a unique sustainability initiative helped to create brand differentiation for the partners and sponsors thought this lead to competitive advantage. As mentioned previously in Chapter 4, a well-known program was the RONA Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver that provided carpentry skill training for at-risk youth to gain work skills and employment and contribute to the building industry. In particular, as described by a manager from RONA in my interview in November 2008,

The fabrication shop is a unique partnership for both RONA and VANOC, and the ITA, the local agency. The venues need a number of things – ski racks, hockey steel brackets, fencing and metal Podiums – that have been built in Fabrication. . . . These young men and women from the Downtown Eastside have gone through a training program there. They are getting trained in skills and all of those experiences of building these things and bringing the venues to life. (Interview with RONA, 2008)

RONA, the largest Canadian retailer of renovation and building products, began to emphasize its involvement in the Fabrication Shop in its commercials on June 2, 2008 when the Beijing 2008 Games were approaching (RONA is building Canada's Games, 2008). These advertisements (each was 30 seconds) featured a group of students who were under-privileged urban youth and facing life challenges, acquiring skills and work experience in the Fabrication Shop. While building products for the 2010 Winter Games, the ads claimed that they also built self-confidence (<http://www.youtube.com>, 2009).

The two RONA commercials emphasized how the RONA Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop gave at-risk youth “a second chance” and opportunities to participate in

the workforce. The representative from RONA further indicated that “these young men and women “get” the training [aspect], they get having an Olympic experience and building their own podium, and making a better life for themselves.” Interestingly, my interview with the RONA representative helped corroborate this perspective (Box 7.1).

### **Box 7.1 RONA Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop - A Sample Story**

...Kevin is the instructor of Fab Shop. He told me he was in a West 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue pub one day having a drink. ...The pub was doing some renovations, and Kevin is an instructor that worked on another social sustainability initiative in our workshop. He entered this pub with his friends and had a bottle of beer. This guy walked by and said, “Hi, Kevin, how are you doing?” At first, he didn’t recognize the guy. And he looked at him again, and said, “I remember you.” He said, “Yeah, I was in your class six years ago.” The guy had a lot of problems at that time. He was addicted to drugs, and his life was as bad as you can imagine – homeless, living on the street, as a drug addict he went to a program first before he went to Kevin’s shop. Something you have cover of a house, have a bed to go to, commitment to getting off the drugs, and then you need to...He didn’t have a bank account, he didn’t have a skill to get a job, so he went into a training program with Kevin. From the time when he started with Kevin, you know, it was very slow, shy and not very good and slowly working with Kevin, the instructor, our instructor in Fab Shop, he became a confident carpenter, his ability with his hands improved. He got all the carpentry certificates and now six years later, he has recruited eight guys who are working for him. He owns his construction company. This guy is contributing to the economy. He is employing people, and he is running a business. He owns a construction company because somebody gave him a chance when he needed a second chance, because Kevin touched his life and worked with him. Things are intangible and hard to measure. When you go talk to Kevin at our Fab Shop, you’ll hear the story, it is so moving because nobody follows the life of all the people that go through that shop. But even if you make a difference for a while, it is absolutely worth it. If you make a difference for 10, 20, 50 years or 60 years, 80 years and 150 years, it is worth it. It is hard to measure, but you know it is making a difference in people’s lives. (Interview with RONA, 2008)

This story is like others that occurred in the RONA Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop. Outside of the Olympics, RONA has been dedicated to supporting young people

experiencing life difficulties through The RONA Foundation since 1998. The following interview passage explained how this works.

...the Fabrication Shop helps young men and women, underprivileged and at risk youth in the Downtown Eastside. RONA has RONA Foundation that has been supporting ...youth from 12 years old to 30 years of age. The focus of the foundation is giving youth a second chance, maybe helping them get life back on track; it could be helping them get the education and training they need to become a productive member in society. When you are dealing with youth, your success rate must be greater than when you're working with someone else in their older years. ... when you look at the value of RONA, the value of VANOC, you can do a great project like the Fabrication Shop. It helps us to achieve our target as well as VANOC's. (Interview with RONA, 2008)

This quote demonstrates one way a corporate sponsorship can be activated using the CSR programs of the sponsor to support the sustainability goals of the Organizing Committee. Recognizing that corporate CSR practices like this community-based initiative directly affected the lives of those who attended the Fabrication Shop, this is evidence that when companies positively respond to a social call such as that set out by VANOC, their response can lead to not only intensifying their commitments to social development, but can also be good for the company and the community.

From a marketing perspective, the advertising campaign highlighted RONA's commitment to creating sustainability programs for the host community in association with its Olympic sponsorship. The corporate participants thought that the five interlocking Olympic-rings are the most recognized brand in the world and have a high market penetration and value (Payne, 2005). The combination of social benefits and Olympic

recognition meant the program stood to achieve higher awareness than might otherwise have been possible. In the examples, therefore, RONA contributed to VANOC's sustainability objectives and to its own CSR programs and also achieved a higher level of recognition because of the Olympic connection.

### **7.3 Business to Business Activation**

The findings show that business-to-business companies can achieve benefits through employee engagement and community relations. An example of this point is Teck, the largest mining company in Canada, which does not sell directly to consumers, but focused on employee engagement as an important focus for its Olympic program.

We are not trying to market our products using the Games. We are trying to activate our sponsorship around engaging our employees and encourage them to be the best as they can be as individuals in terms of health awareness. To use the example that the Olympics provides us around pursuing excellence, raise the bar to find your own podium and going for it. (Interview with Teck, 2009)

This point resonates with the subsequent decision made by other sponsors to emphasize employee engagement as part of their sponsorship activation across Canada. It is consistent with Apostolopoulou and Papadimitriou's (2004) findings that employee engagement is one of the major motivations for corporations to enter Olympic sponsorship. Of course, the use of employee engagement like "Going for Gold" initiated by Teck is just one way that firms try to associate themselves with the Olympics. As a mining company with obvious impacts on the land, Teck has to earn the social license to operate. Building good relationships with the communities in which it operates by

emphasizing environmental sustainable community development is an important part of the company's activation program. In this area, Teck was seeking opportunities with other sponsors to support youth sport development more broadly through the Olympic platform. Also, this affords an opportunity to emphasize measures they are taking to make the mining industry more sustainable.

Last but not least, the findings demonstrated that the Olympics created social marketing opportunities to promote sustainable living, which is part of the Olympic emphasis on the environment. According to the *Olympic Movement's Agenda 21*, social marketing of sustainability through sport has potential to go further and make behavior changes, particularly with corporate sponsors' sustainability efforts. As the Teck representative pointed out, "there is an opportunity for the Games branding themselves and raising everybody's awareness around sustainable living." Although this sounds very positive, others may have different perspectives. Issues around the 2010 SSI are discussed in the last section of this chapter.

The 2010 SSI was the first of its kind in the Olympic Movement. Its impact will potentially be significant in driving the Olympic sustainability agenda forward in terms of corporate sponsorship. The VANOC sponsors that attended the 2010 SSI meetings and shared what they were doing in sustainable development gained an edge through the organizational learning that occurred. As one corporate sponsor put it, "You will become smarter after you attend the meeting." The sponsors learned from each other and capitalized on "synergies" between the different companies and their respective

sustainability initiatives. Although the 2010 SSI was a pilot project, it has potential to grow with future events and to become an important catalyst for promoting sustainable living and healthy lifestyles. Some corporate sponsors predicted in their interviews that sponsor sustainability would be more fully realized by future Olympic organizing committees, like London.

Despite its merits, there were some issues associated with implementing collaborative activities that influenced the 2010 SSI agenda and the way it developed. For example, one sponsor indicated that the fact that VANOC did not take a leadership position confused corporate sponsors about the specific sustainability goals VANOC wanted them to reach. The quote in Box 7.2 demonstrates this concern.

#### **Box 7.2 Issues around 2010 Sponsor Sustainability Initiative**

I think the thing was that VANCO wasn't providing clear leadership in direction in the vision for the sustainability initiative that we sponsors could sustain and support. It was likely putting the cart before the horse. You have got to put the horse back to the cart: tell us what you want to do, what legacy you want to leave, what mission and vision you have, what message you want to convey, how you want this to work. From our perspective as a sponsor, how are you going to communicate all that? Where is your communication plan? They didn't have any. You can share that with us; we would be there to support you all the way. They were kind of scurrying a little bit. I think they need to step up and say, "Here is what we want to do, here is where we want to go, here is our vision, this is how we are going to communicate, what can you help with?" As the sponsors, we can all get behind that and reinforce that, but the way that is going is that the sponsors are kind of going all over the map because VANOC hasn't provided the direction and leadership that they should. That is the issue currently about getting results and hasn't been addressed.

The issues raised in the above quotation revealed that one corporate sponsor felt VANOC should have taken a leadership role in directing the 2010 SSI development.

Nevertheless, there was no clear evidence in my interviews that VANOC wanted to do so because they felt this was a sponsor-led initiative.

On the whole, the outcomes of this research have direct implications for corporate sponsors wanting to use sport mega events as a platform to educate other organizations and the public about sustainability. It also points to the possibility of organizational learning as a means to develop expertise among corporate partners and the organizing committee. This expertise, in turn, can be shared with future bid cities and organizing committees.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **LEVERAGING THE LEGACY: 2010 LEGACIES NOW**

This chapter focuses on 2010 Legacies Now in recognition of the important role this agency played in contributing to legacy planning prior to the Games and in working with the sponsors and VANOC to support social development and programmatic sustainability. I explore the nature of its partnerships with VANOC and the corporate partners, and examine how it helped enhance the potential for producing legacies in the host city and region.

2010 Legacies Now was established in 2000 by the Province of British Columbia and the Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation in support of Vancouver's bid for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. In 1999, the 2010 Domestic Bid Society provided \$5 million and originated the idea of what was called the "Legacies Now – Sport Program" in the Society's proposal to be the Canadian Bid City for the 2010 Winter Games. Later in 2002, the society was registered as an independent, not-for-profit organization ([www.2010andbeyond.ca/#/our-history](http://www.2010andbeyond.ca/#/our-history)). Its vision was "to create sustainable legacies that will benefit all of BC and Canada as a result of hosting the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games" (2010 Legacies Now vision statement, 2009). It sought to leverage opportunities in key areas of its mandate, such as funding and promoting sport development from playground to podium, advancing physical activity

and healthy living, and building community capacity leading up to and beyond 2010 (<http://www.2010legaciesnow.com>). As a not-for-profit organization 2010 Legacies Now was intended to help broker the opportunities presented by partnering with various levels of government, other non-government organizations (NGOs), and the Vancouver 2010 corporate sponsors to leave sustainable legacies in the Province of BC and the host communities. Although its partnerships with government and the NGOs were not the main focus of the research for this dissertation, their important roles in helping VANOC reach its sustainability goals could not be overlooked.

The results show that corporate sponsors like Bell and RBC were able to help support the legacy and sustainability goals of VANOC and 2010 Legacies Now and also pursue their own social responsibility objectives. The following section discusses how 2010 Legacies Now structured its partnerships with VANOC and the corporate sponsors with the goal of developing sustainable legacies associated with the Winter Games.

### **8.1 Partnering with VANOC**

The relationship between 2010 Legacies Now and VANOC is unique. As the first of its kind, 2010 Legacies Now is not listed as an official partner on VANOC's website, but could leverage sponsorship opportunities associated with the Olympic Games. The following interview statement illustrates the particulars of its partnership with VANOC:

I think that we are very important in the sustainability process in that we work closely with the communities... throughout the province, and we work with a variety of other partners who have similar goals. Because... the vision of 2010 Legacies Now came out of the bid, our values are

aligned with the values of the Games. So we are now seen from some other countries, they are very interested in our model for other bid cities. ... They see an organization like us can really drive big benefits to the community. (Interviews with 2010 Legacies Now, 2008)

The partnership with VANOC brought tangible benefits to 2010 Legacies Now. For example, although “2010” was a trademark of VANOC, Legacies Now had an agreement with VANOC to maintain “2010” in its name, so it could use the Olympic Games to promote itself. At the same time, however, this also imposed constraints, because it meant they could only associate with the IOC and VANOC corporate partners as a result of the exclusivity of the Olympic contracts.

At the level of day-to-day operations, a participant from 2010 Legacies Now reported that the VANOC account manager for 2010 Legacies Now also manages other government partners. “We have an account representative at VANOC that we work with; we’re treated like one of their government partners.” However, the person then clarified, “[But,] we are not considered as a government partner because we are not, we are a partner, our portfolio falls on the same person, she does the government partners.”

At the senior level, 2010 Legacies Now’s senior executive (s) regularly attended meetings with VANOC and had direct lines of communication with almost all senior executives from all functional departments of VANOC. Other Legacies Now managers had also worked with VANOC’s various departments including sustainability, marketing, the Torch Relay, and Aboriginal inclusion. 2010 Legacies Now mainly obtained operating and program funding from the Provincial Government and from sponsors. It

was not funded by VANOC and did not divert funding from VANOC. Rather, its goals were to add to the benefits of the Games. The following two quotes from the interviews with 2010 Legacies Now clarify this relationship:

We deliver on things that are [linked to] the Games as well, but they are not dollars towards the Games. ... Any dollars we invest do not take away from commitments the Games have from an operational point of view. So you would never see 2010 Legacies Now's dollars reducing the cost of the Games. We would leverage the opportunities. When [we] meet with the [VANOC sustainability team], we can talk about what we are doing. [They] actually help us show our broad benefits for the Games.

We work with all of [VANOC's official] partners. I think quite often we are a facilitator, and we bring the deals together, so it can happen. I think it is a lot because of the relationships, and trust, and also we have a willingness to share. ... We can bring other resources to the table. We leverage.

In addition to formal interactions between the two organizations, one VANOC respondent made a clear differentiation concerning the nature of relationships between the focal organization (VANOC) and government with 2010 Legacies Now. She pointed out that 2010 Legacies Now was “not an arm of VANOC” but “an arm of the Provincial Government.” Another VANOC respondent indicated VANOC did not rely on 2010 Legacies Now to develop sustainability programs, but had its own sustainability objectives and programs instead. The important difference is that 2010 Legacies Now was intended to carry on some of the programs that VANOC developed after the Games and help to create a lasting legacy. From VANOC's perspective, 2010 Legacies Now was

doing things for the Provincial Government, not for VANOC, even though they had collaborated on some projects. For example, in the words of one of VANOC respondents:

Legacies Now...will be taking on a lot of the management of legacies after we have left. Certainly I did mention volunteers that do not normally associate with sustainability, but people in Legacies [Now] will be left. Legacies Now will manage those volunteers after we are gone. They are integrally involved and have been on a number of initiatives. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

The [VANOC sustainability manager] has very been involved with them. And they are helping us a lot on our public participation program and they are helping us with volunteers and diversity. We have quite a good relationship with them. It is helpful because we know they will be here afterward. So they are a very logical place for us to work. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

This example illustrates that VANOC was able to partner with 2010 Legacies Now to develop a post-Games legacy for the community and to pass the 25,000 Olympic volunteers over to VolWeb.ca, a program created by 2010 Legacies Now in 2005 in order to “encourage volunteerism and increase access to volunteer opportunities across Canada, leading up to and beyond the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games” (<http://volweb/aboutus.php>). Beyond this, the interviewees from 2010 Legacies Now also stated that they had created programs to support the bid commitments to the Games, and that they leveraged these opportunities through their partnerships with government and corporate sponsors.

## 8.2 Business-Planning Approach to Operations

The results show that a business-planning approach to developing partnerships played an important role in securing mutually beneficial relationships for 2010 Legacies Now with corporate sponsors. The following two quotes from one interview with 2010 Legacies Now explore further how their approach to operations facilitated this process:

We developed a process for our business planning... [using] a business-planning model. We... have a marketing and communication department, which most nonprofit organizations do not have. We track our investments. We track when we provide any grants or investments in communities. I can go on my computer and tell [clients] what we want, and when, the [benefits] they got and what the impact is to that community. (Interview with 2010 Legacies Now, 2008)

We have a strong business model – first is the structure of the organization itself and second we can track and measure. When we look at our programs or our initiatives, we are trying to do slightly differently from a lot of other nonprofits. Because we put things on a product lifecycle, a business product life-cycle, we look at when we need to take it to the next level or is it time for the product to be passed off. We try to really look at things, we're looking at line extensions. ... We believe it is a model and we are still testing it. (Interview with 2010 Legacies Now, 2008)

An important feature of implementing their business-planning approach was to measure and track opportunities and programs by analyzing risks and benefits as done by for-profit companies. The key benefit that 2010 Legacies Now sought was whether the program/initiative could make a difference. Three main risks were identified by 2010 Legacies Now when taking on an initiative or creating a program: 1) legal risk, 2) financial risk, and 3) if they could find a sponsor. The biggest barrier to implementation of this business-planning approach was that they were working in a nonprofit

environment and dealing with companies that had distinctive ways of doing business. For example, the following quote illustrates these issues:

[I]f I look at our staff make-up, the majority of our staff come from the not-for-profit sector so we're bringing tools to look at doing business differently. So it takes a while for them to understand why we take this model. It is a process and takes some time. People we partner with can give us information to help them, [we need to] be able to track the information and they all do things slightly differently. (Interview with 2010 Legacies Now, 2008)

Despite the challenges facing them, representatives from 2010 Legacies Now felt that their model for nonprofit entities could facilitate working with corporate partners more efficiently and effectively than would otherwise be possible. In many cases, Legacies Now increased opportunities by partnering with for-profit corporations.

### **8.3 Partnering with Corporate Sponsors**

The participants indicated that the way 2010 Legacies Now brokered opportunities not only built on their sponsor relationships but brought more partners into the network, and also created programs designed to help support BC communities such as physical activity, volunteerism, and capacity building. This approach also helped to strengthen the partners' brands and CSR programs. An example is the RBC 2010 Legacies Now Speaker Series, which highlighted RBC's role in BC communities, and at the same time enabled the communities to learn from international experts in the Olympic and Paralympic industry about how to build on opportunities provided by the Olympics.

We run a program called RBC 2010 Legacies Now Speaker's Series. We

partner with RBC on that program. Basically we invite international experts to talk about past Games' experiences. We had speaking engagements around the province. We're also webcasting their presentations to a larger audience. So all of BC could benefit, all Canada and all of the world as well, because it is a webcast. That's basically what really focuses on the economic opportunities around the Games for businesses. So that was what the speakers talked about, how small and medium size businesses can engage in the Games and benefit from the Games' coming. So that's one of the economic sustainability initiatives. (Interview with 2010 Legacies Now, 2009)

This speaker program invited 10 speakers from the IOC, Australia, United Kingdom, Italy, and United States to share their knowledge of the Olympics. All of these speakers had over 10 ten years Olympic experience regarding legacy development including community engagement, volunteerism, media relations, local tourism, sport tourism, event marketing, business innovation, and procurement opportunities ([http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/rbc\\_speaker\\_series/](http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/rbc_speaker_series/)). I attended three of these presentations and felt that this program did a good job of sharing knowledge and lessons from previous Games experiences, even though it was restricted to a lecture format.

In addition, 2010 Legacies Now was invited to attend the 2010 SSI meetings, so its executives could interact with all VANOC corporate sponsors. Several successful programs were undertaken under the umbrella of 2010 Legacies Now with corporate partners. For example, *Chill*, a snowboarding program with Bell Canada, was a community-based initiative for at-risk youth between 10 to 18 years old.

Bell committed funding to the program and has been funding this program since its inception. ...Certainly with Bell, that was a link to 2010, [and] having 2010 behind it really helps us with that connection. (Interviews with 2010 Legacies Now, 2008)

This example was not isolated. *Zero Ceiling* with RBC was another program undertaken to help some at-risk and underprivileged inner city youth participate in snowboarding, with the goal of providing positive life experiences and employment opportunities, even though it was beyond the scope of this study to determine the extent to which these benefits were achieved. These have the potential to continue in the post-Games environment.

I think ...something like *Chill*, that Bell will stay involved with us after the Games. I think that around the Games a lot of sponsors got involved. Optimally, I think that they still have the same benefits after the Games for many of them. I think that a lot of corporate sponsors have their own objectives for corporate social responsibility as well. (Interview with 2010 Legacies Now, 2008)

At the time of my interviews, there were seven 2010 sponsors working with 2010 Legacies Now in a variety of community development programs including: RBC, Bell, 3M, BC Hydro, Teck, CTV and BC Lottery. I interviewed RBC, Bell and Teck in my research.

The Marketing and Revenue Generation Department within 2010 Legacies Now was responsible for managing the relationships with corporate partners. It was found that the business-planning model worked effectively with corporate sponsors because the people who were involved came from the private sector and understood corporate sponsors' business models. Corporate sponsors from their side thought that 2010 Legacies Now was a "sophisticated not-for-profit organization" that was able to identify and measure deliverables for corporate sponsors. The important finding here is that the

people in 2010 Legacies Now did not think corporate sponsors were just donors, putting philanthropy dollars into a charity, but rather partners in a business relationship, which needed to meet corporate sponsors' priorities and objectives. One of these objectives was to provide a vehicle to help the corporations build their brands in the marketplace. The programs offered a co-branding opportunity for the corporate sponsors with the program through community engagement across British Columbia. Both the corporate and 2010 Legacies Now participants felt that this relationship offered benefits the individual organizations could not attain alone.

As discussed previously, there were advantages to being linked to the 2010 Games, but the senior marketing manager thought that it was still very difficult to solicit corporate sponsors to support their programs because the marketplace for non-profit organizations was very competitive. Sponsorship renewals were considered a sign of a successful partnership with corporate sponsors. When my interview was conducted with the senior marketing manager in April 2008, the person reported that they had achieved a 100% renewal rate, but she felt a lot of pressure to maintain current sponsors and find new ones because they had more and more programs that needed sponsors. For future development, 2010 Legacies Now would hope to pass their programs to their community partners.

For us to be successful in the long term, we should not be owning these programs that we create. We do them with our partners, but during the Games because of who we are, we need to play sometimes a bigger role because of the Games association. But post the Games, there are certain

programs that need to go to communities, those community groups and partners who we've been working with. We were working on how we transition those programs. We have been working on some plans or testing them, but we are not there yet. But that is why we see success of the programs we created with our partners and carry on in the community with whatever partners. That is, I believe, to create a true legacy. (Interview with 2010 Legacies Now)

2010 Legacies Now essentially operated like a broker to put programs together for local communities in British Columbia with sponsor and government funding. In his sense, the organization helped bridge the connection between VANOC and local communities, and played an important role in facilitating partnership initiation and opportunities for creating legacies. These findings support Kouwenhoven's (1993) notion that an independent organization can act as a facilitator to open communication opportunities for various parties to meet.

By the end of March 2009, over 70 different programs were created and run by 2010 Legacies Now (Morrison, 2009), and nine of them were awarded the Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Star, which is the same as the partner Sustainability Star discussed in Chapter 6. The Sustainability Star program highlighted Games-related sustainability initiatives, with a focus on creating social, economic, and environmental benefits. 2010 Legacies Now itself won this award ([www.2010legaciesnow.com/about-us](http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/about-us)). However, questions might be raised about what criteria were used to evaluate a sustainability star program, so further research should be conducted to assess whether or not such a program is effective.

The findings reported here are based on the data I collected from the interviews mainly in April 2008. Constricted by the timeframe, the data might not reflect the current status of 2010 Legacies Now. I visited their website numerous times and watched the program video in November and December 2009. Based on the videos, their community-based programs tend to be focused on social innovation and change for targeted populations, such as at-risk youth and Aboriginal youth. The current information is very similar to the data I obtained from the interviews in 2008. From an evolutionary point of view, some programs have developed further, and approximately 70 more programs were created, compared to only about 10 programs which existed when my interviews were carried out in April 2008. In December 2009, 2010 Legacies Now announced that it was working with over 4000 organizations and groups across BC in the areas of arts, literacy, accessibility, and volunteerism in addition to sport and recreation and healthy living ([www.2010legaciesnow.com/about-us](http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/about-us)). Future research should evaluate the impact that these programs had from the points of view of organizers and participants.

The findings show that 2010 Legacies Now defined its target groups as: 1) youth, 2) youth at risk, 3) Aboriginal people, 4) inner city residents, 5) people living with a disability, and 6) women according to a presentation by a manager from 2010 Legacies Now at the *First Olympic Legacies Conference* at UBC School of Human Kinetics in November 2006 (Qualtrough, 2006). In the point of view of the interviewees, a priority was to insure there were benefits for these groups that otherwise would not benefit from or be touched by the Olympic and Paralympic Games. From the examples given by

participants, programs, such as *Chill* and *Zero Ceiling* provided opportunities for several of these priority groups to engage in Olympic-related activities. Nevertheless, the number of program participants (e.g., 775 kids were recruited in *Chill* program according to the interview in April 2008) were small versus the actual number of these ‘priority groups’ (e.g., estimated 87,000 children in poverty in 2008)<sup>11</sup> in Province of BC (BC child poverty rate, 2010).

On the whole, this was the first of its kind in the history of a Games Bid. 2010 Legacies Now has played a unique role in building partnerships to undertake sports initiatives in communities across the Province of British Columbia. Its objectives were to build a strong and lasting sport system that ensured increased participation from Playground to Podium, and supported safe, healthy and vibrant communities contributing to the provincial economy. Yet, since it was still in its pilot phase, follow-up research will be needed to examine its effectiveness and the impacts it had on the host community, and whether or not its objectives were met.

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<sup>11</sup> An analysis of the latest figures by First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, showed a drop in the BC child poverty rate from 13 percent in 2007 to 10.4 percent in 2008. The number of poor BC children dropped from 108,000 in 2007 to 87,000 in 2008. Retrieved June 29, 2010, From <http://www.firstcallbc.org/pdfs/currentissues/press%20release08stats.pdf>

## **CHAPTER 9**

### **CONCLUDING DISCUSSION**

The findings in this study have shed light on several important theoretical and practical issues in relation to how corporate sponsorship can contribute to Olympic sustainability. Firstly, the qualitative case study of VANOC has expanded our understanding of how the opportunities and resources of sports mega events, like the Olympics, can be leveraged to help achieve the sustainable development agenda of the host community. Secondly, the study documents a unique “hybrid” organizational model that can help facilitate this process for future bid and host cities. More specifically, VANOC fully integrated “the triple bottom line” into its daily operation and in important ways put sustainability at the forefront. Exemplary programs included 2010 Legacies Now, the Buy Smart Program and VANOC’s official partnership with the Four Host First Nations. These initiatives provided a foundation for a sustainable legacy in the host community and region. Finally, the outcomes demonstrate the potential to use a CSR / sustainability approach in other event or sport management organizations.

#### **9.1 Olympic Sustainability: An Evolving Paradigm**

Olympic sustainability is an evolving paradigm, partly because the expectations of host citizens have increased, and partly because sustainability itself has increasingly become a global imperative. As discussed in Chapter 1, just 30 years ago, without Los

Angeles' bid for the 1984 Summer Games, it was possible that the Olympic Games would no longer be able to continue because of the financial burden that was left to the host citizens. This issue was exemplified by Montreal 1976 (Payne 2005; Payne 2008). However, this financial failure led to innovation and Olympic financial independence later on. The success of the 1984 Los Angeles with its well-known financial surplus, was in part due to a referendum in which 83% voters of in Los Angeles were against providing any funding for the Games (Payne, 2008). This fact forced Peter Ueberroth, President of the LAOOC, to rethink corporate sponsorship of the Olympics along the lines of exclusivity where sponsors would pay more money but would have exclusive marketing rights. This avoided the clutter and competition of having the same product categories within the Olympic family as discussed in Chapter 5. Yet, this Olympic marketing strategy did not arise on its own, but rather evolved from previous Games, particularly from lessons learned at the 1976 Montreal which attracted 628 companies and among them 42 official sponsors paying an average of CA\$50,000 each and providing CA\$5million in cash and another CA\$12 million in value-in-kind, just 2% of the overall expenditure (Payne, 2008). It was not surprising that without protection of sponsors' exclusive rights, "organizers were often faced with numerous lawsuits from companies who felt they had been cheated" (Payne, 2008, p. 87).

During the past 25 years after Los Angeles, Ueberroth's original model has been further developed to provide more economic growth opportunities for the organizing committee and host community rather than just an emphasis on sponsors' return on

investment. In this study, as presented in Chapter 4, it is evident that the Buy Smart Program (encouraging local small business to get benefits from Olympic engagement), Bell BOB, Building Opportunities for Business, (providing job training programs for inner-city disadvantaged groups), and RBC-2010 Commerce Center (educating small businesses to get involved in Olympic sustainability) are examples of initiatives that reflect this trend. In chronological order, these examples demonstrate positive changes in response to Lenskyj's (2000, p. 96) claim that, "small business enterprises saw little benefits" according to a report by Miguelez and Carrasquer (1995).

Equally important is the shift away from the perception of economic benefits as the sole area of concern over Games impacts to an emphasis on environmental protection as a fundamental condition of how the Olympics are prepared and staged. Dating back to the early 1900s, the expansion in scale of Olympic-related construction has led to media attention to the damage to the environment, particularly the Alpine landscape with the 1992 Albertville Winter Games in France (Mohan, 2007). The environmental disaster of preparation for and staging of the 1992 Albertville became an important impetus for the IOC and future bid and host cities to take environmental protection into consideration within the Olympic Movement. In response to the lessons of the 1992 Albertville Winter Games, the 1994 Lillehammer Games made a breakthrough in applying principles of Ecological Sustainable Development (ESD) to sport management. David Chernushenko's 1994 book "*Greening our Games: Running Sports Events and Facilities That Won't Cost the Earth*" documented and shed a light on what Olympics can do for the protection of

the environment. Consequently, when examining Sydney's bid, Lenskyj (1998, p. 174) commented, "Lillehammer was probably the best model of a large international sporting event organized on environmentally friendly principles [in the 1990s]." Furthermore, this provided empirical insights into the Games' bidding and staging process, and in turn, inspired the IOC to change its philosophy of the Olympic Movement to embrace the environment as a third pillar along with sport and culture, as discussed in Chapter 1.

Equally important as the economic and environmental impacts of the Olympics are the social impacts that the Games accrue in the host city, region and country for people from all social groups. While Sydney 2000 highlighted a range of accomplishments in environmental initiatives, some of the social issues, such as homelessness and discrimination against Aboriginal peoples became the "most significant social problems confronting Sydney" (Lenskyj, 2002, p. 107). Helen Lenskyj's 2002 book "*The best Olympics ever? Social impacts of Sydney 2000*" documented a number of Olympic-related social impacts on the disadvantaged in the host community. There are indications that more explicit recognition of these issues is beginning to result in Olympic-related initiatives that are intended to help address these conditions.

In the case of Vancouver 2010, VANOC demonstrated social responsibility in a number of areas, including a greater inclusion of Aboriginal peoples and the inner city disadvantaged, and a wider adoption of ethical sourcing and social compliance in its practices. The retrospective part of this study shows that crisis or criticism can often

become the starting point of progressive social changes as advocated by Margolis and Walsh (2003).

As one corporate participant in this research indicated, “Evolution is by the timeline 2016, 2020 or 2024; every organizing committee will raise the bar.” Vancouver 2010 is part of this evolution. Although VANOC and its corporate partners, together with many dedicated groups and individuals, made extensive effort to achieve their sustainability goals, several examples of issues and problems with this Olympics are presented in Chapter 5, Chapter 6 and Chapter 7. However, in the journey of Olympic sustainability, there is evidence that shows the situation is changing. As described by Frisby,

We have seen examples of this with the Olympics because some organizers have taken steps to build legacies that will contribute to sport development over the long term, to run more environmentally friendly games, to reduce athlete abuse, to make bidding and judging processes more fair, and to involve aboriginals, athletes, and citizens in decision making in more authentic ways (2005, p. 8).

Thinking about the development of Olympic sustainability through an organizational learning lens (Senge et al., 2006; Senge et al., 2008) requires recognizing that the Olympic organizing committee and its partners, particularly the corporate partners in this study, are active in this ongoing process. Throughout this process, the ideals of the Olympic Movement are becoming transformed to emphasize the host community and integrate economic opportunity, environmental protection, and social responsibility. In this way the Olympic Movement is indirectly addressing issues such as

homelessness, carbon emissions, and unemployment, even though much more can be done in all of these areas. Evidence of this shift is that Olympic organizers and corporate partners as seen in the case of VANOC now emphasize the role of harnessing the power of sport as an agent for social change, instead of focusing on avoiding serious criticism of Olympic wrongdoings.

Although the information obtained from my interviews is limited by the respective industries of the participants and their specific sponsorship programs, the nature of the sustainability initiative that developed ultimately was seen to depend on the respondents' perceptions of how these initiatives could help attain their organizational objectives. The findings show that the Vancouver 2010 sustainability initiatives were on course at the time of my research with Vancouver and Whistler's sustainability plans, and aligned with the corporate partners CSR programs.

## **9.2 Olympics: A Catalyst to Raise Awareness of Sustainability**

The evidence provided from this study has demonstrated that the Olympics can serve as a catalyst to promote global sustainability, because it is a platform for focusing worldwide attention on Olympic ideals and actions. The new function of the Olympic Games can be capitalized on at two process levels: 1) to educate companies on how to do business in a sustainable way at an organizational level (e.g., VANOC Smart Buy program), and 2) to educate people to pursue sustainable living at an individual level (e.g., Teck employee engagement). More importantly, the stories provided by the

participants in this study emphasized that legacies means more than buildings and the transformation of the environment. Legacies are in part the way the Olympic Games continually provide people with new opportunities. This reflects on ways that the Olympic organizers, together with various partners, particularly corporate partners in this study, promoted sustainability at all levels. As discussed in Chapter 4 and Chapter 8, corporate partners reported that through working with VANOC, their sustainability initiatives (e.g., RONA Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop, RBC Zero-Ceiling) that were designed to help the environment and improve people's lives, could also increase awareness of sustainability because the Olympics could act as a platform to bring sustainability issues into the regional, national and international spotlight.

Concerning Olympic legacies, Glynn (2008, p.1126) found that host cities have focused on improvement in two major areas based on her analysis of the last 17 host cities over 34 years between 1972 and 2006:

The intended legacies sought to improve two aspects of civic health: (1) symbolic features, such as boosting a city's image, cultivating an international reputation, or making the city an appealing tourist destination; and (2) economic returns, such as increasing revenues, developing industries, generating jobs, or strengthening the city infrastructure of transportation, and public gathering spaces (parks, buildings, sports venues). This increasingly commercial aspect seems to parallel the shift in revenues over time ...as well as the aspirations of a city-building growth model that was popular at the time.

In addition to the above two aspects, the findings in this study revealed that raising awareness of sustainability and emphasizing positive impacts by creating

economic, environmental, and social benefits in the host community was an objective that was embraced equally by the Olympic organizer (VANOC) and its corporate partners.

The corporations that were motivated by marketing outcomes also paid close attention to the sustainability elements of their initiatives, even though those were not required in their sponsorship contracts. In some cases, corporate partners, like Teck, which initiated the 2010 ISS, voluntarily played a leadership role in this process. From their perspective, sustainability was not something ‘nice to do’ for reputation, but was ‘need to do’ for real change.

### **9.3 CSR Approach to Vancouver 2010: A New Paradigm in the Olympic Movement**

The results of this study show that the corporate model for social responsibility was effectively used to implement a public commitment through VANOC to sustainability. These commitments were determined by the values of the citizens and communities of Vancouver and Whistler during the bid process. It is clear that while VANOC used a corporate model to run the Olympic Games, its primary goal, as a not-for-profit organization, was to host a successful Games. As noted in its mission, this meant that the Games were intended, at least in part, to benefit the citizens in the host city, region and country. As discussed previously in Chapter 6, an adaptive collaborative management model was found to be an efficient instrument to run the Olympic Games, because corporate sponsors worked together on the Olympic platform.

The 2010 Games marked the first time an Olympic organizing committee managed the Games with a set of comprehensive CSR / sustainability principles. This is consistent with the argument that an organization should systematically incorporate social expectations into all dimensions of its core decision-making process (Bonini et al., 2006). The study suggests that the sustainability model represents a shift towards adaptive management and a move away from outcomes towards a process orientation. In other words, the Olympics is not only a 17-day event, but an eight-year commitment and a potentially lasting legacy because of consistent improvements in its strategic planning and preparation. The model of sustainable sport / event management in Figure 6.1 could serve as a guide in formulating criteria and procedures to assist sport / event organizations in developing their position on various sport / event-related social, economic, and environmental issues. The net results could be more systematic attention being given to the whole realm of sport / event management.

With the increased levels of accountability being experienced by Olympic organizers and corporate partners, these findings are potentially useful for identifying some of the unique and complex opportunities offered by sports mega events. Sustainability initiatives such as the RONA Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop, RBC Zero Ceiling, and Bell BOB helped resolve some of the social problems described by Lenskyj (2000, p. 93):

The fact that men, women, and children living on the streets of Atlanta, Seoul, Toronto, or Sydney may have had their own dreams—of

accommodation, safety, employment, personal fulfillment—had no place in Olympic rhetoric, except for the predictable promises that the economic boost would help to solve some (but not all) of these people’s problems. The myth of the pure athlete and pure sport ensured that the dreams of the disadvantaged took low priority in the public discourse.

As noted in Chapter 7, the RONA Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop helped at-risk youth who previously were homeless or came from disadvantaged backgrounds, to learn carpentry skills. RONA’s two commercials featured a group of young people from the “harsh reality of the East Vancouver Streets”, who were learning new life skills, building about 8,000 small items for the 2010 Games, and working for their Olympic dream (Chiasson, 2008). The last quote from the ad, “Not every Olympic dream is an athletic one” is pertinent to the issues raised by Lenskyj (2000), although it remains to be seen what the long-term legacies will be from this program ([www.youtube.com/user/](http://www.youtube.com/user/), 2008).

Nevertheless, this research into the Vancouver Games sustainability programs provides evidence that CSR can play an appropriate and important role in supporting the sustainability goals of an organizing committee. CSR resonates with both Olympic organizers and their corporate sponsors’ management practices as discussed already in Chapter 6. This also supports Misener and Mason’s (2009) argument that community development initiatives through sport events can be linked to CSR assessment.

In essence, VANOC converted the traditional three components of sustainability, namely economic, environmental, and social responsibility, into its six corporate-wide performance objectives including: 1) accountability, 2) environmental stewardship and

impact reduction, 3) social inclusion and responsibility, 4) Aboriginal participation and collaboration, 5) economic benefits, and 6) sport for sustainable living. More importantly, it also created an annual sustainability report whereby it embraced the accountability and transparency of the Games. For example, the Buy Smart Program, a first for an Olympic Organizing Committee, applied a strict Code of Ethics for VANOC and its partners' procurements related to the Olympic Games. As John Furlong, CEO of VANOC stated at the *7th World Conference on Sport and the Environment* which was held in Beijing, in 2007, "We've further embraced the third pillar of the Olympic Movement so that our sustainability objectives include commitments to achieve unprecedented Aboriginal Participation in the planning, hosting and legacy of the Games, and we have pledged to stage Games that are fiscally responsible, socially inclusive and accessible" (From action to plan, 2007). The implication of this is that social development is being incorporated as an implicit part of the Olympic Movement. It remains to be seen whether the whole triple bottom line will be added to the charter or whether the environment will be expanded to include sustainability. Either way, there appears to be increased emphasis on social development as an aspect of sustainability as claimed by Lenskyj (2008).

The increased emphasis on insights on CSR practices in sport management has resulted in demand for a completely new type of information allowing sport organizations like Olympic organizing committees to be evaluated based on triple bottom line principles, which measure not only economic success but also environmental and social performance. In addition, as the first of its kind, the Vancouver 2010 annual sustainability

report has also established an industry framework for sport mega events to evaluate their CSR performance. This partly addresses the concern that the Games lack a commonly accepted framework for evaluation (Crompton, 1999).

VANOC collaborated with the International Academy of Sports Science and Technology (AISTS) to create the *Sustainable Sport and Event Toolkit* (SSET), a guideline for sport organizations to incorporate sustainability practices into event management. This initiative was launched at the 8th *World Conference on Sport and the Environment* in March 2009 in Vancouver. It aims to give sport organizations the knowledge and tools to plan and implement sustainable sport events by integrating sustainability practices into their business. According to the *Sustainable Sport and Event Toolkit* (2009, p. 2), this framework was established based on the following international standards:

- 1) ISO 14001-14006 (Organization for Standardization)
- 2) GRI G3 (Global Reporting Initiative)
- 3) IOC Agenda 21
- 4) IOC Guide on Sport, Environment, and Sustainable Development
- 5) BSI 8900-8901 (British Standards Institute)
- 6) UNEP (The United Nations Environment Programme)
- 7) Vancouver 2010 Sustainability Management and Reporting System

In order to make this become a commonly accepted framework of sustainable sport event management, the Sustainable Sport and Event Toolkit (SSET) Centre was

founded and situated within AISTS, Lausanne, Switzerland, with the IOC as its principal supporting partner (<http://sustainable-sport.org/>). It operates by recruiting organizational members. On its website, there is a member forum, blog and member wiki, which is an online and evolving version of SSET for members to access and which features extensive resources and best practices information.

It has become clear that a systematic reporting format (e.g., Vancouver 2010 annual sustainability report) could be used to increase the reliability of the evaluation and verification procedure. This is where an instrument, such as the SSET may be useful in trying to develop an internationally accepted framework for sustainable development by sport organizations. Beyond this, the current phase of development of CSR / sustainability in sport and event management suggests a potential evolution of CSR itself. As an extension of CSR practices, the sustainability programs that VANOC and its corporate partners developed open the door to a potential role for sport mega-events to support sustainable development in host cities and countries.

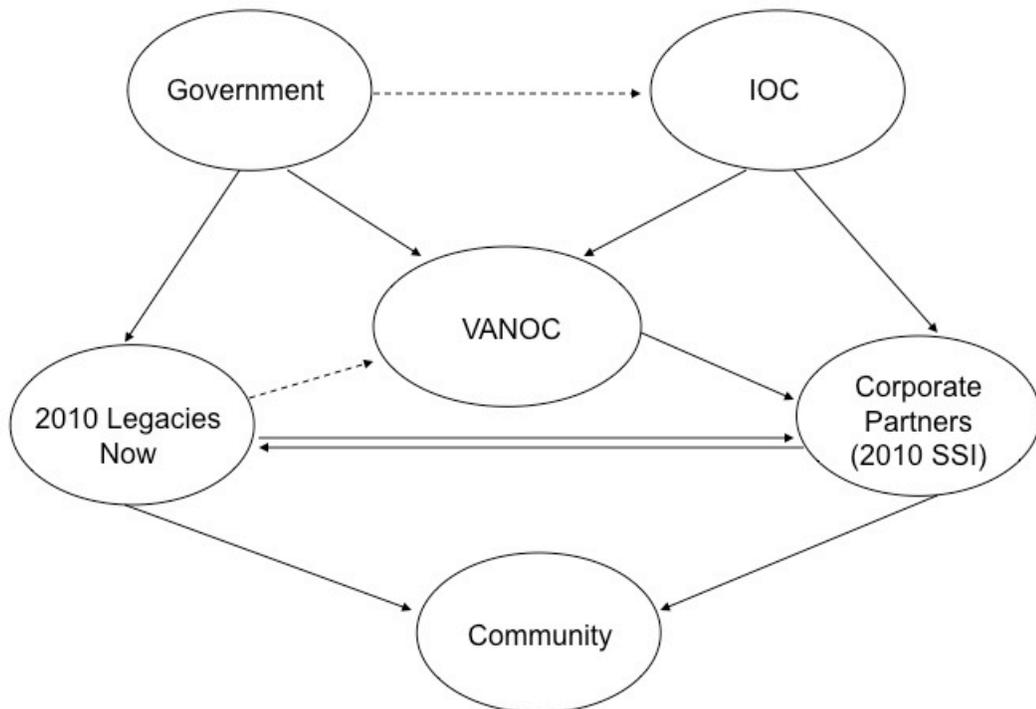
#### **9.4 Leveraging the Opportunities: Partnership**

The findings of this study reveal that when public and private objectives are aligned, corporations and nonprofit organizations (e.g., 2010 Legacies Now) can partner around mutually beneficial initiatives to leverage the opportunities the Olympic Games provide for community development. The documented benefits of these partnerships seen with the 2010 Games offer a precedent for corporations to partner with a nonprofit entity,

such as 2010 Legacies Now and other nonprofit organizations, to leverage their sponsorship rights in the future.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the social network approach to sponsorship relationships found in the context of Vancouver 2010, VANOC, 2010 Legacies Now, and 2010 SSI, reveals a complex collaborative web of Olympic-linked partnerships (see Figure 9.1).

**Figure 9. 1 A Conceptual Collaborative Network of Olympic-Linked Relationships**



These partnerships involved interactions among various kinds of organizations: public and private, profit and nonprofit as discussed previously in Chapter 4, 5, 7, and 8. Each organization in this network brought new ideas and resources to form new partnerships, so that the network became wider and covered more sustainability areas

than each organization could encompass individually. The results support the conclusion that the complex network of sport sponsorship relationships could drive wider benefits (e.g., community-based legacies) from sponsorship activities (Olkkonen, 2001; Olkkonen et al., 2000).

Each actor in this wider network also was seen to have formed its own flexibly designed network, which Huxham and Vangen (2005) have defined as “an umbrella group”. In this study, umbrella groups were comprised of multiple layers of collaborations attributed to the corporations’ partnerships with VANOC. While the focal organization VANOC was located in the hub of these networks, 2010 Legacies Now itself functioned as an umbrella group that initiated many community-based programs through its connections with multiple organizations including community groups, various levels of government, and the Vancouver 2010 corporate partners.

The corporate partners also formed their own collaborative network, namely 2010 SSI, as described in Chapter 7. Each member of 2010 SSI had a formal partnership with VANOC, and also formed a partnership and in some cases collaborated with 2010 Legacies Now in building community capacity for sustainable living. Regarding corporate sustainability, these corporate partners activated their Olympic sponsorships following practices and opportunities identified at 2010 SSI meetings through which new business opportunities were often generated by forming new partnerships between sponsors themselves.

A salient feature of these partnerships within this network was 2010 Legacies Now's role as a broker to leverage legacies through their relationships with government, communities, and sponsors. This was an added layer of interactions within the web, and facilitated the process of leveraging the legacies of the Games.

The application of a *social network perspective* in this study to investigate corporate sponsorship phenomena proved a useful way to gain insights into the sport management field as suggested by Quatman and Chelladurai (2008a; 2008b). My research supports their work and shows the importance of evaluating the initiation, management, and evaluation phases of partnerships between organizers and sponsors, in this case between VANOC and its corporate partners. When the corporations entered the partnership, both VANOC and the National Partners considered sustainability to be a key component in forming the Olympic partnership, creating a new basis for partnership initiation.

In addition to examining the three phases of partnership in the Olympic sponsorship context, this study also examined the internal sponsorship relationships to reveal a number of key structural and process elements perceived to be crucial to successful partnership management. Specifically, such components as shared goals with corporate partners, assigned personnel, well-organized structure under contractual relationship and non-contract support, as well as flexibility, were found to be important structural considerations when entering the partnership management stage. The process considerations in this study were identified in terms of five main determinants:

communication, commitment, shared learning, open relationships, and the willingness to seek solutions. The findings uncovered necessary factors for successful partnership management between an Olympic organizing committee and its corporate partners. These extend Frisby et al.'s (2004) framework on partnership management, which outlined a number of structural and process issues contributing to under-managed partnerships in the context of Canadian sport recreation departments.

The findings also showed that VANOC used a partner satisfaction survey, conducted by a third party, to evaluate their partnerships with the corporate sponsors. This once-a-year survey helped VANOC to improve its services, with the purpose of enabling their clients – the corporate sponsors – to describe how VANOC could better deliver its services and help them enhance the value of their investments. The corporate partners also conducted self-evaluations to assist in making the relationships smooth and strong. According to the model of managing sponsor partnerships to achieve sustainability in Figure 2.2, both the event organizer and corporate sponsors need to have a systematic framework for thinking through not only social, economic and environmental issues but also the managerial response patterns contemplated around the Olympic sustainability objectives. Throughout the feedback loop of partnership management in Figure 2.2, the parties of Olympic partnerships are tasked with evaluating their motivations, actions and evaluation strategies in their sponsorship activities.

Finally, the use of an *organizational learning approach* to sponsorship activation provided insights into knowledge transfer among corporate partners and the organizing

committee. This framework helps to identify opportunities for learning new capabilities from, and knowledge transfer through, partnerships among Olympic sponsors as discussed in Chapter 7. Equally importantly, given the uniqueness of the exclusivity of Olympic sponsorship, Olympic activation on sustainability offers potential for corporations to enhance their brand equity and hence obtain competitive advantages through emphasizing CSR in concert with Olympic sustainability programs.

From a *resource-based view*, the exclusive rights of Olympic sponsorship represents a heterogeneous distribution of resources across the industry because it must be “imperfectly imitable, imperfectly mobile, and associated with *ex-ante* limits to competition” (Amis et al., 1997, p. 84, emphasis in original). According to the principles of the Olympic sponsorship program and anti-ambushing marketing law, the Olympic sponsors had the right to use the unique Olympic image and rings once they signed the Olympic sponsorship agreement with the IOC and VANOC. This policy immediately excludes all competitors in the same industry, as seen in the discussion of the 2010 SSI in Chapter 7 and 2010 Legacies Now in Chapter 8, so that the Olympic sponsorship rights became non-imitable and heterogeneously distributed resources for sponsoring corporations. As discussed above, although the examples I have described of how corporate sponsorship activation can support social development under the rubric of sustainability have not yet been tested over time, the emphasis on these programs in conjunction with the 2010 Games is a positive sign that organizers are taking more responsibility for the impacts of the Games. According to the interviews, some programs

such as the RONA Vancouver 2010 Fabrication Shop, Teck Employee Engagement, RBC Zero Ceiling are intended to continue after the Games, potentially supporting positive changes in the host city over time.

Overall, this study used three frameworks – the *resource-based view*, *social network theory*, and *organizational learning* – to examine sport sponsorship relationships, as noted in Figure 2.1 in Chapter 2. This approach provided a multi-dimensional perspective on the partnership process in sport sponsorship relationships research and introduced new considerations and concerns regarding managing sport sponsorship relationships to achieve sustainability goals. These were also connected to the interpretive approach as discussed in Chapter 3, which allowed understanding the dynamics involved from the points of view of Olympic organizers and their key corporate sponsors. Implications of the study are discussed in the final chapter.

## CHAPTER 10

### IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES

This study provided three original contributions. First, as a qualitative Olympic Games sustainability study it helps to expand our understanding of how social responsibility imperatives shape corporate sponsorship practices. Second, the study identified major relationship factors that influenced the corporations involved in the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games as sponsors that supported VANOC's sustainability programs. Finally, the study has implications for policy makers wanting to encourage corporate sponsorship of sports as a way to support grassroots social and sport development, locally, regionally and nationally.

#### 10.1 Research Implications

This research supports the application of *the resource-based view, social network perspective, and organizational learning theory* to sport sponsorship. Integration of these three frameworks proved very useful for offering a more holistic view of relationship processes in sponsorship, particularly with respect to how an organizing committee like VANOC can work with sponsors to meet its sustainability goals.

By creating a conceptual framework for evaluating how to manage sponsor partnerships to achieve sustainability, greater insight was provided into key features of the partnership management system. The research suggested that a feedback process

enables consistent improvements by sharing learning from partners in the sponsorship context. Relationship values were found to serve as both structural and process factors that contributed to the achievement of sponsorship objectives. The partnership evaluation strategy (i.e., the Partner Satisfaction Survey which was conducted by a third party) was found to provide specific evidence for how to remove obstacles and make the relationship process more productive. Taken together, each phase of the partnership management process was found to align with specific objectives, suggesting that this framework helps to link systematic thinking and action to achieving sustainability goals.

The study also found that the motivations for the 2010 organizer to emphasize social as well as environmental initiatives came from the bid, and that sustainability became a key part of VANOC's Games strategy as a result. Building on the findings of this study, I argue that other sports mega-events could adopt a similar CSR / corporate sustainability approach provided this fit with the mandate of the event. The three-stage model of sustainable event management in Figure 6.1 provides an initial road map for managers seeking to implement CSR / sustainability-oriented principles in practice. This framework represents the results of extensive effort to synthesize key challenges and issues in the CSR / sustainability design and implementation process. The next essential stage for sport / event managers is to bring CSR / sustainability practices to an operational level that would enable ongoing evaluation of their CSR performance. It is suggested that a sustainability management and reporting system, such as the Vancouver

2010 Sustainability Report would be a useful tool to integrate stakeholders' feedback and input into their CSR / sustainability practices.

This study provides qualitative evidence that organizational learning theory can be utilized to examine the phenomena of Olympic sponsorship activation on sustainability. While traditional sponsorship activation focuses on marketing activities like cross-promotions (e.g., Cornwell, 1995; Cornwell et al., 2001; Meenaghan, 1991), this study offers an alternative approach for investigating how sustainability imperatives shape the activation of sport sponsorship. The 2010 Sponsor Sustainability Initiative in particular is an excellent example of how inter-organizational learning can be mobilized as a means to share 'best practices' and help strengthen each individual organization's development (Laiken, 2001). This is just one example and there is an obvious need for further exploration of sport sponsorship activation through organizational learning.

Finally, this study helps to expand our understanding of how the opportunities and resources of sport mega events like the Olympics can be leveraged to help achieve a community development agenda. The study documents a unique not-for-profit organizational model – 2010 Legacies Now – that helped facilitate this process in the case of Vancouver 2010 that could have potential use-value for future bid and host cities. This shows that partnerships between nonprofit organizations and corporate sponsors can be structured to bridge high-performance sport and grassroots sport participation, and provide a foundation for a sustainable legacy in the host community.

## 10.2 Practical Implications

The findings from this study also have practical implications that can be used to better manage a sport mega-event in a sustainable way. The model of sustainable sport / event management (Figure 6.1) described in the study provides sport managers with a practical framework for making strategic decisions for the sustainable development of sport events. Using the model, sport managers can evaluate sustainability strategies to determine which would be beneficial for a particular event. For example, in the case of VANOC, when research found that previous Olympics had never paid serious attention to social issues, it created an opportunity for the organizers to consider what social programs would be most meaningful in a local, regional and national context, for the 2010 Games. This resulted in a variety of initiatives including engagement with the Four Host First Nations, and programs for under privileged youth. Similarly, if environmental concerns were paramount, sport managers could direct the resources to improve environmental protection as again occurred with VANOC. On the whole, this study offers sport managers a “triple bottom line” framework to engage in sport management practices.

The findings show that feedback processes are important for effectively managing corporate sponsor relationships to achieve sustainability goals (Figure 2.2). The managerial structures and processes described in the study may also provide useful references for other kinds of sport partnerships. The results indicate that both partnership management and partnership evaluation have a significant impact on the success of sport

sponsorship. With an increased level of corporate commitment to Olympic sustainability, it is likely that there will also be a greater commitment to corporate sustainability on the part of the sponsors. Increasingly, pressure is already placed on sponsors to integrate social value into their sponsorships such as by contributing to sport development in their communities. The Olympics provide a platform for this kind of capacity.

Organizations like 2010 Legacies Now also have the unique potential to assist in leveraging opportunities provided by the Games by working with the Olympic organizer, government and community. The unique ‘broker’ approach of the organization offers an alternative model for how to enhance positive impacts from sport mega-events by focusing stakeholder’s attention on important social issues within host communities. Given the important role that corporate sponsors can play in sport development, a number of specific implications for future Olympic Games and corporate sponsors are provided in the next section.

### **10.2.1 Implications for Future Olympic Games**

The critical analysis of findings provided by this study has direct implications for future Olympic Games. First, it is recommended that future Olympic organizing committees create clear sustainability objectives and specific baseline commitments for corporate partners to follow and act upon. Second, for the first point to be achieved, a watchdog organization, specializing in sustainability practices, should be considered as a partner to meet its commitments. Third, when a sustainability idea (e.g., alternative fuels) is recommended to corporate partners, it should already be proven to be feasible and

productive by the industry. If it has not been proven, there is a risk of failure or a waste of resources or money. Fourth, the investment in sustainability initiatives should be included in the Olympic sponsorship package. Olympic sponsorship is a considerable financial and resource commitment, and it is difficult for sponsors to put additional money into Olympic sustainability projects, particularly if there is an economic downturn and corporate marketing budgets shrink as happened with Vancouver 2010.

### **10.2.2 Implications for Corporate Sponsors**

This study also has implications for corporate sponsors. First, sustainability needs to be seen as a necessary and valuable investment in the context of sponsorship, just as it is with respect to CSR programs. Second, the investments must be in programs that will achieve real, measurable results. “Greenwashing” is a term used to describe a company spending money to claim to be “green” through marketing and public relations but not actually taking action to bring change. This risks consumer backlash in today’s markets and also has no practical advantage over real programs that do bring social and environmental benefits. In sum, it should be avoided. Third, sustainability can clearly be integrated into corporate sponsorship activations, and if used properly, it can generate tangible competitive advantages for the company.

### **10.3 Limitations**

Four limitations of this study should be recognized. First, the interviews were conducted during the preparation phase for Vancouver 2010, a little more than one year before the event was held. As a result, obtaining interviews was expected to be

challenging because the corporate sponsors did not want to disclose what they were thinking and doing before the initiatives were public. As a VANOC representative explained,

You are a little bit ahead of what is happening in real life. ... We are not in the position to sit down and give you everything we are working on at this point because we don't know which corporate sponsor is going to participate in which program, and all that sort of thing. (Interview with VANOC, 2008)

This is to say that the timing of the research to some extent affected the comprehensiveness and quality of the information I was able to obtain. Second, the study was limited to 26 interviews and did not fully explore all the characteristics of the Olympic sustainability program with respect to corporate sponsorship. This is partly the result of focusing on the national partners and partly from needing to delimit the size of the study.

Moreover, because all of participants volunteered, their willingness to spend time discussing Olympic sustainability issues with an outside interviewer had the potential to skew the findings in an overly positive way. Nevertheless, on balance, the different interviewees provided similar accounts, which stood up well in light of the background information I was able to collect from documents and websites. Also, there was a clear sense that the number of interviews was sufficient to develop an initial picture of the interactions, relationships and management strategies of VANOC and the partners.

Patterns, for example, in describing partners relations with VANOC became well established in the data and achieved saturation.

Finally, as the data collection and analysis was all conducted by one person, the researcher's personal bias should be acknowledged. As a doctorate student researcher with previous experience with the Beijing Olympic Games, I attempted to represent participants' diverse perspectives through my meaning-making process, as shaped by my research intention, my reading of relevant literature, and my own background. In keeping with the interpretive paradigm, I endeavored to make meaning of participants' perspectives based on their positions situated in their working environment. In the process of writing-up the findings, I integrated my own interpretations with those from the literature to add additional meaning and depth to the data. This also helped me to anchor my perceptions in the ideas of the academic community as well as the reports of the industry representatives I interviewed, but I acknowledge that others may read the data in different ways depending on their perspectives and backgrounds.

#### **10.4 Future Studies**

Using this research as a starting point, I recommend that more work be done in the area of qualitative and quantitative research on Olympic sustainability in terms of corporate sponsorship because a mixed methods approach would get the most potential to reveal the complexities involved. In particular, future research should examine the return on sustainability (ROS) as a result of the sponsors' commitment to Olympic

sustainability. Also, it would be very important to examine what intended beneficiaries of sustainability efforts and how such efforts can be extended to those in host communities who did not benefit, as claimed by Owen (2005)

Methodologically, if qualitative methods are used to study Olympic sponsors and sustainability, it is recommended that participant observation be used in addition to in-depth interviews. Observations and audits could substantially enhance the methodological rigor and value of such a study.

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## APPENDIX I: SAMPLES OF INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

### Interview Questions for VANOC

#### **Opening Comments:**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how corporate sponsorship can contribute to Olympic sustainability and I received an IOC postgraduate research grant for this in 2008. I am doing this for my doctoral degree at UBC. There are no right and wrong answers as we are interested in hearing your views on two main topics:

- 1) your perspectives on why Olympic sustainability is important,
- 2) your perspectives on, experiences with, and knowledge of how to manage partnerships with corporate sponsors in terms of appropriate structures, processes and evaluation strategies to achieve sustainability goals.

#### **General Questions**

- What is your role at VANOC? How long have you been in this position?
- What are your responsibilities in terms of VANOC's sustainability goals?
  - ✓ In its development?
  - ✓ In its implementation?
- Do you have responsibilities with corporate partners? If so, what are they?

#### **Research Questions**

**RQ #1: What are the strategic motivations for VANOC to establish sustainability goals for Vancouver 2010? What are the strategic motivations of corporations to enter Olympic sponsorship in relation to sustainability?**

- What is VANOC's definition of sustainability and what specific goals do you hope to achieve?
- Why are sustainability goals important to VANOC?
- Are these goals connected to corporate social responsibility? How so?
- Does corporate sponsorship help VANOC achieve each sustainability goal?
  - ✓ In economic growth? Please provide an example
  - ✓ In environmental protection? Please provide an example
  - ✓ In social development? Please provide an example
- Do corporate sponsorships contribute in some areas more than others? For example, economic more than social, etc. Please provide examples.

**RQ#2: How are corporate sponsorship relationships being managed to achieve the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games sustainability goals?**

- How do you manage partnerships with those corporate partners in terms of VANOC sustainability goals? Do you use the same or different strategies for the various partners? Why or why not?
- What organizational structures are in place with corporate sponsors to facilitate VANOC to achieve its sustainability goals?
  - ✓ Are both equally responsible?
  - ✓ What is the reporting structure?
  - ✓ Do you assign personnel to be responsible for communication with corporate partners?
- What organizational processes are in place with corporate sponsors to facilitate VANOC to achieve its sustainability goals?
  - ✓ How do you communicate with one another?
  - ✓ Do you have any difficulty to negotiate with corporate partners? Why or why not?
  - ✓ How much time do you spend to manage the relationships with corporate partners? Do you think it is enough?
  - ✓ Do you have any measurement to assess whether or not corporate partners are satisfied with VANOC?
- Is VANOC learning from corporate sponsors and are they learning from VANOC in terms of achieving these goals? Please provide examples.

**RQ#3: How do VANOC and corporate sponsors expect to evaluate the attainment of Olympic sustainability goals?**

- What you have accomplished to date in terms of sustainability?
- What do you hope to achieve in the future in this area?
- How you will know if you have accomplished what you set out to do?
- Do you have any plan to continue VANOC's sustainability projects after VANOC is dissolved?

**Closing Comments:**

That is all for our formal interview. Do you have any other thoughts or comments about this topic that you would like to add? Thank you for your input. Finally, could you please let me know if you would like a summary report when my study is completed?

## **Interview Questions for Corporate Partners**

### **Opening Comments:**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how corporate sponsorship can contribute to Olympic sustainability and I received on IOC postgraduate research grant in 2008. I am doing this for my doctoral degree at UBC. There are no right and wrong answers as we are interested in hearing your views on three main topics:

- 1) your perspectives on why corporate social responsibility (CSR) approaches to sport sponsorship, particular in Olympic sustainability is important,
- 2) your perspectives on, experiences with, knowledge of how to integrate VANOC's sustainability goals into your company's Olympic sponsorship strategies, and
- 3) your perspectives on managing partnerships with VNAOC including such information as appropriate structures, processes, and evaluation strategies for helping to identify, define and benchmark these goals.

### **General Questions**

- What is your role at your company? How long have you been in this position?
- Do you have responsibility in relation to Vancouver 2010 Olympic Games? If so, what are they?

### **Research Questions**

**RQ#1: What are the strategic motivations for VANOC to establish sustainability goals for Vancouver 2010? What are the strategic motivations of corporations to enter Olympic sponsorship in relation to sustainability?**

- Are you aware of VANOC's sustainability goals? How is it being defined?
- Are these goals connected to corporate social responsibility? How so?
- How do the VANOC's sustainability goals relate your company's Olympic sponsorship?
- Does corporate sponsorship help VANOC achieve each sustainability goal?
  - ✓ In economic growth? Please provide an example
  - ✓ In environmental protection? Please provide an example
  - ✓ In social development? Please provide an example
- Do corporate sponsorships contribute in some areas more than others? For example, economic more than social, etc. Please provide examples.

**RQ#2: How can sport sponsorship relationships be managed to achieve the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games sustainability goals?**

- Do you think that managing partnerships with VANOC is a key to fulfilling your company's sponsorship goals? Why or why not?
- What elements do you perceive to be critical in terms of managing partnerships with

VANOC?

- In organizational structures? Please provide examples.
  - What is the reporting structure?
  - Do you assign personnel to be responsible for daily communication with VANOC?
  - Which department in VANOC do you communicate the most in terms of VANOC sustainability goals?
- In organizational processes? Please provide examples.
  - How do you communicate with one another?
  - Do you have any difficulty to negotiate with VANOC? Why or why not?
  - How much time do you spend to manage the relationships with VANOC? Do you think it is enough?
  - Do you have any measurement of assess whether or not VANOC is satisfied with your company? Alternatively, does VANOC have any evaluation system to assess whether or not your corporate partners are satisfied with VANOC?
- Is VANOC learning from you company and your company learning from VANOC in terms of achieving these goals? Please provide examples.

**RQ#3: How do VANOC and corporate sponsors expect to evaluate the attainment of Olympic sustainability goals?**

- What you have accomplished to date in terms of sustainability?
- What you hope to achieve in the future in this area?
- How you will know if you have accomplished what you set out to do?
- Do you have any plan to continue VANOC's sustainability projects after VANOC is dissolved?
- What are the potential benefits to your company with respect to VANOC's sustainability projects?
- What are the barriers to your involvement in VANOC's sustainability projects?

**Closing Comments:**

We have finished our formal interview. Do you have any other thoughts or comments about this topic that you would like to add? Thank you for your input. Finally, could you please let me know if you would like a summary report when my study is completed?

## Interview Guide for the Third Parties

### Interview questions for 2010 Legacies Now

#### **Opening Comments:**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how corporate sponsorship can contribute Olympic sustainability. There are no right and wrong answers as we are interested in hearing your views on two main topics:

- 1) your perspectives on why VANOC's sustainability goals are important,
- 2) your perspectives on how VANOC's sustainability goals can be realized as its promises.

#### **General Questions:**

- What is your role at 2010 Legacies Now? How long have you been in this position?
- Do you have any contact with VANOC? How so?

#### **Research Questions:**

**RQ#1: What are the strategic motivations for VANOC to establish sustainability goals for Vancouver 2010? What are the strategic motivations of corporations to enter Olympic sponsorship in relation to sustainability?**

- Are you aware of VANOC's sustainability goals? What are they?
- How do you interpret VANOC's sustainability goals? Do you have different understanding of what the economic, environmental and social goals are?
- Do you involve VANOC's sustainability programs? Why or why not? How so?
- Do you have any contact with VANOC sustainability group? If so, which department do you communicate most?

**RQ#2: How are corporate sponsorship relationships being managed to achieve the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games sustainability goals?**

- Are you aware of VANOC's primary corporate partners? What are they?
- Do you have any contact with these VANOC's corporate partners? How can these major corporate partners contribute to VANOC's sustainability goals?
- Is VANOC learning from corporate sponsors and are they learning from VANOC in terms of achieving these goals? Please provide examples.

**RQ#3: How do VANOC and corporate sponsors expect to evaluate the attainment of Olympic sustainability goals?**

- To what degree do you think that VANOC can meet its sustainability goals?
- How do you evaluate VANOC's sustainability performances?
- Do you anticipate the further VANOC's sustainability goals with respect to

partnerships with those corporate sponsors after Vancouver 2010? Why or why not?

**Closing Comments:**

That is all for my formal interview. Do you have any other thoughts or comments about this topic that you would like to add? Thank you for your input. Finally, could you please let me know if you would like a summary report when my study is completed?

## Interview questions for *Vancouver Sun* journalists

### **Opening Comments:**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how corporate sponsorship can contribute Olympic sustainability. There are no right and wrong answers as we are interested in hearing your views on two main topics:

- 1) your perspectives on why VANOC's sustainability goals are important,
- 2) your perspectives on how VANOC's sustainability goals can be realized as its promises.

### **General Questions:**

- What is your role at Vancouver Sun? How long have you been in this position?
- Do you have any contact with VANOC?

### **Research Questions:**

**RQ#1: What are the strategic motivations for VANOC to establish sustainability goals for Vancouver 2010? What are the strategic motivations of corporations to enter Olympic sponsorship in relation to sustainability?**

- Are you aware of VANOC's sustainability goals? If so, what are they?
- How do you get the news about VANOC?
- What does VANOC sustainability stand for?
- Who is the key contact in VANOC? Who is the group being interviewed?
- Where do you get information from?

**RQ#2: How are corporate sponsorship relationships being managed to achieve the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games sustainability goals?**

- Are you aware of VANOC's primary corporate partners? If so, what are they?
- Do you have any contact with these VANOC's corporate partners? How can these major corporate partners contribute to VANOC's sustainability goals?
- Is VANOC learning from corporate sponsors and are they learning from VANOC in terms of achieving these goals? Please provide examples.

**RQ#3: How do VANOC and corporate sponsors expect to evaluate the attainment of Olympic sustainability goals?**

- Who would satisfy the story in relation to VANOC sustainability performances?
- How do you frame the story?
- Who's the news media sponsor? Does it affect your tell story if *Vancouver Sun* is the sponsor? Why or why not?
- How you will know if VANOC has accomplished what it set out to do?
- Do you have any predictions that VANOC's sustainability projects will continue

after VANOC is dissolved? Why or why not?

**Closing Comments:**

That is all for my forma interview. Do you have any other thoughts or comments about this topic that you would like to add? Thank you for your input. Finally, could you please let me know if you would like a summary report when my study is completed? .

## Interview questions for IOCC

### **Opening Comments:**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how corporate sponsorship can contribute Olympic sustainability. There are no right and wrong answers as we are interested in hearing your views on two main topics:

- 1) your perspectives on why VANOC's sustainability goals are important,
- 2) your perspectives on how VANOC's sustainability goals can be realized as its promises.

### **General Questions:**

- What is your role at IOCC? How long have you been in this position?
- Do you have any contact with VANOC? Why or why not?

**RQ #1: What are the strategic motivations for VANOC to establish sustainability goals for Vancouver 2010? What are the strategic motivations of corporations to enter Olympic sponsorship in relation to sustainability?**

- Are you aware of VANOC's sustainability goals? What are they?
- Have you read VANOC Sustainability Report 2005-06? How do you evaluate this report?
- How do you interpret VANOC's sustainability goals? Do you have different understanding of what the economic, environmental and social impacts are?
- Who will benefit from VANOC's sustainability projects?

**RQ#2: How are corporate sponsorship relationships being managed to achieve the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games sustainability goals?**

- Are you aware of VANOC's primary corporate partners? What are they?
- Do you think that these corporate partners can help to realize these goals? How so?
- Is VANOC learning from corporate sponsors and are they learning from VANOC in terms of achieving these goals? Please provide examples.

**RQ#3: How do VANOC and corporate sponsors expect to evaluate the attainment of Olympic sustainability goals?**

- Do you involve VANOC's sustainability programs? How so? Please provide examples.
- Sydney 2000 invited Greenpeace to be its consultant. Does VANOC do the same? Why or why not?
- Can you describe the relationship between VANOC and IOCC? How so?
- To what degree do you think that VANOC can meet its sustainability goals?
- How do you evaluate VANOC's sustainability performances?

- Do you anticipate the further VANOC's sustainability goals with respect to partnerships with those corporate sponsors after Vancouver 2010? Why or why not? How so?

**Closing Comments:**

That is all for my formal interview. Do you have any other thoughts or comments that you would like to add? Thank you for your input. Finally, could you please let me know if you would like a summary report when my study is completed?

## APPENDIX II: UBC ETHICAL APPROVAL



*The University of British Columbia*  
*Office of Research Services*  
**Behavioural Research Ethics Board**  
 Suite 102, 6190 Agronomy Road,  
 Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z3

### CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL - MINIMAL RISK

<b>PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:</b> Robert E.C. Sparks	<b>INSTITUTION / DEPARTMENT:</b> UBC/Education/Human Kinetics	<b>UBC BREB NUMBER:</b> H07-02487
<b>INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT:</b>		
<b>Institution</b>	<b>Site</b>	
N/A	N/A	
<b>Other locations where the research will be conducted:</b>		
Phase 1: The interviews will be conducted in the offices of the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) in Vancouver upon approval. Phase 2: Interviews will be conducted in a location convenient to the participants (e.g., participant's office, meeting room or hotel, coffee house) in Vancouver.		
<b>CO-INVESTIGATOR(S):</b>		
Xinquan (Sheena) Yang		
Wendy Frisby		
<b>SPONSORING AGENCIES:</b>		
N/A		
<b>PROJECT TITLE:</b>		
Managing Relationships and Developing Sustainability: A Case Study of VANOC and the Vancouver 2010 National Partners		

**CERTIFICATE EXPIRY DATE: January 16, 2009**

<b>DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:</b>	<b>DATE APPROVED:</b> January 16, 2008
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Document Name	Version	Date
<b><u>Consent Forms:</u></b>		
Consent Form for VANOC	December 4, 2007	December 4, 2007
Consent Form for Corporate Partners	December 4, 2007	December 4, 2007
<b><u>Questionnaire, Questionnaire Cover Letter, Tests:</u></b>		
Interview Questions for Corporate Partners	November 28, 2007	November 28, 2007
Interview Questions for VANOC	November 28, 2007	November 28, 2007
<b><u>Letter of Initial Contact:</u></b>		
Letter of Initial Contact for VANOC	December 4, 2007	December 4, 2007
Letter of Initial Contact for Corporate Partners	December 4, 2007	December 4, 2007

The application for ethical review and the document(s) listed above have been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

*Approval is issued on behalf of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board  
and signed electronically by one of the following:*

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Dr. M. Judith Lynam, Chair  
Dr. Jim Rupert, Associate Chair  
Dr. Laurie Ford, Associate Chair

### **APPENDIX III: SAMPLE OF LETTER OF INITIAL CONTACT**

Dear [Name of Potential Participant]

I am writing to invite you to participate in a research project I am conducting on the role of sponsorship in supporting Olympic sustainability. The project, entitled *Managing the Relationship and Developing Sustainability: the Case of VANOC and the Vancouver 2010 National Partners*, is funded by a grant from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Postgraduate Research Grant Programme 2008. Information collected from the research will be used in my dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of British Columbia (UBC), Faculty of Graduate Studies, and School of Human Kinetics. The information may also be used in the future for other scholarly productions, such as journal papers, conference presentations, and/or professional workbooks. My research supervisor is Dr. Robert Sparks, Professor and Director, School of Human Kinetics, who can be reached at 604-822-9050. My research co-supervisor is Dr. Wendy Frisby, Professor, School of Human Kinetics, who can be reached at 604-822-3018.

The goal of this letter is to request an interview with you about your experiences working on Olympic sustainability projects in VANOC. Your perspective is important and your participation would add real world knowledge and experience to our understandings of how Olympic sustainability goals can be achieved through partnerships with corporate sponsors.

The study involves participating in at least one interview lasting up to one and a half hours. The interview will focus on questions related to the topics mentioned above. I have attached an information and consent form sheet that gives you more information about the study and about the guidelines that this study will follow regarding confidentiality and research ethics.

Please look over the information and consent sheet. I will contact you in 3 days to invite you to participate in the study. If you are available, please let me know by e-mail or phone, and we can work out a time and location for an interview that is convenient for you. Thank you very much for your time and for considering this request. I am looking forward to being in touch.

Sincerely,

Xinquan (Sheena) Yang, PhD student, School of Human Kinetics, University of British Columbia. Tel: 604-822-4267; 604-716-1996; Email: [xsy@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:xsy@interchange.ubc.ca)

## APPENDIX IV: SAMPLE OF CONSENT FORM

### **Title of Study: Managing Relationships and Developing Sustainability: the Case of VANOC and the Vancouver 2010 National Partners**

#### **Principal Investigator:**

Dr. Robert Sparks, PhD. Professor, School of Human Kinetics. Telephone: 604-822-9050  
Email: [res@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:res@interchange.ubc.ca)

#### **Co-Investigator(s):**

Wendy Frisby, PhD. Professor, School of Human Kinetics. Telephone: 604-822-3018  
Email: [frisby@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:frisby@interchange.ubc.ca)

Xinquan (Sheena) Yang, Ph.D. Student, School of Human Kinetics. Telephone: 604-716-1996  
Email: [xsy@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:xsy@interchange.ubc.ca)

Note: This research is part of Doctor of Philosophy degree program in the School of Human Kinetics

**Purpose:** This study aims to find out more about the perspectives of individuals, such as yourself who are working in the area of Olympic sustainability, in order to better understand how corporate sponsorship can contribute to Olympic sustainability. The research focuses on the partnership management strategies between the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) and six Vancouver 2010 National Partners, with an emphasis on the role of social responsibility imperatives in shaping corporate investment in sport and social development. The overall goal of the research is to examine how such relationships can support the sustainability initiatives of Olympic organizing committees in host countries.

The study is intended to integrate real world information with ‘best practices’ research to contribute new knowledge about how to optimally manage corporate-sport relationships in terms of appropriate structures, processes, and evaluation strategies in the sustainability field. The results of the study are meant to help Olympic management practitioners and policy-makers more effectively engage social responsibility issues in planning and staging the Games, as identified by the Olympic organizers and corporate

sponsors themselves. This ‘shared knowledge’ approach may be helpful in your future work.

**Study Procedures:** You will be contacted by either email or telephone to arrange an interview at your convenience. The interview will focus on your perspectives on how to best manage corporate partner relationships to achieve sustainability goals in the Vancouver context, and will last approximately one hour. You may also be invited to participate in a follow-up interview. A digital audio recorder will be used to record the interview. The digital audio files will be loaded onto a computer and will only be used for a transcription of the interview.

**Confidentiality:** Before the interview we will discuss the level of anonymity that you would like to have. If you would prefer that your identity not be known, then your name will not be referred to in any documents associated with the completed study. All information resulting from this research will be kept strictly confidential. The transcripts from the data will be secured by password on a computer and the audio files similarly will be secured by password in a separate folder on the computer. Consent forms will be kept in a sealed envelope and locked in a separate filing cabinet from other study materials. All records will be maintained for 5 years and then shredded (paper) and erased (data files). The computer files will be kept on a computer and in a locked cabinet at UBC. Only Dr. Sparks, Dr. Frisby and Ms. Yang will have access to the forms, information and data files.

**Remuneration/Compensation:** You will be given a bottle of ice wine, made in Canada, in appreciation of your participation.

**Your Voluntary Participation:** Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are free to not answer any question, and you may withdraw from the interview and the study at any time without any consequences whatsoever.

**Contact for information about the study:** If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study, you may contact Dr. Robert Sparks at 604-822-9050 Dr. Wendy Frisby at 604-822-3018 or Xinquan Yang at 604-716-1996.

**Contact for concerns about the rights of research subjects:** If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research subject, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 604-822-8598.

**Consent**

I have read the above information and understand the nature of the study. I understand that participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may refuse to participate in or withdraw from the study at any time.

I consent to the information I provide in the study to be used for a Ph.D. dissertation and scholarly publications written by the researchers.

I have received a copy of this consent form for my own record.

I hereby agree to the above stated conditions and consent to participate in this study.

---

Participant Signature

Date

---

Printed Name of the Participant

## **APPENDIX V: LIST OF ACRONYMS USED IN DISSERTATION**

**AISTS** – International Academy of Sports Science and Technology  
**BACSP** – Board Advisory Committee on Sustainability Performance  
**BC** – British Columbia  
**BOB** – Building Opportunities with Business Inner-City Society  
**CERES** – Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies  
**CSR** – Corporate Social Responsibility  
**ESD** – Ecological Sustainable Development  
**FHFN** – Four Host First Nation  
**FSC** – Forest Stewardship Council  
**GRI** – Global Reporting Initiatives  
**GM** – General Motors (GM) of Canada  
**HBC** – The Hudson’s Bay Company  
**IOC** – International Olympic Committee  
**IOCC** – Impact On Community Coalition  
**LEEDS** – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design System  
**NGOs** – Non-Governmental Organizations  
**Non-VOC** – Non Volatile Organic Compounds  
**OGI** – Olympic Games Impact Research Project  
**RBC** – Royal Bank of Canada  
**SHRC** – Sustainability and Human Resource Committee  
**SMRS** – Sustainability Management and Reporting System  
**SSI** – 2010 Sponsor Sustainability Initiative  
**SSET** – Sustainable Sport and Event Toolkit  
**UNEP** – United Nations Environment Program  
**VANOC** – Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games

## APPENDIX VI: LIST OF NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS BEING MENTIONED

**Building Opportunities with Business (BOB)** is a non-profit organization that is championing an inclusive revitalization process for the inner-city that values existing businesses and residents in Vancouver. BOB is a connector, a resource and a facilitator working to: strengthen the inner-city's community capacity; identify and build on untapped business opportunities; improve employment opportunities and retention; and increase investment in Vancouver's inner-city.

<http://www.buildingopportunities.org/>

**Calgary Olympic Development Association (CODA)** was founded in 1956 to bid on behalf of Calgary to host an Olympic Winter, winning the bid on September 30, 1981 to host the XV Olympic Winter Games. CODA was then restructured to manage the legacy of the Games. Working with partners in sport, its vision is to create Canadian Olympic winter sport excellence, from the grassroots level to the country's Olympic best.

[http://www.coda.ca//aboutcoda/our\\_story.cfm](http://www.coda.ca//aboutcoda/our_story.cfm)

**Construction Orientation and Retention for Employment Foundation (CORE)** is a construction readiness programs that will prepare inner-city residents, Aboriginal peoples and others for entry level construction jobs. The Vancouver Regional Construction Association is responsible for the delivery of the CORE program. One hundred of jobs available through the CORE program will be at the Games sites including the Vancouver Olympic and Paralympic Village.

<http://www.itabc.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=641>

<http://www.vancouver2010.com/en/news/news-releases/-/37580/32566/1974t9p/rona-and-vanoc-open-fabricatio.html>

**Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)** is an independent, non-government, not for profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world's forests.

<http://www.fsc.org/about-fsc.html>

**ParticipACTION** is a private, not-for-profit corporation. Originally established in 1971, ParticipACTION operated for nearly 30 years and was a leading catalyst to encourage healthy, active living for all Canadians. In late 2006, ParticipACTION received renewed commitment from the government (Sport Canada and Public Health Agency of Canada) and was revitalized in February 2007.

<http://www.participaction.com/en-us/AboutParticipaction/AboutParticipaction.aspx>

**Spirit of BC Week 2006** is to encourage all communities to embrace the spirit of achievement, effort, inclusion, celebration and excellence; the five elements that define the Spirit of BC. This year communities are encouraged to feature events not only in sport and recreation but in arts and culture, volunteerism, and literacy.

<http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/135/>

The **BC Aboriginal Youth Sport Legacy Fund** supports programs assisting BC's Aboriginal youth to prosper in sport. Administered by 2010 Legacies Now, the BC Aboriginal Youth Sport Legacy Fund was created in partnership by the Province of BC, Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation, and the Vancouver 2010 Bid Corporation. Created in 2002, the BC Aboriginal Youth Sport Legacy Fund (AYSLF) has three grant programs to support BC Aboriginal youth who are pursuing a future in sport and recreation. Squamish and Lil'wat Nation and Province of British Columbia appointed the 2010 Legacies Now Society trustee for the BC Aboriginal Youth Sport Legacy Fund.

[http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/aboriginalyouth\\_sport\\_fund/](http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/aboriginalyouth_sport_fund/)

The **First Nations Snowboard Team**, which is largely funded by the Aboriginal Youth Sport Legacy Fund, is using sport to create a legacy of healthy, physically active youth who strive for personal excellence. Founded in 2004, the First Nations Snowboard Team (FNST) offers two programs: Recreation program where youth can improve their snowboarding skills in a comfortable environment; High-performance team which offer athletes training by a world-class coach. The team members receive free training, equipment and passes to various mountains. They must also commit to a drug- and alcohol-free lifestyle, a minimum C+ grade average in school, and 90 percent of the training schedule. For the 2008/09 season, the FNST has more than 140 youth in the recreation program and 24 athletes on the high-performance team.

[http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/aboriginalyouth\\_sport\\_fund/](http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/aboriginalyouth_sport_fund/)

The **Fraser Basin Council (FBC)** is focused on advancing sustainability throughout the entire Fraser River Basin. The long-term vision of the FBC is to ensure that the Fraser Basin is a place where social well-being is supported by a vibrant economy and sustained by a healthy environment – a true reflection of sustainability.

[http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/about\\_us/index.html](http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/about_us/index.html)

The **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)** Green Building Rating System, developed by the **U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)**, provides a suite of standards for environmentally sustainable construction. Since its inception in 1998, The LEED Green Building Rating System<sup>TM</sup> designed by the U.S. Green Building Council advances energy and material efficiency and sustainability for New Construction (LEED-NC) and for Existing Buildings (LEED-EB)

<http://www.green.ca.gov/GreenBuildings/leed.htm>

**The RONA Foundation**, which was created in 1998, provides assistance for young people between the ages of 12 and 30 by supporting organizations and projects that fight against problems such as dropping out of school or illiteracy, or that offer them training so that they can work at a trade or in a profession.

[http://www.rona.ca/content/rona-foundation-unleashing-potential-youth\\_profile\\_investor-relations](http://www.rona.ca/content/rona-foundation-unleashing-potential-youth_profile_investor-relations)

The **RBC 2010 Legacies Now Speaker Series** enables BC businesses and communities to learn from international experts in the Olympic and Paralympic Games industry. The RBC 2010 Legacies Now Speakers Series hosted ten speakers over the past three years who shared their experience around the opportunities available resulting from BC hosting the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

[http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/rbc\\_speaker\\_series/](http://www.2010legaciesnow.com/rbc_speaker_series/)

The **Sustainability Purchasing Network (SPN)** is a learning resource for corporate, not-for-profit, academic, government, public sector, labour, and co-operative organizations in their sustainability purchasing efforts. The Network serves the needs of organizations through sustainability purchasing training, resources, and projects. The SPN is a program of the [Fraser Basin Council](#), a BC-based not-for-profit organization. April 22, 2009 from

<http://www.buysmartbc.com/>

**VolWeb.ca™** was created by 2010 Legacies Now to encourage volunteerism and increase access to volunteer opportunities across Canada, leading up to and beyond the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. It is supported by the Province of British Columbia and numerous other partners, including CTV, Volunteer BC and Volunteer Canada. Volweb.ca™ launched in 2005 and has grown considerably since then, attracting both event organizers and volunteers interested in special event volunteering.

<http://volweb.ca/volweb/aboutus.php>

**Zero Ceiling** works with Youth Agencies in Vancouver and the lower Mainland to identify youth who may benefit from the opportunity to participate in a day of mountain biking or snowboarding. Began in December 1997, Zero Ceiling is an unbiased charitable society that offers innovative snowboarding programs to at-risk youth and street youth. Through adventure-based learning, employment skills training and personal development, Zero Ceiling is making a difference

[http://www.zeroceiling.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1&Itemid=23](http://www.zeroceiling.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1&Itemid=23)

## APPENDIX VII: LIST OF CODES

- Motivation – VANOC – Bid commitment
- Motivation – Corporate sponsors – environmental friendly technology/product
- Motivation – Corporate sponsors – employee engagement
- Motivation – Corporate sponsors – volunteer opportunities
- Motivation – Corporate sponsors – community engagement
- Motivation – Corporate sponsors – social responsibility
- Motivation – Corporate sponsors – taking a leadership role in sustainability
- Motivation – Corporate sponsors – brand differentiation by sustainability initiatives
- Motivation – Corporate sponsors – corporate history of Olympic engagement
- Motivation – Corporate sponsors – raising awareness of sustainable living
- Motivation – Corporate sponsors – providing partnership business opportunity with other sponsors
- Sustainability goal – Economic growth – BOB – Bell
- Sustainability goal – Economic growth – Buy Smart – HBC
- Sustainability goal – Economic growth – 2010 Commerce Center
- Sustainability goal – Economic growth – RBC seminars
- Sustainability goal – Environmental protection – protect bio-diversity
- Sustainability goal – Environmental protection – Hybrid vehicles
- Sustainability goal – Environmental protection – alternative fuels
- Sustainability goal – Social responsibility – Aboriginal cultural center
- Sustainability goal – Social responsibility – *Ceiling* snow boarding program
- Sustainability goal – Social responsibility – *Chill* snow boarding program
- Sustainability goal – Social Responsibility – RONA Vancouver 2010 fabrication shop
- Partnership Initiation – Strategic – fit
- Partnership Initiation – Strategic – goal/objective
- Partnership Initiation – Strategic – sustainability component
- Partnership Initiation – Strategic – partner selection – product category
- exclusivity
- Partnership Initiation – Strategic – competence
- Partnership Management – Organizational structure – shared goals
- Partnership Management – Organizational structure – assigned personnel
- Partnership Management – Organizational structure – well-organizational structure
- Partnership Management – Organizational structure – non-contract support
- Partnership Management – Organizational structure – flexibility

Partnership Management – Organizational process – communication  
Partnership Management – Organizational process – commitment  
Partnership Management – Organizational process – sharing learning  
Partnership Management – Organizational process – open relationship  
Partnership Management – Organizational process – willingness to find a solution  
Partnership Evaluation – Partner Satisfaction Survey  
Partnership Evaluation – Self-evaluation  
Partnership Evaluation – Media relations – tensions  
Partnership Evaluation – Issues – other  
Sustainability and CSR – Best practices  
Sustainability and CSR – VANCO working definition  
Sustainability and CSR – triple bottom line  
Sustainability Governance – VANOC – hybrid – corporate, non-profit,  
government  
Sustainability Governance – VANOC sustainability objectives  
Sustainability Governance – VANOC sustainability procedure  
Sustainability Governance – Board Advisory Committee on Sustainability  
Performance  
Sustainability Evaluation – VANOC sustainability management and reporting  
system  
Sustainability Evaluation – Global Reporting Initiative Guidelines  
Sustainability Evaluation – Vancouver 2010 Sustainability reports  
Sustainability Evaluation – Partner sustainability star program  
Sustainability Evaluation – Issues – vogue  
Sustainability Evaluation – Issues – too broad  
Sustainability Evaluation – Issues – beyond corporate expertise  
Sustainability Evaluation – Issues – watchdog to be partnered  
Sustainability Evaluation – Issues – ‘Greenwashing’  
Sponsorship Activation – 2010 SSI – organizational structure – network  
Sponsorship Activation – 2010 SSI – operation – regular meetings  
Sponsorship Activation – 2010 SSI – organizational learning  
Sponsorship Activation – 2010 SSI – business-to-business activation  
Sponsorship Activation – 2010 SSI – business-to-consumer activation  
Sponsorship Activation – 2010 SSI – issues – confusion about VANOC’ role  
Sponsorship Activation – 2010 SSI – issues – VANOC lacked activation budgets  
Sustainability Legacies – 2010 Legacies Now – business planning approach  
Sustainability Legacies – 2010 Legacies Now – relationship with VANOC  
Sustainability Legacies – 2010 Legacies Now – relationship with corporate  
sponsors