WHO Commission on the Social Determinants of Health

Canada’s Participation and Response

Presentation
May 23, 2006
Geneva
Purpose

• Summarize Canada’s involvement with and support to the Commission

• Outline initiatives in Canada that build on the work of the Commission
Importance of the Commission

• Global need for visible leadership – profile the real causes of health disparities, inequalities.
• Requirements for synthesized evidence on effective/ promising policies, strategies.
• Benefit of sharing international experiences in how to strengthen commitment.
• Need for innovative thinking and practical ways to overcome barriers.
Canada’s Support to the Commission

1. Canadian Commissioners (2)
   - funding assistance to meetings
   - analytical support

2. Knowledge Networks
   - Funding assistance to:
     Early Childhood Development and Education
     Health Systems
     Globalization and Health
   - Canadian participation on other Knowledge Networks
Canada’s Support to the Commission

3. Country Action Partnership
   • Canadian Case Study
   • Models and Processes – Lessons Learned from Canada
   • Potential bilateral partnership(s)

4. Potential Commission Meeting in Canada
   • June, 2007
   • Investigating possible financial assistance
Canadian Initiatives on the Social Determinants

- WHO Commission serving as a catalyst in Canada
  - renewed attention and dialogue on disparities reduction

- Increased engagement of government and non-government stakeholders

- Coordinated planning underway
  - recognized need for coherent, intersectoral approach
Canadian Initiatives on the Social Determinants

Research/ Knowledge Development

- increased funding to policy research and analysis
  - new studies and reports
- initiatives to engage researchers and policy-makers

Leadership and Infrastructure

- Canadian Reference Group on SDOH
- Public Health Network – Expert Group on Population Health Promotion
Initiatives – Under Development / Consideration

- Inter-sectoral Action – Best Practices Review
- Building the Case – Economic Arguments
- Strategies for Engaging the Public
- Development of Indicators on Disparities/Inequalities
- Mechanisms for whole-of-government approach
Conclusion

• Greatest health gains by addressing the “causes of the causes”
• Syntheses of knowledge to inform policy is fundamental
• Innovative approaches and practical tools critical for action
• The Commission is focused on these needs

How can you engage and benefit from the Commission’s work?