



RURAL
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE

**Enhancing and Linking Ethnocultural Organizations
and Communities in Rural Manitoba:
A Focus on Brandon and Steinbach**

Final Project Report

April 14, 2009



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Rural Development Institute, Brandon University

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RDI functions as a not-for-profit research and development organization designed to promote, facilitate, coordinate, initiate and conduct multi-disciplinary academic and applied research on rural issues. The Institute provides an interface between academic research efforts and the community by acting as a conduit of rural research information and by facilitating community involvement in rural development. RDI projects are characterized by cooperative and collaborative efforts of multi-stakeholders.

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Submitted to:
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Introduction to Project

Immigration to rural areas is a significant element of Manitoba's overall immigration experience and thus shifting attention from Winnipeg to other communities is needed to better understand immigration in the province. Rural communities receiving immigrants struggle to ensure adequate service provision, in part, because there are few pre-established institutions or organizations in these areas to assist newcomers. An important factor in immigrant attraction, settlement, and retention is the role of ethnocultural organizations and communities; however, in rural communities without large immigrant populations, these organizations may not be well established or exist at all. According to the Canadian Ethnocultural Council (2004)

Ethnocultural organizations support settlement programs and associations involved in meeting the needs of newcomers to the country. They also strengthen the development of structures that form the underpinning of the economic, cultural, and social wellbeing of our society. The structures become part of the vital Canadian voluntary sector and contribute to nation building in Canada.

The development and establishment of ethnocultural organizations is a vital part of meeting the needs of newcomers and ensuring a vibrant, diverse community.

Examining the role of the social economy in rural regions can compliment and enhance understandings of rural immigration and ethnocultural organizations. In small communities that do not have the infrastructure that benefits larger centres, the social economy and related enterprises can be a viable alternative to traditional service delivery mechanisms (Kangayi, Olfert, and Partridge 2007). An integral aspect of the social economy in communities that receive immigrants is the role of ethnocultural organizations and communities as well as immigrant service provider organizations. Without such social supports in place newcomers face challenges in fostering social networks and meeting basic needs such as housing, education, and employment. Ethnocultural organizations and communities provide members with increased social resources that assist in finding employment, pursuing education, and meeting other social needs. It is important to understand how these organizations operate outside of urban centres because it is in rural areas where these organizations receive less attention and fewer resources. From the perspective of the community, if successful settlement and retention of newcomers is desired then steps must be taken to ensure a welcoming community with adequate supports and resources.

Ethnocultural groups must be encouraged to build capacity as they have an important role to play in developing welcoming communities and contributing to the social economy of rural communities. If these organizations are encouraged to build capacity they have the potential to alleviate some of the pressures on traditional government-funded immigrant service provider organizations.

There is little to no research on ethnocultural organizations existing outside of Winnipeg in rural areas. Furthermore, there is no research exploring the organizational structure, history, membership, and operations of ethnocultural organizations and communities in rural areas. The principle objective of the project is to gain insight into the processes of establishment and development of ethnocultural communities and organizations, the factors that contribute to their success, and what barriers may hinder these associations. Also, to ensure that ethnocultural organizations and communities in rural Manitoba have opportunities to obtain as much

information as possible, one of the goals of this research project is to establish an on-line resource including a list of organizations, sources of information, and resources.

This project will leverage and compliment work currently being conducted at the Rural Development Institute (RDI). Recently, RDI has focused research efforts on rural immigration, temporary foreign workers, and welcoming communities. A guiding question for all immigration-related initiatives at RDI is what is the capacity of rural communities to attract immigrants, to welcome diversity, and to accommodate immigrants. This project is part of a larger research initiative designed to understand the scope of immigration to Brandon and southwestern Manitoba, with particular focus on how communities can become more welcoming.

Methodology

Initially, the project intended to adopt a case study approach focusing on three rural Manitoba communities and the nature of social enterprises and ethnocultural organizations in the these regions. However, after a thorough review of social enterprises and ethnocultural organizations/communities in rural areas it became evident that there were no cases that could be researched. It was decided that the project would have to focus on how the linkages between ethnocultural organizations/communities and social enterprises could be made and the benefits of doing so, instead of in-depth case studies. The project has had to shift focus because of the limited number of research subjects.

A focus group-style workshop was conducted in Brandon, bringing together representatives from ethnocultural communities and other organizations to help bridge the gap between newcomers and established non-government organizations. This activity proved to be a valuable source of information as well as a stimulus for organizations to start communicating with one another and discuss possibilities for community economic development. The scope of the workshop extended beyond the newcomer population and included long-time residents who are part of more established ethnocultural communities.

Community scans were conducted in two rural communities – Brandon and Steinbach – with particular attention being given to Brandon. Unfortunately, there were challenges with conducting more in-depth research in Steinbach because of limited numbers of ethnocultural organizations, difficulties making contacts, and the nature of ethnocultural organizations in the community. Preliminary information was gathered in Steinbach, but an in-depth case study could not be conducted.

While the overall focus of the project has not changed, the methods had to be modified to accommodate the actual nature of ethnocultural organizations/communities and social enterprise organizations in Brandon and Steinbach. The research process was instructive and prompted further consideration of the challenges associated with conducting research in rural areas where populations are small and resources are limited. Being flexible and able to adjust the scope and focus of research is an important lesson in conducting research with community organizations and in rural communities.

Role of Community Partner

The project's community partner, Hope Roberts of Westman Immigrant Services, was a valuable resource throughout the research process. She was instrumental in shaping the direction of the

project, guiding key questions, and providing “on-the-ground” observations and insights. Throughout the process of shaping and organizing the discussion session on ethnocultural communities, the community partner provided lists of invitees and encouraged newcomers and settlement workers to attend. As the Director of settlement programs at Westman Immigrant Services and Coordinator of the Immigrant Services Network, our community partner was expected to devote only as much time to the project as schedules would allow. It is anticipated that conclusions and next steps generated from the project will provide Westman Immigrant Services with valuable insights as they continue to evolve and adapt to Brandon’s diverse immigrant populations. Westman Immigrant Services continues to be an active and invaluable contributor to all immigration-related research initiatives at RDI. As Brandon’s only immigrant service providers, the organization is instrumental in raising and addressing concerns related to the ever-growing immigrant population in the community.

Activities Completed

- Literature review of social enterprises, social economy, and ethnocultural organizations/communities;
- Review of ethnocultural organizations/communities in Brandon, Manitoba;
- Participated in the “Tapestry of Our Community” Service Providers’ Fair in Brandon and produced the final report (see Appendix A);
- Participated in a tele-learning event organized by C-CED Network on newcomers and community economic development;
- Preliminary scan of ethnocultural organizations/communities in Steinbach, Manitoba;
- Consultations and discussions with community partner;
- Compiled electronic resources on ethnocultural organizations, community economic development, cooperatives, and social economy to populate project’s website [http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/rdi/ethnocultural_links.asp];
- Facilitated and hosted the discussion session entitled “Enhancing and Linking Ethnocultural Communities”; and
- Completed final reporting.

Background and Literature Review

Rural Immigration in Canada

More than one half of Canada’s population growth between 1996 and 2001 was due to immigration (Beshiri and Alfred 2002). From 1945 to 1970s, Britain and other European countries had been the main source of immigrants arriving to Canada. Although a smaller number of visible minorities have been present in Canada since the 1600s, the majority of immigrants from Asia, the Caribbean, Africa and the Middle East have been arriving since the 1960s. Since the 1980s, Canada has seen a doubling in visible minority numbers among its immigrant population (Budhu 2001). Immigrants coming from other source countries are arriving under different circumstances, bringing with them “unique human capital” to this country (Teixeira 2001).

In 1998, Manitoba became the first province in Canada to implement the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP) under which the provincial government nominates potential immigrants best

suited to the provincial economy. The program recognizes specific priorities, as well as economic, cultural and social needs of newcomers coming to the province (Chekki 2006). Although Manitoba never was a primary destination for immigrants in the past, there has been a steady increase in immigrant arrivals in the province since the introduction of the Provincial Nominee Program. Since 1998, more immigrants have arrived through the PNP than through federal streams (Chekki 2006; Silvius & Annis 2007). According to 2006 census reports, the immigrant population in Manitoba was 151,230, which equals 13.3% of the total population of the province. Between 2001 and 2006, immigration in the province was still below national average (2.8% in Manitoba compared to 3.6% in Canada), but this five-year period has seen more than twice as many immigrant arrivals in Manitoba when compared to the previous period from 1996 to 2000: there were 31,190 new immigrant arrivals to Manitoba between 2001 and 2006, compared to 14,290 immigrant arrivals between 1996 and 2000 (Statistics Canada 2007).

While Winnipeg continues to attract the majority of the immigrant population in the province (23,820 immigrants between 2001 and 2006), some smaller urban centers and rural communities have been receiving a steady flow of newcomers each year. For example, between 2001 and 2006, the number of immigrants to rural communities such as Brandon, Steinbach, and Winkler has almost doubled compared to the previous five-year period. While the numbers of immigrants to rural areas are smaller in comparison to those in urban areas, the number of newcomers to rural Manitoban regions is increasing, thus changing the demographic mosaic of these communities.

Immigration, especially immigration from non-European countries, has been predominantly an urban phenomenon. Literature addressing the impact of recent immigration increase to rural areas is scarce, but some scholars have recognized the potential impact of immigrant arrivals on the economic development and demographic growth of rural communities. In their recent publication, Bollman, Beshiri and Clemenson (2007) observe that although the flux of newcomers to rural communities is small, these flows “are large in terms of the contribution to the rural community. A small change in the choice of destination by immigrants can have a significant impact on rural community demographic growth” (14). Other studies have recognized the importance of immigration for maintaining population growth and economic development in rural areas. While the populations of rural communities continue a declining trend, successfully attracting and retaining immigrants can have a huge impact on the future of these communities by sustaining populations and stimulating regional development (Beshiri and Alfred 2002; Clemenson 2007; Sorensen 2007).

There are multiple motivations for newcomers to Canada to settle in rural areas – job opportunities, farmland, connections to family and friends, safety and security of smaller communities (Silvius & Annis 2007; Sorensen 2007). Among these, employment is consistently noted as the key factor for attracting and retaining immigrants in rural communities (Clemenson 2007; Sorensen 2007; Zehtab-Martin & Beesley 2007). Sorensen (2007) also mentions settlement support and cultural matching as other reasons for immigrants to choose certain rural areas.

Social Economy, Social Enterprise, and Ethnocultural Organizations / Communities

The Social Economy and Immigration

The term social economy first appeared in France in the first third of the 19th century. Although there is no absolute definition of social economy, literature on the topic agrees on several defining principles of social economy enterprises as related to their objectives and management practices. These common principles include focus on service to members and community over accumulation of capital, autonomous management of organizations, democratic decision-making practice within organizations and primacy of work and people over capital and revenue distribution (Defourny and Develtere 2000). As such, social economy initiatives comprise, according to Defourny and Develtere (2000), “any economic phenomenon that has a social dimension and any social phenomenon that has an economic dimension” (1).

Literature generally defines three main forms of social economy enterprises: co-operatives, mutual aid societies, and associations that include various non-profit organizations (Quarter 2000). The organizations operating within social economy were born out of necessity to address pressing issues in the society or a specific community. As explained by Defourny and Develtere (2000),

In particular, because of the decline of the welfare state and the unemployment crisis, many people who were previously protected now have new needs that have to be met. Generally speaking, new social demands are now being made, demands which the market and public intervention cannot meet, or can no longer meet adequately. These demands are opening up new fields in which the social economy seems to offer the only, or one of the few possible solutions (25).

The primary focus of social economy initiatives is to address pressing needs in the community that are otherwise not being addressed, or being addressed inadequately. Social economy projects thus fill both social and economic roles in a community (Fontan and Shrage 2000). In his definition of social economy, Quarter (2000) includes cooperatives and non-profit organizations, both formally incorporated and non-incorporated. His view of social economy is “not a homogenous entity but rather a mosaic of disparate organizations” (55). Initiatives that fall under the definition of social economy often include the cooperation of a number of organizations, communities and/or sectors. Defourny and Develtere (2000) attribute the growth of social economy in some communities to “common awareness” of certain pressing issues that are not being addressed within the community. Rather than a strong collective identity, it is the shared partial awareness of issues within the community that brings different organizations together on projects of mutual interest. This awareness of a shared challenge can encourage the development of new forms of collaboration and initiatives between members of different organizations and sectors.

Social Enterprise

There is no firm consensus on the definition of social enterprise. The term is used to comprise a variety of activities and initiatives that generate the necessary resources to address an unmet need in a society. These can include economic activities directly aimed to create social benefits, as well as initiatives that offset the costs of or supplement existing social programs.

The idea behind the social enterprise model is the blurring of traditional boundaries between the public, private, and non-for-profit sectors (Johnson 2000). This model seeks innovative, creative ways to address social needs through new forms of collaboration between the sectors. As such, social enterprise can be seen, according to Johnson (2000), as a “hybrid...of for-profit and non-profit activities” (1), “driven by innovators increasingly committed to using market-based approaches to solve social problems” (4). Because social enterprises often involve collaboration between several parties or sectors, establishing relationships and maintaining a wide social network is a necessary foundation of any social enterprise activity (Johnson 2000).

In their study on ethnic entrepreneurship among new Chinese immigrants in Toronto, Salaf, Greve, Wong, and Li Ping (2002) emphasized the importance of social networks as a means of mobilizing social capital for business start-up. Even though the study focuses on small, private sector activities and ethnic businesses, the emphasis on solid community networks and the development of social capital could be applied to any form of successful enterprise. The researchers note, “even if individual businesses do not survive, they contribute to mobilizing social capital at the wider community level. Ethnic businesses may contribute a meaningful part to community building” (19). Chekki (2006), too, recognizes a range of “culturally sensitive services” offered through various ethnic enterprises in Winnipeg (7). Small ethnic businesses could be absorbed into the definition of social enterprise by providing secondary, indirect services to their communities – social venues and network opportunities for ethnic communities, additional employment avenues to the underemployed immigrant population, as well as products and services specific to their cultures that are otherwise unavailable in the new country.

The Role of Ethnocultural Organizations

New immigrants often seek assistance from others who preceded them and with whom they share a common heritage. Immigrant and settlement agencies and ethnocultural organizations started by immigrants already established in the country of arrival often provide a support network for new immigrants. The networks established through these relations, according to Salaf, Greve, Wong, Li Ping (2002), become “a source of new immigrants’ social capital” (9), decreasing their feelings of loneliness and often providing much-needed orientation and settlement assistance in a new environment.

In his 2006 study on immigrant and refugee serving organizations in Winnipeg, Chekki (2006) defines Ethnic Non-Governmental Organizations as

Bodies possessing a minimal organization structure (i.e. a set of rules, a board of directors, including executive officers, voluntary or paid staff and members), which meet at least once annually, and which are identifiable as an ethnic organization by virtue of the aims and activities that are associated with the religious, cultural traditions and practices unique to a group of immigrants (7).

Many ethnic organizations are volunteer-run, locally based groups that take on issues and concerns specific to the cultural communities that comprise their membership (Budhu 2001). The main objectives of these organizations are integration and settlement support, the preservation of culture, religion and family values for the next generation, maintaining ethnic identity, and the preservation of ancestral languages (Canadian CED Network 2006b; Chekki 2006). Some ethnocultural organizations have existed for decades. With the change of immigrant source country flow to Canada over the past decades, new organizations have been or are being

established by newcomers from non-European countries, and in communities which have previously benefited from much smaller numbers of immigrants arrivals. This, for example, is the case within Brandon, which, in recent years, has seen an influx of immigrants from South and Central America and Africa.

The importance of ethnocultural groups and organizations on the quality of life of new immigrants is crucial. Not only do they provide much needed settlement, orientation and language support, but they also create important social, cultural and trans-cultural links to immigrants' ethnic community and the community at large. According to Chekki (2006), immigrants establish new, and maintain existing, organizations in order to "meet their socio-religious and cultural needs, but also to escape or alleviate the isolation, alienation, loneliness, insecurity and bewilderment that they would otherwise experience" (7). The social capital established through these ethnocultural organizations has the capacity to affect immigration to certain areas. In his Winnipeg-based study, Chekki uses an example from the Filipino community in Winnipeg, currently the fastest-growing ethnocultural group in Manitoba. According to Statistics Canada (2007), there were almost 37,000 people of Filipino origin living in Winnipeg in 2006, comprising the third-largest Filipino community in Canada after Toronto and Vancouver. Chekki explains that the Filipino population is "growing in Winnipeg because, among other factors, new arrivals from the Philippines immediately feel they are a part of their ethnic community that is already relatively well-established" (15). There is also evidence of the same phenomenon occurring within the Filipino community in Steinbach, Manitoba.

Immigrant Networks and Social Capital

Scholar Robert Putnam distinguishes between physical, human, and social capital by defining social capital as "connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (Smith 2007, 19). Kazemipur (2004) expands on this definition stating "the richness of social capital in a group depends on the density of their network, as well as the resources each individual can make available to the network" (5). As such, social capital cannot be measured merely by a size of a network in a particular community, but rather by the quality of individual and organizational relations established through the network.

Given their displacement and minority status in the new society, social capital is a relevant concept for study among immigrant populations. Kazemipur (2004) states "the argument is further reinforced when it comes to recent immigrants to North America who are coming mostly from non-European sources" (2-3). Although studies on social capital of immigrants in Canada are scarce, there is a great relevance for research on social capital among immigrant populations, given their displacement and minority status in a society (Kazemipur 2004). Devaluation of education and skills in a new labour market, isolation, and limited social networks put newcomers at a disadvantage when building on social capital to improve their quality of life in a new country. According to Kazemipur (2004),

Over the past few years, there has been an increasing awareness of the significant role that social capital plays in the lives of immigrants, from the type of jobs they find after arrival to the career paths they take later in life, and from their emotional well-being to educational performance of their children (1).

Strong social networks are also of great importance to immigrant entrepreneurs who need social capital for a successful launch of their businesses (Salaf, Greve, Wong, & Lin Ping 2002). Limited credential recognition and initial displacement felt by immigrants create a huge barrier at the beginning of their ventures. As explained by Salaf, Greve, Wong, and Lin Ping (2002),

These new professionals and technically trained workers, admitted to Canada in a wave of unconnected, independent immigrants, have no ready made networks. Their human and social capital is dynamically interrelated with complex organizations they left behind. Building a similar network in the new environment takes time (12).

Isolation, displacement, language barriers, and limited access to resources are some of the greatest obstacles for immigrants seeking to establish themselves in a new country. At the point of arrival, their social, personal or professional relations to a new community are limited or non-existent, increasing their isolation. Ethnocultural groups, immigrants and settlement organizations have the capacity to create a crucial link for immigrants to the new environment.

Focus on Cooperatives

Cooperatives combine both social and economic objectives of members in a community. These autonomous enterprises provide essential goods and services in the areas of housing, health, community service and development, banking, business and other activities. Coop enterprises are self-sufficient, community-based initiatives that create economic opportunities locally, generating and retaining local wealth and providing employment opportunities while meeting specific needs of the area they operate in.

The cooperative model could provide an opportunity to address some of the challenges faced by immigrant population in Canada, particularly in rural areas. Throughout history, rural communities relied on community cooperation as a means of addressing local problems and challenges. Because immigration from non-European countries to rural regions is a more recent phenomenon, many new arrivals to non-urban or smaller urban communities lack the resources and support of ethnocultural communities and networks often found in larger urban centres. Immigrants face a variety of barriers during their first years in Canada, including social isolation, problems with transfer of professional credentials, affordable housing and childcare, low earnings and language barriers, among others. According to the Co-operative Secretariat, cooperative initiatives could be one of the solutions to address these issues:

Too often, these issues are complicated by poverty, language barriers, a lack of culturally sensitive support systems, and limited access to organizational structures that allow these communities to help themselves. Yet, many immigrant groups are demonstrating a strong desire to create their own solutions to challenges, and they are showing interest in the co-operative model as a way to achieve their goals.

While engagement in cooperative enterprises among immigrant groups in Manitoba is very limited, a number of immigrant groups in other parts of Canada embrace the model to address challenges they face in their new society. The following is a brief overview of several successful immigrant cooperatives and CED initiatives operating in across Canada:

Malalay Afghan Women's Sewing & Crafts Co-operative

Website: www.malalaycooperative.com.

Location: Burnaby, BC

The Malalay Afghan Women's Sewing & Crafts Co-operative is a grass-roots initiative started in 2004. The enterprise promotes equality and economic security for Afghan immigrant and refugee women by providing opportunities for them to work and learn together. The cooperative is managed by its members, and supported by community members, government, business groups, social agencies and other bodies in the community.

The cooperative was started with the assistance of the Immigrant Services Society (ISS) of BC through a community capacity building program. The community economic development ideas initiated by the group led to the emergence of a sewing group which later that year, with the coordination and implementations support from the ISS Settlement Services and C-CEDNet, led to the establishment of the autonomous Malalay Co-op.

The main goals of this enterprise are to provide a source of income for women and encourage their economic empowerment, reduce the isolation of the Afghan society in Canada, build bridges between the Afghan community and wider community, and test new ways to address social and economic needs of immigrant women. Their services include dressmaking, tailoring, embroidery, knitting, carpet weaving, alterations, sewing traditional Afghan dresses and decorative items, as well as household items such as curtains, bed sheets, cushions, tablecloths and shopping bags.

(Information compiled from the Malalay Afghan Women's Sewing and Crafts Co-operatives website at www.malalaycooperative.com.)

Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative

Website: <http://www.mchb.org/>

Location: Edmonton, AB

The mandate of the Multicultural Health Brokers' Co-operative is to "support immigrant and refugee individuals and families in attaining optimum health through relevant health education, community development and advocacy support."

The enterprise started as a public health initiative in the early 1990s to "enhance maternal and infant health within immigrant and refugee communities." Membership of the cooperative is comprised of immigrant and refugee communities of Chinese, Vietnamese, South Asian, Filipino, Arabic-speaking, Spanish-speaking and other origins. Since its inception, this democratically governed cooperative has provided culturally and linguistically relevant pre-natal education, as well as post-natal outreach to communities, parenting and community development support, interpretation and translation of health education material for immigrant and refugee families. The Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative also acts as an advocacy group for resources and support to families in areas of housing, education and economic and food security.

The cooperative's services are delivered through home visits, telephone counseling and referrals, community education, consultations on cross-cultural issues, mutual support group development, community organizing and advocacy on important issues concerning their membership.

(Information compiled from the MCHBs website at <http://www.mchb.org/>)

Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre

Website: <http://riwc.ca/>

Location: Toronto, ON

The Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre supports Chinese-speaking and South Asian women and families by providing settlement and counseling support with the use of "community-determined strategies that are developed and delivered by immigrant women."

The centre started community development programs in 1996 in order to encourage economic self-sufficiency that builds on the skills and resources of the women and youth of their community. These initiatives are designed to provide work experience for marginalized women and youth, and to help them "translate their existing skills into marketable assets in the labour market."

The following are examples of the Centre's CED initiatives:

- *Global Pantry* - initiated in the fall of 1995 to enable immigrant women to apply their skills in food preparation, budgeting, and marketing in a food catering enterprise.
- *The Riverdale Natural Health Practice* is "a complementary health CED model aiming to provide an environment where immigrant women, their families and the broader community will have access to appropriate, affordable and culturally relevant health care services such as acupuncture, ayurveda, homeopathy, massage, naturopathy and shiatsu."
- *ITTs in School* is a new, innovative project launched in March 2007 in six schools in the East Toronto Area. It aims to "provide internationally trained teachers with Canadian work experience, a step toward permanent employment in education and related careers. At the same time it will assist immigrant children integrate into the Canadian school system."

(Information compiled from the RIWC website at <http://riwc.ca/>)

Ethnicity Catering

Website: <http://www.ethnicitycatering.ca/>

Location: Calgary, AB

This social enterprise was initiated by the Centre for Newcomers in 1997. It was started by a group of immigrant women who were receiving requests for catering traditional meals. The following year a commercial kitchen was set up with financial assistance from The Calgary Foundation.

Ethnicity Catering caters quality, multi-ethnic meals to its clients while providing immigrant women in transition with their first Canadian employment experience. Their part-time employees receive training, hands-on experience, and access resources in the Canadian employment market to look for full time work.

(Information compiled from Ethnicity Catering website at <http://www.ethnicitycatering.ca/>)

Earthshare Agricultural Co-operative

Website: <http://earthsharemanitoba.ca/>

Location: Winnipeg, MB

Earthshare Agricultural Cooperative trains and employs refugees and recent immigrants to Winnipeg in ecologically sustainable agricultural activities. Their training program, *Breaking Ground*, involves ten weeks of full-time classes in industry-specific English proficiency, horticulture, financial management, cooking and nutrition.

Originally a worker co-operative, the initiative started in 1989 and five years later incorporated into a consumer co-op with a membership of over 250 across Winnipeg. For a yearly fee and a small volunteer labour contribution, members receive a weekly supply of fresh vegetables during the growing season. The co-op also employs several workers, most of whom are refugees.

(Information compiled from Earthshare Agricultural Co-operative website at <http://earthsharemanitoba.ca/> and *Storytelling Newcomers' Experience with CED in Canada*. The Canadian CED Network 2006, 22 - 23)

The Cooperative ESL Ministries Society

Website: <http://www.eslcooperative.ca/>

Location: Calgary, AB

The Cooperative ESL Ministries Society is a Christian association of several organizations in Calgary focusing on society's integration of the immigrant, refugee, and international community who have come to Calgary.

Their activities focus on cross-cultural communication, literacy classes for newcomers, conversation clubs, tutoring, networking, professional development, and creating opportunities that support learning for individuals and the community.

Since its inception, other Co-operatives of ESL ministries have been found in Canada:

Southern Ontario Cooperative of ESL Ministries <http://eslministries.googlepages.com/home> and BC ESL Ministries <http://www.eslministries.com/>.

(Information compiled from Cooperative ESL Ministries' website at <http://www.eslcooperative.ca/>)

Research on Community Economic Development and Ethnocultural Organizations / Communities

Canadian Community Economic Development Network

In 2006 and 2007, the Canadian Community Economic Development Network conducted a two-phased project focusing on ethnocultural communities in Manitoba. The first report, entitled *Community Economic Development in Manitoba's Ethno-Cultural Communities: Progress & Prospects*, focused on consultations with 21 Manitoba organizations involved in various aspects of development and services to refugee and immigrant populations in the province. The second, entitled *Ethno Cultural Enterprise: Making it Happen*, is a follow-up report that further explored ideas and case studies presented in the first report. These reports focus on workshops conducted

in Winnipeg, specifically concentrating on the objectives, activities, capacities and barriers of ethnocultural organizations in the context of the Community Economic Development (CED) model, and on enhancing the general understanding and knowledge of CED principles and practices among the participating groups.

The findings of the first phase of the study reported that there was “limited engagement in CED in Manitoba’s ethno-cultural organizations”, although, given the “significant cultural assets” (Canadian CED Network 2006a, 20) of Winnipeg’s multicultural community, the potential for further engagement is there. As an outcome of phase one a steering committee was developed that formulated recommendations and strategies on building capacity in CED activities in Manitoba. The greatest barriers hindering the development of CED activities within Winnipeg’s immigrant and refugee communities were identified as follows:

- A lack of exposure and educational opportunities to learn about CED;
- Limited networking opportunities for information exchange and partnership development. Many organizations are working in isolation and have limited awareness of other organizations;
- Lack of policy and program support for a successful integration of newcomers, including little support for self-employment of newcomers, limited delivery of ESL and settlement services;
- Lack of resources in the areas of technical assistance, training, development of marketing skills and opportunities for new and existing small businesses to develop strong local CED models in ethno-cultural, immigrant and refugee communities; and
- Few solid local examples of CED within ethno-cultural, immigrant and refugee communities (ibid, 22 - 23).

To build on the momentum of the first phase, the second phase of the project focused on the delivery of and subsequent follow-up on a four-part workshop series aimed at the development potential of CED activities in ethnocultural organizations in Manitoba. The workshops were designed to increase awareness of CED and social enterprise principles among representatives from ethnocultural organizations, help them define social enterprise ideas, and assess business feasibility. The four-part training program, which ended in March 2007, identified several potential social enterprises and tested their feasibility. There were several recommendations resulting from this study:

- Create 3-year positions for a coordinator, facilitator, and social enterprise counselor to ensure continuity of the project;
- Develop curriculum for social enterprises, based on SEED Winnipeg’s publications;
- Develop a Social Enterprise Fund for Immigrant and Refugees and Ethnocultural Organizations for startup capital, marketing, and training costs;
- Create more learning opportunities on CED and social enterprises by facilitating similar workshops in Brandon and Thompson; and
- Conduct case study research on three ethnocultural social enterprises in Manitoba (Canadian CED Network 2007, 24-25).

Newcomers and Community Economic Development: A Tele-learning Session
Organized by the Canadian Social Economy Hub
October 28, 2008

The session explored some of the Community Economic Development (CED) solutions for new immigrant and refugee populations in Canada and was aimed to address the following issues:

- How can the principals of CED be shared with Canada's recent immigrant and refugee population?
- What makes social enterprise a good fit for newcomers?
- What are the challenges and barriers in applying CED principles in the context of newcomers in Canada?

During the session, Dr. Stephen Ameyaw and Lindsay McBain gave a presentation focusing on newcomers and the role of CED. Locally created economic development opportunities present a good fit for recently arrived immigrants and refugees in Canada for a number of reasons. Local social economic opportunities are inclusive, accessible, community managed and owned, they can address multiple local issues and have a broad impact on the community in which they operate.

Social enterprises are formed to provide needed commercial service in the community, often with a social objective. Social enterprises reinvest surpluses in the communities they serve and provide employment opportunities and skills development to people outside the mainstream.

Examples of social enterprises with a newcomer-focus include:

- Winnipeg's Central Park Ethnic Market
- Nyam Nyam Sudanese Catering
- Sewing Co-op of the Canadian Muslim Women's Institute

Following the presentation, the participants discussed a number of issues and questions:

- How can rural communities work with newcomers in social enterprise contexts?
 - No specific examples of rural social enterprises were available. Success of the venture would depend on the support in communities, existing industries, and availability of training.
- How can newcomers from different countries and backgrounds create a unity in immigrant communities? Is there a platform to bring the different groups together?
 - Cultural experience can create cohesive groups. Regionalization of immigrant communities is not uncommon. There is no existing model to bring the different ethnocultural groups together.
- Are there any examples of skilled immigrant co-ops?
 - Multicultural Health Brokers, a multi-national organization.
- Where can organizations go for a curriculum or training to set up a co-op venture?
 - The Coop Zone provides resources on setting up cooperative ventures - <http://www.coopzone.coop>. Training and development programs can be delivered regionally. SEED Winnipeg can provide development workshops.

Social economy in Canada comprises 3.5% of national GDP. It is possible to stimulate the economy by stimulating the social enterprise sector. Intermediary organizations can help ethnocultural groups grow capacity. It is not beneficial to the sector to separate the groups but rather to bring them together without prejudice. Further fragmentation would result in duplication of services and not help in the long run.

Ethnocultural Organizations and Communities in Rural Manitoba

The Case of Steinbach, Manitoba

Dating as far back as 1874, Steinbach, Manitoba has had a rich and varied history of immigration that has shaped the community. Initial settlement began when eighteen Mennonite families facing mandatory military service and land shortages in South Russia (presently Ukraine) arrived to the area and proceeded to build a settlement. The strong Mennonite heritage has remained an integral and central part of Steinbach, contributing to successful local immigration strategies and a growing community.¹

According to census data, Steinbach's population has grown by 19.9% between 2001 and 2006, with a current population of 11,066. This population increase is largely attributable to influxes of immigrants. Steinbach has consistently ranked as one of the top three regional immigrant destinations (excluding Winnipeg) in Manitoba (Manitoba Labour and Immigration 2007). Since 2005, Steinbach has welcomed more than 1,100 newcomers and their families from such countries as Germany, Paraguay, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, and Mexico. Over the last two years, the nature of immigration to Steinbach has been changing. Immigrants from more diverse cultural backgrounds are arriving, thus impacting what has been a predominately Mennonite cultural base. In 2008, Steinbach welcomed immigrants from over 32 different countries including a recent influx of Filipino, Colombian and Indian immigrants. The changing cultural base has necessitated a change in service delivery strategies as new languages and cultural traditions are introduced.

In the past, Eastman Immigrant Services and the Steinbach Arts Council had organized a community-based cultural celebration and following the event there was a desire to expand the celebrations. In November 2008, Culturama was held with the purpose of showcasing both immigrant and local heritage and culture to the community, providing newcomers with an opportunity to be included in a large community event. With door counts approximating 550 – 600, Culturama exceeded organizers' expectations. The event included 196 dedicated performers and volunteers who cooked food, performed dances, and organized the event. Celebrations included dance, drama, and visual arts performances organized around different ethnic communities including Irish musical story telling, Scottish Pipe Band, Irish singing, African singing, German music, Welsh singing, and Filipino music and dance. Some of the ethnocultural groups and communities that were involved in the event included Nicaraguan, Sudanese, Zimbabwean, Indian, Ukrainian, Paraguayan, Colombian, Filipino, Scottish, English, Irish, Russian, and German.

¹ For more information on Steinbach's history: http://www.steinbach.ca/images/File/Steinbach_s_First_Settlers.pdf

Newcomers were asked to cook traditional foods for the event, which were offered to participants free of charge. Foods included traditional fares from Colombia, German/Russian, the Philippines, Paraguay, the Netherlands, Ireland, East Africa, and Germany. Feedback around the food was extremely positive and participants enjoyed learning about the authentically prepared food.

The case of Steinbach presents an interesting example of successful immigrant attraction, settlement, and retention. Religion is a central part of the community with approximately 40 churches serving a population of about 11,000. The strong religious affiliation, family connections, and cultural composition of Steinbach has presented a foundation on which to build effective networks that facilitate the arrival of immigrants with intentions to join family and settle in an area that holds similar cultural traditions and values. According to Silvius (2005), many newcomers are familiar with the region of southeastern Manitoba prior to arriving because they have either visited the area or heard about the community through family networks. Religious affiliation and strong connections to traditional cultural values have made Steinbach an attractive community for Mennonite groups and other immigrants.

One of the goals of this research project was to explore the nature of ethnocultural organizations and communities in Steinbach and attempt to present an illustration of how the groups function and what they need in order to form organizations. Increased cultural diversity is an emerging trend in Steinbach therefore established ethnocultural communities are rare. The role of religion and centralized activities within the church negate the purpose of having an ethnocultural organization for the largest group of immigrants in the area - Mennonites. Recently, significant numbers of immigrants from the Philippines, Colombia, and India have settled in the area, changing the demographic and cultural base of Steinbach. Interest in formal organizations and associations is only beginning amongst these newcomers, with the Filipino community having established the only formal ethnocultural organization. The relatively small number of members of other ethnocultural groups in Steinbach does not lend well to establishing formal organizations, which require a strong and dedicated volunteer base.

The Case of Brandon, Manitoba

Located in southwestern Manitoba, Brandon is the second largest city in the province, however it is comparably small with a population of 41,511. Over the past decade, Brandon has experienced a population growth, largely influenced by immigration. From 2001 to 2006, Brandon's population grew by 4.5%, compared to a 2.6% increase of the province's total population. According to Statistics Canada, the number of immigrants in Brandon between 2001 and 2006 almost doubled from the previous five-year period (780 compared to 410).

Historically, Brandon's population has been fairly homogenous, consisting predominately of descendents of European immigrants. In recent years, there has been a gradual change in the demographic make-up of the city with new immigrants arriving from South and Central American, Asian and African countries. The majority of these newcomers are coming through the federal government's Low-Skilled Temporary Foreign Worker program to supply labour shortages at a Maple Leaf Foods pork processing plant. These new arrivals have been recruited from Mexico, El Salvador, Ukraine, China, Colombia, Mauritius, and, most recently, Honduras.

Recent immigrants to Brandon are coming from diverse source countries, some of which had limited or no immigration history in the community. The Maple Leaf Food's recruitment strategy

focuses on the recruitment of workers from specific countries at a time, which brings whole groups of immigrants from the same or similar ethnocultural backgrounds to Brandon. After six months of working in Manitoba, these temporary foreign workers have the option to apply to the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP). If accepted under the PNP, the workers may gain permanent residency status, which allows for reunification with their families. This pattern can have a great impact on the formation of new ethnocultural groups and communities in the city (Bucklaschuk & Sormova 2008).

While the new arrivals have brought with them unique cultural resources and greatly expanded the cultural diversity of the city, this new diversity has also introduced new challenges for service providers in the community. The steady influx of new temporary foreign workers, combined with challenges faced by the second-wave arrival of families and dependants of new permanent residents, have introduced a need for expansion of existing services provided by community organizations, as well as requests for other services such as childcare, legal aid, and counseling. New ethnocultural networks and organizations formed by recent immigrants could help alleviate the demands on these sectors by providing culturally appropriate services to their members.

In Brandon, the majority of ethnocultural organizations are either informal or in the process of organizing. Brandon has not been a city characterized by much diversity and, as mentioned, it is quite homogenous. Established and formal ethnocultural communities are rare and those organizations that are more established and better organized have deep roots in the area (for example Ukrainian, Scottish, and Irish). It must be acknowledged that new immigrants to the area may take a lot of time to build communities and organizations and may not be familiar with the process or feel the need to do so. Furthermore, with such small numbers, the size of some ethnocultural communities in Brandon may not even allow for the formation of an organization as human resources and volunteers are needed to ensure the development of such organizations.

With the changing demographics in Brandon has come greater awareness of and interest in new cultures. Brandon's largest and most popular multicultural celebration is the Lieutenant Governor's Winter Festival, which originated in 2003. Since then the annual festival has continued to increase both in number of participants and cultural pavilions. From year to year it is not uncommon to have to wait in lines to get into a pavilion or for the pavilion organizers to run out the goods they sell.

Each pavilion is organized by various ethnocultural groups and showcases the cultural traditions of the group. Often the pavilions organize traditional entertainment, cook traditional food, and sell traditional beverages. Participating groups receive funds from the City of Brandon for the purposes of covering some of the costs associated with operations. Attendance to the festival is free; however, pavilions receive revenue from the sale of food, alcohol, and other memorabilia. Pavilions are all their own entities, required to meet their expenses, rent the venue, and organize the programming.

Ethnocultural organizations and communities in Brandon credit the Winter Festival with increasing awareness of and participation in cultural celebrations. Impacts have included additional awareness of cultural traditions and the introduction of traditions to those who are unfamiliar with a particular cultural group. Organizations and communities have experienced an increased sense of pride as they organize pavilions from year to year and see the increasing numbers of participants who are interested in learning about their cultural traditions.

Language Cooperative

With funding support from the City of Brandon, Manitoba Labour and Immigration, and the United Way of Brandon and District, the Westman Immigrant Services initiated the development of a self-sustaining, trained language cooperative in January 2009. Once established, the cooperative will work independently of any particular sector or organizations and will provide interpretation services for the entire community on a fee for service basis. In the long term, the language cooperative will be developed into a self-sustaining organization that will provide standard payment and training to interpreters and facilitate local control of interpreter training standards.

The creation of the language cooperative is being undertaken as a grass-roots response to the ever-growing need in Brandon for interpretation and translation services. Once implemented, the language cooperative will benefit the community in a number of ways:

- Provide access to confidential spoken language interpretation services;
- Reduce organizational and personal risks associated with using untrained volunteer interpreters;
- Recognize individuals skilled in multiple languages to be financially rewarded by implementing a fee for service;
- Encourage community collaboration by providing an opportunity for local organizations to learn from one another while working on a project that serves the community as a whole; and
- Help the community establish and maintain the quality of interpretation training standards and minimize costs associated with accessing related services.

The first phase of the language cooperative is underway and includes the development of a “Foundations of Spoken Language Interpretation” program for interpreters, the development of a sustainable business plan, capacity building, and community education. The first interpreter training sessions will take place in late March and early April 2009. The language cooperative plans to hire a coordinator and resume operations in May 2009.

Enhancing and Linking Ethnocultural Communities: A Discussion Session

Brandon University

January 23, 2009

(for list of participants see Appendix B)

One of the goals of this research project was to seek ways to link ethnocultural communities with other community-based organizations. Encouraging organizations to connect with one another, share common experiences, and discuss challenges is an important step in building capacity. Adopting suggests from the social enterprise and social economy literature, a discussion session was held to begin developing networks and relationships between ethnocultural organizations / communities and other community-based organizations.

The session targeted a small group of key individuals and presented an opportunity for ethnocultural groups, non-government organizations, and service providers to discuss challenges faced by Brandon’s ethnocultural communities. The purpose was to bring together individuals to discuss how ethnocultural organizations and communities can become or remain active contributors to the cultural diversity of Brandon. The workshop builds on research conducted by

the Rural Development Institute between January and March 2008 and adopts suggestions from the ethnocultural social enterprise study conducted by the Canadian CED Network (2006, 2007).

Some questions that were explored in the discussion session included:

- What are the biggest challenges faced by ethnocultural groups/communities?
- What are some solutions to these challenges?
- What do ethnocultural groups need to form organizations?

A literature review of ethnocultural organizations and communities suggested that such associations serve a number of purposes in the community. Ethnocultural organizations and communities:

- Often emerge to fill a specific need in the community;
- In some capacity, act as service providers to their membership;
- Maintain and celebrate cultural identity; and
- Promote social relationships, networking, and integration within the group and the community at large.

Ethnocultural organizations and communities face a number of challenges. The influx of newcomers to Brandon is a recent phenomenon and, given the small population of the city, the sizes of ethnocultural communities are smaller than in larger cities. Therefore many of the ethnocultural groups in Brandon do not have enough people to form organizations and have not been in the area long enough to establish formal ethnocultural organizations. Another barrier to forming ethnocultural organizations is the lack of familiarity with the process and limited resources.

Newcomers to Brandon have brought with them unique cultural resources and greatly expanded the cultural diversity of the city. This diversity also introduces new challenges for service organizations operating in Brandon who have expanded and added new programs and services to accommodate the needs of newcomers in Brandon.

The lack of volunteers and human resources has been commonly identified as a challenge for both ethnocultural groups and non-government organizations. The threat of core volunteer and staff burnout is an ongoing challenge faced by many organizations. Limited financial and human resources also bear impact on capacity building within organizations. Some organizations identified challenges in building links and establishing collaborations with other groups and attracting new and youth membership to their groups.

Discussion Session, facilitated by Bob Annis

A number of issues and challenges facing ethnocultural and non-governmental organizations were raised during roundtable introductions of workshop participants. Among these, some common issues emerged around the following themes:

- Ways of sharing information across individual groups;
- Member recruitment and retention;
- Lack of volunteers for newcomer support services and special events;
- Threat of burnout of core volunteers within groups;

- Member participation in organizations and their events;
- Engagement of community at large; and
- Ways to form new partnerships among organizations.

The after-lunch discussion session focused on sharing information between organizations and addressing the challenges and issues raised during the roundtable introductions. The discussion was initiated along the following questions:

- How to share information across organizations and foster discussion on issues affecting them?
- How can ethnocultural groups or organizations be more involved in the community?
- Are there opportunities to make links between various organizations and ethnocultural groups in Brandon?

The group discussion raised a number of important points and new questions for future discussions. They are listed as follows:

- How to establish information exchange among organizations and foster discussion on issues affecting them?

It was agreed that Westman Immigrant Services (WIS) would be the most suited hub for communication between ethnocultural groups and other organizations. Established connections could raise the profile of all organizations involved. However, this introduces challenges regarding WIS's human and volunteer resources and their ability to cover all demands.

Also discussed was the unavailability of a mutual, collectively owned space that could provide a venue for future meetings. The Westman Multicultural Centre provided such venue in the past, but without governmental support, the space has disappeared.

A question was raised about how to establish a link between specific communities with the purposes of sharing services and establishing a form of cooperation that would help alleviate the stress and demands on some organizations.

- Volunteer and member recruitment and retention within organizations

The Provincial Exhibition is interested in organizing another cultural celebration event in the summer. The aim is to add to what is already happening in Brandon rather than compete with existing multicultural events. The event would be mostly volunteer-driven; it would depend on the will and availability of volunteers from various ethnocultural groups.

Volunteers within established ethnocultural organizations are often older and recruiting new volunteers is a challenge. Some established ethnocultural organizations are seeking the involvement of younger people who otherwise are not learning their cultural traditions. However, this is a challenge as younger people have limited available time between work and family commitments.

Language training and education on the norms of the adopted country and its culture are in constant demand. The increased volume of these demands in recent years contributes to volunteer burnout within organizations.

- Fostering cross-cultural understanding

A question was raised about what existing organizations should offer to newcomers and new members in order to secure their involvement and participation. An example of member recruitment was offered by the Westman Chinese Association which was formed, in part, to address the needs of Chinese-speaking Maple Leaf workers who have limited English language skills and often face difficulties connecting and communicating with Brandon agencies and residents. It was noted that in Chinese society the concept of volunteerism is not the same as in Canadian society, and for this reason not fully understood by Chinese newcomers. To foster cross-cultural understanding and establish a reciprocal relationship between individual and organizations requires time and patience.

Language barriers limit many newcomers when engaging in the broader community, which often leads to isolation. Some immigrant groups tend to be more insular due to cultural barriers.

There is still difficulty in understanding newcomers' needs. It was suggested that organizing local educational or informational events (i.e. how to buy a house, how to live in a wooden house) in conjunction with local agencies and organizations would help connect newcomers to the community. There is a need within the newcomer community to become familiar with the Canadian system and learn how to make a positive, healthy transition to their new home. Events and workshops that promote the understanding of life in Canada (i.e. obtaining a credit card, building a credit history etc) could help newcomers with this transition. Financial and human resource limitations of many non-governmental and service organizations create a challenge to take on new programs and events.

- Family reunification and challenges facing immigrant families

Issues were raised relating to family reunification and their integration within Brandon society. In some cultural contexts, 'family' includes the extended family of newcomers. Some newcomers face the challenge of separation from family and spouses for up to two years, which in some cases contributes to alcohol abuse and extra-marital affairs.

The lack of housing, and especially affordable housing, is a community issue that also negatively affects immigrants and their families.

- How do ethnocultural organizations keep value in communities over time?

While first generation immigrants keep close ties to their home countries and want to remember their homes, this need lessens over time. A question that remains for ethnocultural organizations spanning several generations in Canada is how to highlight the value of remembering and maintaining cultural traditions.

The following sentiment was echoed: "Know the history, know the culture." There is a need to teach history to people and incorporate all people's histories including Aboriginal, African, Asian, etc. Educating people about other cultures could help stop racism in communities, foster inclusiveness, and encourage cooperation.

Encouraging communication, education, and valuing young people and their ideas could encourage their involvement in organizations and help promote building diverse, inclusive societies.

Concluding remarks – observations and suggestions from participants, Roundtable discussion

The session offered a venue for participants to share experiences and challenges, exchange ideas, establish communication, and raise awareness of ethnocultural groups and organizations working or seeking to work with immigrant communities in Brandon.

Many participants expressed interest in holding another discussion session in the future with more focus on specific issues affecting the newcomer communities and ethnocultural organizations. For some, the session was an assertion that issues and challenges faced by their specific organizations are echoed in other groups and took the opportunity to ask questions and gain insight from other participants on how to address these challenges.

It was noted several times that making contact with other groups and organizations by opening a venue for discussion opens a door to communication among groups and prospects for future collaboration. A shared forum also provides opportunity to inform and learn from each other about the roles of specific organizations. It also raises awareness about other organizations' programs and services. A contact list with e-mail addresses of all participants was circulated to all partaking in the session.

The importance of communication, keeping in touch with grass-roots issues, and mobilizing a common strategy was discussed. Questions were raised on how to continue the following:

- Establish links;
- Open communication;
- Share services with other organizations;
- Link with Aboriginal communities;
- Meet and combat divides;
- Share volunteer resources; and
- Find the right people for specific tasks.

These and other issues can become topics for future discussion forums.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned

- *The first step to successfully attract, settle, and retain newcomers in a rural community is to be open to change and new ways of thinking.*

Rural communities lack the infrastructure and population that is enjoyed by larger centres, and thus face difficulties in organizing ethnocultural communities and providing requisite services to newcomers. However, immigration presents new possibilities for rural communities. Through concerted efforts to establish new ways of thinking, rural communities can reap the benefits of increased diversity. Lessons can be learned from larger cities, such as Winnipeg, that boast vibrant ethnocultural organizations and unique ethnocultural social enterprises. While rural communities may not have the population required to support large initiatives, they must be creative in their approaches to celebrating diversity and encourage new forms of organization and strategies to address challenges.

- *Collaboration and communication amongst non-government organizations and ethnocultural communities is needed to support ethnocultural organizations.*

Challenges associated with immigration can encourage new forms of collaboration amongst various stakeholders and community-based organizations. By connecting with other organizations, ethnocultural communities can gain knowledge that will help them operate; the same can be said for immigrant service providers throughout rural Manitoba. Sharing lessons learned, best practices, and key challenges amongst organizations can only benefit those groups that wish to form organizations. Collaboration also ensures that services are not being duplicated and opens opportunities for more cultural events and activities.

In the past few months, multi-stakeholder collaboration and communication amongst organizations in Brandon have begun to actively occur. The Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation's service provider fair brought together newcomers and service providers raise awareness of services available in Brandon (for the final report see Appendix A). Also, the Rural Development Institute's discussion session on enhancing ethnocultural organizations made strides in connecting various ethnocultural communities with non-government organizations.

The *Enhancing and Linking Ethnocultural Communities* discussion session was but a first step in linking ethnocultural organizations, developing capacity, and creating learning opportunities. Further engagement is needed though. The workshop provided a foundation on which to build networks for newcomers and established ethnocultural communities. Such events offer a venue for ideas and experiences to be shared. To effectively develop capacity, groups cannot exist in isolation and it is important to develop relationships and networks amongst ethnocultural communities because, for the most part, they share common experiences and challenges.

When thinking about ethnocultural organizations, it is also important to not always assume that such groups are entirely newcomers. There is a tendency when discussing ethnocultural organizations and communities to focus on the needs of newcomers and examine such groups through an immigration lens. The majority of established, formal ethnocultural organizations in Brandon are of ethnic groups that have been in Canada for multiple generations. They, too, must be encouraged to build capacity, explore new opportunities, and remain vibrant contributors to

the diversity of their communities. Furthermore, these long-time residents are uniquely positioned to offer advice and lessons learned to newly emerging ethnocultural groups. Relationships and networks must be fostered and encouraged amongst all ethnocultural communities, regardless of immigration status or length of time in an area.

- *Ethnocultural organizations and communities require easily accessible information resources.*

Finding information on how to establish a formal ethnocultural organization and developing an understanding of the process can be challenging for newcomers and long-time residents alike. With the proper information and supports from government, immigrant-serving organizations can guide ethnocultural communities as they navigate the process of establishing organizations. In time, ethnocultural communities can serve many of the same functions as an immigrant service organization thus alleviating much of the strain placed on such organizations in small areas with large numbers of immigrants. Immigrant serving organizations can be an invaluable resource in the formation of ethnocultural organizations, but it also has to be acknowledged that they are often overburdened with other service demands.

If the principles and benefits of community economic development and social enterprise are to be successfully introduced to and implemented within ethnocultural communities, then these groups must be provided with information that is easily understood and culturally-appropriate. There needs to be increased learning opportunities for ethnocultural communities to build capacity and reach their full potential.

Ultimately, it takes time, financial resources, a lot of energy, and a rich volunteer-base for ethnocultural communities to establish formal organizations. Members of ethnocultural organizations often experience burnout and continually seek additional, younger members to ensure the long-term viability of the organization. Introducing concepts of community economic development and social enterprise would take even more time and volunteers, although such models have the potential to alleviate some of the financial struggles of ethnocultural organizations. In rural areas that do not have large ethnocultural communities, developing notions of social enterprise can be a challenge; both ethnocultural organizations and the rural communities in which they operate must embrace such concepts. The level of encouragement and support from the community as a whole will determine whether social enterprise ventures are successful or not. The first step is to encourage rural residents and ethnocultural communities to think in new ways, offer examples of what initiatives exist across the country, and provide information. The role of the social economy and community economic development in enhancing and building capacity in ethnocultural organizations cannot be ignored; however in rural areas there are many steps to be taken before such concepts can be successfully introduced.

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Appendix A - Service Providers Fair report

Tapestry of Our Community Service Providers' Fair

**Wednesday, October 15, 2008, 11am – 9pm.
Central United Church Auditorium, 327 – 8th Street, Brandon, MB.**

Community Display Participants

Assiniboine Community College
Brandon Community Welcome
Brandon Friendship Centre
Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation
Canadian Mental Health Association
Canadian National Institute for the Blind
Career and Employment Youth Services
Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba
City of Brandon
CMHA – Restore/Refit
Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre
Public Health Services
Prairie Health Matters (RHA)
Race Relations Network
RHA Diabetes Study
7th Street Health Access Centre
Samaritan House
Streetlove
Service Canada
The Counseling Centre
The Women's Resource Centre
United Church Ministries
Westman Coalition for Employment Opportunities Inc.
Westman Crisis Services
Westman Youth for Christ
Westman Immigrant Services
YMCA
YWCA – Westman Women's Shelter

Welcome

Brandon's first immigrant and community service provider fair was planned and hosted by the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation and Westman Immigrant Services. The Rural Development Institute (RDI), Brandon University offered input into the day's activities and recorded discoveries from presentations and community dialogue. The information presented in this report reflects RDI researcher's interpretation of October 15, 2008 activities.

Shawn Ankenmann, Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (BNRC)

Mr. Ankenmann welcomed everyone to the Service Providers' Fair and thanked all participants of this inaugural event. He noted the importance of bringing different agencies and community organizations together to inform each other of their services and the challenges they are facing, to network, and to avoid duplication of services in the community.

There has been a will to host a similar event in Brandon for many years. This fair is the first in a series of similar events that will hopefully be planned annually. The main purpose is to encourage the community to work together as Brandon continues to change over time. Mr. Ankenmann noted that in order to attract more public to the event, the next fair should be held at a more public venue such as the Town Centre.

Laura Moar, Brandon Friendship Centre (BFC)

The BFC operates five buildings at different locations in Brandon. Currently the organization is running fifteen community-based programs including Partners for Careers (resume writing, job postings, counseling), Adult Learning, In a Good Way (pre- and post-natal education), Access Service (addressing issues of family violence), Drop-In Centre for Youth, and others.

The BFC always tries to develop new programs to meet the needs of people in the community; they often partner with other organizations in the area such as the Brandon Regional Health, 7th Street Access Centre, Samaritan House, and others. On request, their cultural worker/ Elder works with other organizations in the community and offers information sessions regarding Aboriginal culture. Although their main focus is the Aboriginal population in Brandon and area, they also serve non-Aboriginal clients.

The BFC's Kokum's Little Daycare provides care for 36 children and currently there are no spots available because of limited availability. The BFC also operates a 40 housing units in Brandon. They are receiving requests for housing units daily and currently there is a 3-year waiting list for open units. Their Transitional House on 12th Street also has a long waiting list. The BFC is looking at adapting another building to help alleviate the need for housing in the community.

The Brandon Friendship Centre offers tours to interested clients or organizations on request. Their 60+ staff in Brandon always seeks ways to grow and develop new programs to meet the needs in the community.

Ms. Moar mentioned that the lack of housing is the number one issue that the BFC deals with on a daily basis. In Brandon, the shortage of adequate housing and high rents result in increasing homelessness and has effects on people transitioning from other communities. There is a particular demand for apartments with 3 or more bedrooms to accommodate families with more than 3 children.

Brandon's rapidly growing population also puts stress on other BFC programs such as Head Start and In a Good Way, both of which have waiting lists and simply cannot meet demands. More space is needed for programs so that more people can be included.

Marie Wotton, Child and Family Services (CFS)/ Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre

The Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre focuses on family issues, parenting, and the well-being of children. The Centre offers a variety of services to its clients including parenting courses, support groups, family literacy and preschool programs, parenting outreach programs, and others. The Elspeth Reid Centre focuses on serving families holistically. Ms. Wotton affirmed “parents can’t meet kids’ needs if their own needs are not met.”

The main issues affecting the Centre mirror the needs of families. The first issue mentioned was family income, often a barrier that places stress on families. The lack of housing, particularly low-income housing, is an ongoing local issue. A serious lack of childcare, particularly the lack of infant spaces, is having an impact on the well-being of today’s families.

While the Centre offers a wide range of classes and services to the public, families encounter a number of barriers that prevent them from accessing services. These obstacles include parents’ lack of time to meet needs (across all income levels); transportation to services for some families; limited employment opportunities, particularly parents without secondary or post-secondary education; the know-how to fit the services into a busy lifestyle; and the issue of isolation and finding time for families in an environment where the parents’ role is not supported.

While the centre also offers some programs to newcomers and their families, they often encounter language and cultural barriers in successfully delivering these programs. The lack of interpretation and translating services is acute.

Ms. Wotton encouraged the audience to read two recent studies on families that reflect the CFS’ and the Centre’s concerns – a Winnipeg study on stress on parents, and another study available online entitled *Vital Communities, Vital Support*.

The Elspeth Reid Centre has created a new coalition, the Healthy Families Team, which meets nine times a year to discuss issues related to families and parenting. This is an open organization and new members are welcome to join.

Greg Lupier-Roziere, 7th Street Health Access Centre

The 7th Street Health Access Centre has been in operation for approximately four years. The demand for services has increased, particularly over the past year, as is the increasing need for additional staff and resources. Services offered include: public showers, washers and dryers, phone, community voice mail boxes, fax, internet, partnerships with community service providers, and access to housing information. Clinical services include: service navigators, community health nurses, addiction counselors (AFM), community mental health workers, mental health support worker, domestic violence counselor, Aboriginal spiritual care provider, cultural facilitators (Spanish, Amharic and Mandarin), travel health nurse, community social worker, specialized supports facilitator, and a community volunteer income tax program.

The critical lack of affordable housing in Brandon is another major issue for the Centre and its clients. Many newcomers have very limited or no understanding of landlord-tenant agreements or what rights they have. Advocacy and greater awareness for newcomers are needed.

The demand for services and an increasing volume of clients are major challenges for the Centre. Programs continue to grow, often hindered by language barriers, as the Centre continues to adjust to a rapidly changing community.

Dean Munchinsky and Adrian Farijo, Youth for Christ (YFC)

Youth for Christ has operated in Brandon and area for fifty years and offers programs and resources to help youth build self-esteem and develop their potential in life. Their focus is on the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of youth.

The organization conducts a number of programs for youth including Uturn, which provides semi-dependent homes for youth-at-risk; Vox, an employment-training program; The Back Alley, a drop-in facility that is currently closed but plans are in place to find a new location; and Gymblast, a program delivered in partnership with YMCA and the schools. The organization also coordinates trips for youth to expose them to different parts of Canada and recently coordinated a volunteering trip to the USA.

YFC is also reaching out to the immigrant population in Brandon and area. Adrian, a Spanish-speaking youth, works with the Spanish-speaking community and youth at schools and organizes a number of programs for newcomers. One of the most popular is the Soccer League for children aged 6 to 13. The Soccer League started with the Spanish-speaking youth in Brandon and has recently expanded to become a truly international venture with participating members from other parts of the world. Other activities from newcomers include Drop-In Nights for teenagers, trips to other parts of Canada, and pool tournaments (for male adults mostly).

YFC has recently participated in a training session from the Search Institute in Minneapolis on healthy development and encouraged people to visit their website for more information.

What can service providers do to ensure the well-being of youth?

- Ensure that people have the information they need;
- Provide free, visible, well-communicated services and community resources;
- Provide opportunities for youth to volunteer; and
- Provide role models and mentors to youth.

Yvonne Hodge, Brandon School Division (BSD)

Aside from the regular schools operating within the BSD, the Alexander school is in the process of becoming an art school, and the Neelin Off-Campus School is attended by approximately 200 students who work at their own pace towards graduation.

The Brandon School Division facilitates a number of special programs within the school system including English as an Additional Language (EAL); Eco-Odyssey at Crocus High; Special Needs Programs; and Brandon Healthy Families (part of Special Needs programs directed at pre-school population). The BSD has also recently hired a full-time Occupational Therapist (continuation of the position is dependent on funding). A website with a list of school division programs is available at <http://www.brandonsd.mb.ca/>. The BSD also coordinates a program that assesses what skills children bring to Kindergarten. The statistics show that one in four children in Manitoba is not ready for Kindergarten; in Brandon the ratio is two in four children or 50%.

The EAL program has been developed to assist children from immigrant families. The BSD coordinates an English Language Assessment program for children and EAL teachers work with curriculum teachers in classrooms. There are also lots of visual supports available for children from non-English speaking families. There is now more support available within the school system for children from immigrant families than there was during the first years of new immigration influx to Brandon.

There are a number of issues at Brandon schools that include:

- Behavioral problems among students;
- Keeping Aboriginal children in school;
- Ensuring that children are equipped with basic skills to enter Kindergartens; and

- Cultural differences and integration of the immigrant children in schools.

In terms of the support for teachers dealing with immigrant families, the BSD organizes workshops and provides consultants and visual support for classes. Also, there are regular group meetings of teachers and principals. The issue of inter-cultural training among students was raised and there is hope that this training could help address some tension and cultural issues among students, particularly in high schools.

Heather Sharpe and Colleen Erickson, YWCA Westman Women's Shelter

The Women's Shelter opened in 1978. The organization provides emergency and support services to women and children who are leaving abusive relationships. In addition to a temporary shelter, the organization offers education, empowerment, counseling services, childcare, crisis intervention and referrals as well as information on legal, medical, housing and employment needs.

The average age of women in the shelter is 18 to 32 and the majority of clients are Aboriginal women. The women can stay in the shelter for up to 30 days, which is an upper-limit set by the government. The YWCA funding is based on 'bed nights' or the number of beds occupied monthly. They rely heavily on private donations and also operate the Adopt a Room Program where businesses sponsor a room in the shelter. Additional programs organized by the YWCA include Power of the Girl Conference, 5th annual conference, focusing on self-esteem and leadership among young women.

The lack of housing, particularly low-income housing, adds lot of pressure on YWCA's operations. Women in the shelter get only 30 days to rebuild their life and find a new home; this time frame and an often limited income does not allow many women to find an apartment in Brandon. Some women end up returning to the relationships they left.

In terms of immigrant women, language factors often prevent YWCA from providing services to this community. In the past, other organizations have stepped in to help with language and immigration-related issues; however, the lack of translation services, language barriers, and unavailability of literature in other languages result in many immigrant women being unaware of the Shelter and its services.

Hope Roberts, Westman Immigrant Services (WIS)

WIS provides a variety of programs and services to the immigrant community in Brandon. With the growing immigrant population, Brandon is changing and WIS is looking for ways to link their work with all that is happening in the community. The organization is seven years old and has been growing rapidly. EAL is their primary program, along with settlement and employment. WIS employs thirteen teachers for their English classes. Their settlement classes and programs employ ten workers. In addition to Brandon, WIS also offers EAL support to programs in rural areas. WIS anticipates seeing an impact on their services due to increasing rural immigration.

The immigrant population seeking WIS's services are of various immigration streams including Maple Leaf workers, refugees through different sponsorships, business immigrants, family sponsorship, and others. In the month of September alone WIS opened 96 new client files (Ms. Roberts noted that this number does not include all family members.). According to WIS, 181 immigrants arrived to Brandon in 2005, 172 in 2006, and 642 in 2007. However, these numbers do not necessarily reflect the true, new immigrant population in Brandon; it is estimated that the numbers are in the thousands.

WIS has been consciously hiring workers with different language skills to provide services to immigrants with limited or no English language skills. They now employ staff fluent in Amharic, Spanish, Mandarin, and Tagalog. Aside from language and settlement services, Ms. Roberts noted that major needs arising in the community relate to issues with mental health and counseling services. WIS collaborates with a

number of other organizations in town to develop and deliver new programs and services (i.e. Family Literacy and EAL, Sexual Health Promo Campaign).

New programs at WIS include Entry Program, which is a core orientation program for newly arrived immigrants and provides information on the city, health, education, employment and justice and legal issues. The WIS Assessment Centre conducts assessments for eligible students entering a government funded EAL program.

Ms. Roberts noted that one of the major issues at WIS is the risk of core service provider burnout. Also, some of WIS's programs depend heavily on volunteers.

Despite the ongoing demand for services, there are very few if any professional interpreters and translators in Brandon. The Program Advisory Committee to WIS has worked for over a year to build interpretation and translation pool in the community.

Ms. Roberts encouraged other organizations to address issues related to the growing immigrant population by developing programs and services that address their concerns and collaborate with other organizations to accommodate their clients. She noted that even large businesses like Future Shop, Canadian Tire, and Superstore have hired people from the immigrant community to better accommodate their customers.

Panel Discussion 7:00 – 8:30pm

Panelists:

Marty Snelling, Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation

Laura Moar, Brandon Friendship Centre

Sandy Trudel, City of Brandon

Yvonne Hodge, Brandon School Division

Adrian Farijo and Dean Munchinsky, Youth for Christ

Shawn Ankenmann introduced individual panelists and each provided background information on their affiliations and involvement in the community. Shawn Ankenmann and Hope Roberts prepared the following questions.

QUESTION #1:

One of the issues that comes up again and again is communication between the sectors. Often we create and operate within “silos” that become focused on our specific area of expertise and experience while inadvertently neglecting the formation of partnerships AND communication with other groups and agencies. Do you feel breaking free of these “silos” is important for Brandon as we face the challenges before us? And how have you and your office formed partnerships and cooperative alliances in recent months?

Laura/ Brandon Friendship Centre: The Centre regularly forms partnerships with different groups and organizations to meet needs in the community. It does so directly through development and collaboration on some programs, and also through client referral to other organizations and services. Some of the organizations with which the Friendship Centre collaborates include: Brandon Regional Health Authority; Community Health Matters; City of Brandon; Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation; Brandon University; Assiniboine Community College; Helping Hands; Youth for Christ; The John Howard Society; and others.

Adrian/ Youth for Christ: Youth for Christ is developing a network of partnerships with other organizations. Their partners include Westman Immigrant Services, the City of Brandon, Brandon Friendship Centre, Brandon School Division, and others.

Yvonne/ Brandon School Division: The Brandon School Division collaborates with a number of organizations on their pre-school and school programs. Their partners include: Manitoba Health; Child and Family Services; Elspeth Reid Centre; Child and Adolescent Treatment Centre; Brandon University; Assiniboine Community College; and University of Alberta. Some of the collaborative programs they operate include Kinderlinks, Roots for Empathy and FAST (Families and Schools Together).

Sandy Trudel/ City of Brandon: The ongoing challenge for the City is how to reach out to the various groups more proactively. The City does so by networking, effectively communicating and active program involvement.

Marty/ Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (BNRC): The BNRC facilitates new partnership and projects that bring different organizations together. Their most recent project is the transformation of the Massey building into a 54-housing unit that includes the collaboration of the BNRC, Habitat for Humanity and Brandon Friendship Centre.

QUESTION #2:

In our community we have numerous groups that have been in existence for a number of years, such as the Brandon Race Relations Network (BRRN), who have been tasked with the role of creating programming that promotes racial diversity and cultural understanding. These groups frequently are facing a lack of funding, a dearth of people committed to leadership and volunteers, and struggle to continue providing their services to the community. Why do you think that groups like this struggle in the city of Brandon? How do you suggest we as a community can address these challenges for groups like the BRRN and others?

Yvonne/ Brandon School Division: Staff within every organization gets busy and preoccupied with core activities. This may be overcome by fostering new partnerships and enhanced communication with the public. One of the biggest challenges that BSD faces is that 50% of Brandon five-year-olds are not ready/equipped for Kindergarten.

Sandy/ City of Brandon: There is a global decline in volunteers and today's volunteers often only offer their time and energy when there is some personal gain. Deepening cultural awareness and diversity will have a long-term pay-off. The majority of Brandon's population does not know about the immigrant experience and therefore are largely unattached to the issues arising. We should all begin by asking ourselves 'what can I do' creating personal connections and linkages. Increasing and stabilizing funding for non-profit organizations will alleviate some issues and assist in the development of volunteer programs. Sometimes volunteers are not treated with full respect and therefore, do not stay with an organization. It is important that volunteers are valued and accorded with the same respect that paid staff are.

Marty/ Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation: It is important to build on successes and emphasize the positive. The Brandon Race Relations Network is involved with organizing two events a year in conjunction with Human Rights Day (December 10th) and the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21st). The Multicultural Festival has been building on the new energy in the city and has been growing steadily. The BNRC still has project funding available that has to be allocated by December.

Laura/ Brandon Friendship Centre: The lack of volunteerism and participation in the community often goes back to the demands on families. Colleges, universities and workplaces need to create strategic plans for inclusivity and cultural diversity.

Adrian/ Youth for Christ: The lack of funding impacts the ability to promote change; continuity of activities and the capacity to develop new programs. Organizations should set aside funding for volunteers (i.e. for volunteer appreciation dinner, etc.). A lack of funding often impacts the desire to volunteer.

QUESTION #3:

Over the last couple of years, we've heard the immigration projections for our city and region. We are currently experiencing the reality of these numbers as Brandon is experiencing a significant change in its population demographics. Many of our new immigrants are moving to the city with little or no proficiency in English. The sheer number of ethnicities now resident in our community, while offering a context for enriching our city by dramatically expanding our cultural diversity, presents enormous challenges to many sectors. What role do you as an organization or an individual have in responding to the needs that are now facing our community and your work?

Sandy/ City of Brandon: Between 1995 and 2003 there was an average of 62 new landed immigrants per year. That number more than doubled in 2004 to 130 a year. In 2005 and 2006 there were about 180 new landed immigrants each year. In 2007 the number increased to 642; in June 2008 the number of new landed immigrant in Brandon was 418, reflecting a half-year of growth. These numbers reflect newcomers with landed immigrant status only and they do not include Temporary Foreign Workers, dependents on visitors' visas, those waiting for landed immigrant status, and those that were destined elsewhere but are living in Brandon.

If all projections are realized Brandon will experience at least a 10% population increase by 2010. Projections are that by 2010, 10% of Brandon School Division students will be EAL learners. 'Community welcome' is important to encourage people to stay in Brandon after they receive permanent resident status, particularly temporary foreign workers and their families. It is important to note that arrivals through every immigrant stream are increasing in Brandon.

Adrian/ Youth for Christ: The Spanish Soccer Program started by YFC has developed into an international soccer league. Program goals include enhanced integration through networking, communication, introduction to new people in the community, and English language skill development through interaction with other children.

QUESTION #4:

How are Brandon youth being drawn into the community and the changes within it?

Adrian/ Youth for Christ: In high schools, youth often associate with separate cultural groups and there is a great deal of pressure to remain within groups. There are challenges related to interaction across groups.

Sandy/ City of Brandon: It is important to encourage people to view local immigration as a permanent reality, and not as a temporary phenomenon. An interpretation and translation model needs to be developed; the housing shortage needs to be addressed by developing affordable housing. The Brandon

Police Service has organized a list of translators who will translate for BPS for an agreed upon fee. The City is currently coordinating a translation of the relocation guide into Spanish and bus schedules are available in multiple languages.

In terms of youth, activities that bring people from different cultural backgrounds together need to be encouraged. Integration only happens when there is a concentrated effort. It is important to develop personal connections with the immigrant community.

Marty/ Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation: Immigration is a great opportunity for the city. It is important to focus on the positive and build on what we have. Meetings are being held to establish a non-profit housing corporation in Brandon and introduce rent controls in the city. The numbers of students in Brandon schools are increasing rapidly with many ESL students needing special services.

Laura/ Brandon Friendship Centre: There is a need to raise awareness about different cultures coming to Brandon and introduce Aboriginal culture to newcomers. The issue of homelessness and the lack of affordable housing in Brandon must be addressed.

Dean/ Youth for Christ: There is not a great deal of interaction with newcomers. It is important to deal with integration and homelessness issues proactively. Some people coming from elsewhere slip through the cracks; sometimes cultural norms do not translate well in a new environment. Newcomers come equipped with different tools to deal with challenges. YFC's program, U-Turn, organizes two workshops a month to assist the journey to independence.

The following community resources are available:

- Community Contact List (from Sandy/ The City of Brandon)
- Brandon Resource Guide (available on the BNRC website)
- Service Provider Guide (available from Sandy/ The City or WIS offices)

Appendix B - Participant List

- Frank Tacan, Sr., Cultural Worker, Brandon Friendship Centre
- Richard McIntyre, Irish Association
- Nellie Gillespie, Ukrainian Society
- Dorothy McHarg, Westman Scottish Association
- Manfred Wicht, German Society of Westman
- Craig Ebbers, Provincial Exhibition
- Ryan Clement, Marquis Project
- Lorraine Dooley and Immaculate Nabisere, WUSC, Brandon University
- Lee-Ann Jaworski, Drew Caldwell's MLA Constituency Office
- Naty Delbridge, Westman Immigrant Services; Filipino Community
- Hope Roberts, Westman Immigrant Services, Brandon Race Relations Network
- Benjamin Amoyaw, Manitoba Labour and Immigration
- Lori Gould, Brandon Race Relations Network; Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation
- Eileen Wang Yu, Westman Chinese Association
- Ian He, Westman Chinese Association
- Lonnie Patterson, Brandon Arts Coalition
- Dave Barnes, Neelin High School
- Esther Bryan, City of Brandon
- Alison Moss, Rural Development Institute
- Monika Sormova, Rural Development Institute; BU Community Outreach
- Muguleta Haile, Westman Immigrant Services; Ethiopian Community
- Cristian Chavez, 7th Street Health Access Centre
- Robert Annis, Rrural Development Institute

Appendix C - Ethnocultural Organizations in Brandon

Westman Scottish Association	
Year Established	Active since the 1970s
Priorities / Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To ensure a place to meet other immigrants and socialize. ▪ To promote interest in Scottish culture.
Organization type	Informal and do not feel that being formally recognized would be necessary for the group.
Organizing Body	Elected committee with a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and five committee members.
Governance Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual General Meeting every April ▪ All-committee meetings held throughout the year with recorded minutes.
Membership	Voluntary
Events / Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monthly social gatherings ▪ Annual golf outing in June ▪ Caledonian or Highland Games in July, in Kenton ▪ Quiz night in September ▪ Robert Burns dinner in January ▪ Scottish Pavilion at the Winter Festival in February ▪ Bowling night in March ▪ Halloween party in October ▪ Picnics, volunteer nights, dances, pot lucks, and other suppers
Services Offered	Assists immigrants if they are facing difficulties (for example, contributing to moving costs or in the event of a disaster)
Funding Sources	Self-funded
Winter Festival Involvement	Operates a popular pavilion – since 2005.

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Holy Ghost	
Year Established	The Ukrainian National Home was built approximately 2 generations ago (80 years ago).
Priorities / Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To provide whatever help they can to Ukrainians in the community, including hospital and nursing home visits. ▪ Maintaining and general up-keep of the Ukrainian National Home (otherwise known as the Hall, which is a separate entity from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church).
Organization type	Informal, religion-based
Organizing Body	The Church has its own Executive Committee and a ‘Ladies’ organization
Governance Meetings	N/A
Membership	Voluntary
Events / Activities	Gatherings and events are directly related to the Church including concerts, suppers, food sales, etc.
Services Offered	The organization has provided items to immigrants when they first arrive in Brandon.
Funding Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-funded ▪ Food sales (perogies and cabbage rolls, Easter breads) ▪ Garage sales ▪ Profits from the Winter Festival ▪ Used to hold Fall Suppers and Spring teas, but have ceased due to an aging volunteer base.
Winter Festival Involvement	Two Ukrainian Churches organized pavilion together to promote Ukrainian culture.

Irish Society of Western Manitoba	
Year Established	Has been in existence for about 17 years.
Priorities / Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To promote fellowship and goodwill amongst all people of Irish birth or descent, in Western Manitoba, and those who, through family relationships, have become connected to the Irish community. ▪ To foster friendly relationships between persons of the Irish community and those of all other nationalities. ▪ To conduct recreational, cultural, social, and sporting activities on behalf of and with the involvement of the membership.
Organization type	N/A
Organizing Body	Executive committee with a constitution and a full slate of officers.
Governance Meetings	N/A
Membership	Voluntary
Events / Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual St. Patrick's Day celebration ▪ Winter Festival ▪ Education and cultural promotion - Participate in rural community's ethnic celebrations and make presentations at Brandon schools and the College.
Services Offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Human resources and assistances offered to newcomers, and do not necessarily need to be members. ▪ Provides newcomers from Ireland with practical assistance regarding living and working in Brandon. ▪ Volunteer opportunities are offered.
Funding Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have received two small grants from the provincial government in the past. ▪ Now the organization is increasingly self sufficient. ▪ Any profits made from the Winter Festival are donated to local charities.

<u>The Icelandic Canadian Club of Western Manitoba</u>	
Year Established	Since 1967.
Priorities / Objectives	N/A
Organization type	A member of the Iceland National League of North America
Organizing Body	N/A
Governance Meetings	N/A
Membership	N/A
Events / Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Tombolla / Thorablott (Icelandic supper) Christmas party ▪ Group field trips ▪ Picnics ▪ Regular monthly meetings ▪ Give out scholarships
Services Offered	N/A
Funding Sources	N/A
Winter Festival Involvement	Invited by the festival organizer to participate.

Westman Chinese Association

Year Established	In the process of becoming formally established – informally began in 2007.
Priorities / Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To assist new immigrants in learning the Canadian way and provide language instruction, settlement services, housing, orientation, and cultural integrations. ▪ To ensure that contact with all members of the community is maintained through various social activities. ▪ To promote the notion of volunteerism. ▪ To cultivate the many talents of the group’s members.
Organization type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Informal, but in the process of becoming formally recognized. ▪ Volunteer-based.
Organizing Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Management committee of 20 people. ▪ In the process of establishing a formal Board of Directors.
Governance Meetings	In the planning processes.
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Actively seeking members. ▪ Planning a membership drive to increase member-base to 1000. ▪ Members from outside of Brandon.
Events / Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meets regularly, but social gatherings are still in the planning stages. ▪ Provided several entertainers for the Horticultural Conference in Brandon in February. ▪ Invited to participate in the planning and entertainment for the Brandon Dragon Boat festival in July. ▪ Hope to secure a regular venue in which to provide recreation and introduce Canadian activities to new members.
Services Offered	Intend to develop a website with an internet public forum. See their website at http://www.westmanchinese.com/
Funding Sources	Have not looked for funding elsewhere, but hope to in the future.
Winter Festival Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2008 was the first year of participation in the Winter Festival. ▪ Used to have a small involvement in the Global Village pavilion.

German Society of Westman	
Year Established	Established in 2005, out of the desires expressed after their initial participation in the Winter Festival.
Priorities / Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To preserve, promote and encourage interest in German language and culture. ▪ The ambition, within the limits of the club, is to promote a better understanding of German speaking areas and people through social and educational activities. ▪ The group's future goal is to establish a German School to teach the German language and culture to students of all ages. They also aspire to having their own dance group and band in the future.
Organization type	N/A
Organizing Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Executive committee that meets regularly, with a President, Vice-President, Second-Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. ▪ Has a constitution. ▪ Social Events Committee
Governance Meetings	Annual meetings with an annual agenda.
Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Members do not have to be able to speak German- they must desire to promote and celebrate cultural traditions. ▪ There are membership fees.
Events / Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Social Events committee coordinates functions such as potlucks, picnics, barbeques, etc. ▪ Stammtisch (a regular monthly social outing) ▪ Camps ▪ Halloween parties ▪ Brandon Travelers Day Parade ▪ Sommerfest (held in July and prompted by the success of their pavilion at the Winter Festival)
Services Offered	See their website at http://www.germansocietyofwestman.ca/
Funding Sources	N/A
Winter Festival Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Invited to participate in the 2004 festival and it was one of the most popular pavilions.

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The role of the RDI Advisory Committee is to provide general advice and direction to the Institute on matters of rural concern. On a semi-annual basis the Committee meets to share information about issues of mutual interest in rural Manitoba and foster linkages with the constituencies they represent.