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

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UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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INTRODUCTION

I MMIGRATION 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, partly 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. In rural communities without large immigrant populations, however, 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 well-being of our society. The structures become part of the vital Canadian voluntary sector and contribute to nation building in Canada.

Ethnocultural organizations are vital to 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 offer viable alternatives to traditional service delivery mechanisms (Kangayi, Olfert, and Partridge 2007). Ethnocultural organizations and communities as well

as immigrant service-provider organizations are integral aspects of the social economy in communities that receive immigrants. 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 them in finding employment, pursuing education, and meeting other social needs. It is important to understand how these organizations operate outside of urban centres because they receive less attention and fewer resources in rural areas. If communities desire successful settlement and retention of newcomers, they must take steps 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 areas. These organizations 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 outside of Winnipeg in rural areas, and there is no research exploring the organizational structure, history, membership, and operations of ethnocultural organizations and communities in rural areas. The principle objectives of this project are to gain insight into the processes of establishing and developing ethnocultural communities and organizations, the factors that contribute to their success, and the barriers that may hinder them. To ensure that ethnocultural organizations and communities in rural Manitoba have opportunities to obtain as much information as possible, we also aim 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) in Brandon, which has recently focussed research efforts on rural immigration, temporary foreign workers, and welcoming communities. A guiding concern for all immigration-related initiatives at RDI is the capacity of rural communities to attract immigrants, to welcome diversity, and to accommodate these newcomers. This project is part of a larger research initiative designed to understand the scope of immigration to Brandon and southwestern Manitoba, with a particular focus on how communities can become more welcoming.

Methodology

THE PROJECT INITIALLY INTENDED to adopt a case study approach, focusing on three rural Manitoba communities and the nature of social enterprises and ethnocultural organizations in 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 to research. As a consequence, we redirected the focus of the project to examine how to create linkages between ethnocultural organizations/communities and social enterprises and the benefits of doing so.

A focus-group-style workshop in Brandon brought together representatives from ethnocultural communities and other organizations to help bridge the gap between newcomers and established nongovernment organizations. This proved to be a valuable source of information as well as a stimulus to encourage organizations to start communicating with one another and discussing 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.

We conducted community scans in two rural communities — Brandon and Steinbach — with particular attention given to Brandon. There were challenges conducting in-depth research in Steinbach because of limited numbers of ethnocultural organizations, difficulties making contacts, and the nature of ethnocultural organizations in the community. The preliminary information gathered in Steinbach was inadequate for an in-depth case study.

While the overall focus of the project has not changed, we had to modify our methods to accommodate the actual nature of ethnocultural organizations/communities and social enterprises in Brandon and Steinbach. The research process was instructive and prompted further consideration of the challenges associated with conducting research in rural areas with small populations and limited resources. It quickly became clear that a flexible approach and the ability to adjust the scope and focus of the research are critical to conducting research with community organizations and in rural areas.

THE ROLE OF THE 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 defining and organizing the discussion session on ethnocultural communities, Ms. Roberts provided lists of invitees and encouraged newcomers and settlement workers to attend. As the director of settlement programs at Westman Immigrant Services and co-ordinator of the Immigrant Services Network, she 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 useful insights as they continue to evolve and adapt to Brandon's diverse immigrant populations. The organization continues to be an active and invaluable contributor to all immigration-related research initiatives at RDI. As Brandon's only immigrant service provider, the organization is instrumental in raising and addressing concerns related to the ever-growing immigrant population in the community.

ACTIVITIES COMPLETED

- conducted literature review of social enterprises, the social economy, and ethnocultural organizations/communities

- prepared 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 CCEDNet on newcomers and community economic development

- conducted preliminary scan of ethnocultural organizations/communities in Steinbach, Manitoba

- participated in consultations and discussions with community partner

- compiled electronic resources on ethnocultural organizations, community economic development, co-operatives, and the social economy to populate the project's website [http://www.brandonu.ca/organizations/rdi/ethnocultural_links.asp]

- facilitated and hosted the discussion session titled "Enhancing and Linking Ethnocultural Communities"

- completed final report

BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Rural Immigration in Canada

MORE THAN HALF OF CANADA'S POPULATION GROWTH between 1996 and 2001 was due to immigration (Beshiri and Alfred 2002). From 1945 to the 1970s, Britain and other European countries had been the main source of immigrants to Canada. Although a small number of visible minorities have been present in Canada since the earliest days of settlement, the majority of immigrants from Asia, the Caribbean, Africa, and the Middle East have arrived since the 1960s. Since the 1980s, the number of immigrants from visible minorities has doubled (Budhu 2001). Immigrants coming from other countries are arriving under different circumstances, bringing with them "unique human capital" to this country (Teixeira 2001).

In 1998, Manitoba became the first Canadian province to implement the Provincial Nominee Program (PNP), under which the government nominates the immigrants best suited to the provincial economy. The program recognizes specific priorities, as well as the economic, cultural, and social needs of newcomers to the province (Chekki 2006). Although Manitoba has not been 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 PNP. Since 1998, more immigrants have arrived through the PNP than through federal streams (Chekki 2006; Silvius and Annis 2007). According to 2006 census reports, the immigrant population in Manitoba was 151,230, or 13.3 percent of the province's total population. Between 2001 and 2006, immigration in the province was still below the national average (2.8 percent in Manitoba compared to 3.6 percent in Canada), but this five-year period saw more than twice as many immigrant arrivals in Manitoba compared to the previous period of 1996 to 2000. There were 31,190 new immigrants to Manitoba between 2001 and 2006, compared to 14,290 between 1996 and 2000 (Statistics Canada 2007).

While Winnipeg continues to attract the majority of immigrants to the province (23,820 between 2001 and 2006), some smaller urban centres 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 Manitoba is increasing, thus changing the demographic mosaic of these communities.

Immigration, especially from non-European countries, has been predominantly an urban phenomenon. Literature addressing the impact of recent immigration 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. Bollman, Beshiri, and Clemenson (2007) recently observed 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 to decline, 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, and the safety and security of smaller communities (Silvius ans 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 and Beesley 2007). Sorenson (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 nineteenth century. Although there is no absolute definition of the term, literature on the topic agrees on several defining principles of social economy enterprises related to their objectives and management practices. These common principles include a 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). According to these researchers, social economy initiatives comprise "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 nonprofit organizations (Quarter 2000). The organizations operating within the 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 fulfil both social and economic roles in a community (Fontan and Shragge 2000). In his definition of the social economy, Quarter (2000) includes co-operatives and nonprofit organizations, both formally incorporated and unincorporated. His view of the 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 co-opera-tion of a number of organizations, communities, and/or sectors. Defourny and Develtere (2000) attribute the growth of the social economy in some communities to "common aware-ness" of certain pressing issues that are not being addressed within the community. Rather than a strong collective identity, it is the shared 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 initia-tives among members of different organizations and sectors.

Social Enterprise

There is no firm consensus on the definition of the term "social enterprise." It 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 aimed directly at creating social benefits, as well as initiatives that offset the costs of or supplement existing social programs.

The social enterprise model blurs 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 among the sectors. Social enterprise can thus be seen, according to Johnson (2000), as a "hybrid … of for-profit and non-profit activi-ties" (1), "driven by innovators increasingly committed to using market-based approaches to solve social problems" (4). Because social enterprises often involve collaboration among sev-eral 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, Salaff et al. (2002) emphasized the importance of social networks as a means of mobilizing social capital for business start-ups. Even though the study focusses on small, private-sector activities and ethnic businesses, the emphasis on solid community networks and the develop-ment 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 capi-tal 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 ser-vices" 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 for 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 Salaff et al. (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 organizations serving immigrants and refugees in Winnipeg, Chekki (2006) defines ethnic non-governmental organizations as

> [b]odies 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 to provide integration and settlement support, to preserve culture, religion, and family values for the next generation, to maintain ethnic identity, and to preserve ancestral languages (CCEDNet 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 that have previously experienced much smaller numbers of immigrant arrivals. This is the case in Brandon, for example, which in recent years has seen an influx of immigrants from South and Central America and Africa.

Ethnocultural groups and organizations have a crucial effect on the quality of life of new immigrants, providing not only much-needed settlement, orientation, and language support, but also creating important social, cultural, and transcultural links to both the 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 thirty-seven thousand 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 among 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 that "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). In other words, social capital cannot be measured merely by the size of a network in a particular community, but rather by the quality of individual and organizational relations established through the network.

Although studies on the social capital of immigrants in Canada are scarce, there is great relevance for research on the topic, given the displacement and minority status of immigrants in a new society (Kazemipur 2004). "The argument is further reinforced when it comes to recent immigrants to North America who are coming mostly from non-European sources" (Kazemipur 2004, 2–3). 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 the 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 (Salaff et al. 2002). Limited recognition of their credentials and the initial displacement felt by immigrants create a huge barrier at the beginning of their ventures. As explained by Salaff et al., (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, and professional relations with the new community are limited or nonexistent, increasing their isolation. Ethnocultural groups and settlement organizations have the capacity to create a crucial link for immigrants to the new environment.

Focus on Co-operatives

Co-operatives combine both social and economic objectives, providing essential goods and services in housing, health, community service and development, banking, business, and other activities. Co-operative 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 in the area in which they operate.

The co-operative model could provide an opportunity to address some of the challenges faced by immigrant populations in Canada, particularly in rural areas. Rural communities have always relied on community co-operation 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 the ethnocultural communities and networks often found in larger 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-operatives Secretariat, co-operative initiatives could be one of the solutions.

> 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 co-operative enterprises among immigrant groups in Manitoba is limited, a number of groups in other parts of Canada have embraced the model to address the challenges in their new society. Following is a brief overview of a few successful immigrant co-operatives and CED initiatives operating across Canada:[1]

Malalay Afghan Women's Sewing & Crafts Co-operative
www.malalaycooperative.com
Burnaby, BC

The Malalay Afghan Women's Sewing & Crafts Co-operative is a grassroots 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 co-operative is managed by its members and supported by community members, government, business groups, social agencies, and other bodies in the community.

The co-operative was started with the assistance of the Immigrant Services Society (ISS) of British Columbia 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 co-ordination and implementation support from the ISS Settlement Services and CCEDNet, culminated in the establishment of the autonomous Malalay Co-operative.

1. Information on the following organizations is compiled from their respective websites.

The main goals of this enterprise are:

*   to provide a source of income for women and encourage their economic empowerment
*   to reduce the isolation of Afghan people in Canada
*   to build bridges between the Afghan population and the wider community
*   to test new ways to address social and economic needs of immigrant women

Its 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.

Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative Ltd.
http://www.mchb.org
Edmonton, AB

The Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative aims 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 in the co-operative 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 co-operative has provided culturally and linguistically relevant prenatal education, as well as postnatal outreach to communities, parenting and community development support, and 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 the areas of housing, education and economic and food security.

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

Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre
http://riwc.ca
Toronto, ON

The Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre supports Chinese-speaking and South Asian women and families by providing settlement and counselling 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."

Following are examples of the centre's CED initiatives:

- The Global Pantry was 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 that aims to provide an environment where immigrant women, their families, and the broader community will have access to appropriate, affordable, and culturally rele-vant health care services such as acupuncture, ayurveda (traditional Indian medi-cine), homeopathy, massage, naturopathy, and shiatsu."

- ITTs in School is an innovative project launched in March 2007 in six schools in the East Toronto Area. It aims to "provide internationally trained teachers with Cana-dian work experience, a step toward permanent employment in education and re-lated careers. At the same time, it will assist immigrant children to integrate into the Canadian school system."

EthniCity Catering
www.ethnicitycatering.ca
Calgary, AB

This social enterprise was initiated by the Centre for Newcomers in 1997 by a group of im-migrant women who were receiving requests to cater traditional meals. In 1998, with finan-cial assistance from The Calgary Foundation, the group set up a commercial kitchen.

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

Earthshare Agricultural Co-operative[2]
Winnipeg, MB

2. Regrettably, this organization recently shut its doors. It is included here as another example of the type of enterprise started by newcomers to Canada. Information on this organization supplied by its website, now defunct, and *Storytelling Newcomers' Experience with CED in Canada.* The Canadian CED Network, 2006, 22–23.

Earthshare Agricultural Co-operative trained and employed refugees and recent immigrants to Winnipeg in ecologically sustainable agricultural activities. Its training program, Breaking Ground, involved ten weeks of full-time classes in industry-specific English proficiency, horticulture, financial management, cooking, and nutrition.

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

Cooperative ESL Ministries
www.eslcooperative.ca
Calgary, AB

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

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

Since its inception, other co-operative ESL ministries have been founded in Canada: Southern Ontario Cooperative of ESL Ministries (eslministries.googlepages.com/home) and BC ESL Ministries (www.eslministries.com).

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 focussing on ethnocultural communities in Manitoba. The first report, titled "Community Economic Development in Manitoba's Ethnocultural Communities: Progress & Prospects," outlined consultations with twenty-one Manitoba organizations involved in providing a variety of services to refugee and immigrant populations. The second, titled "Ethnocultural Enterprise: Making It Happen," further explored the ideas and case

studies presented in the first report. These reports focus on workshops conducted in Winnipeg that concentrated specifically on the objectives, activities, capacities, and barriers faced by ethnocultural organizations in the context of the community economic development (CED) model, as well as 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 "limited engagement in CED in Manitoba's ethnocultural organizations," although given the "significant cultural assets" of Winnipeg's multicultural community (Canadian CED Network 2006a, 20), the potential for further engagement is there. A steering committee developed during phase one formulated recommendations and strategies on building capacity in CED activities in Manitoba. The committee identified a number of barriers hindering the development of CED activities within Winnipeg's immigrant and refugee communities:

- 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 groups

- lack of policy and program support for the successful integration of newcomers, including little support for self-employment and 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 ethnocultural, immigrant, and refugee communities

- few solid local examples of CED within ethnocultural, immigrant, and refugee communities (Canadian CED Network 2006a, 22–23)

Building on the momentum of the first phase, the second stage of the project focussed 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. This study resulted in recommendations to:

- create three-year positions for a co-ordinator, facilitator, and social enterprise counsellor 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

- conduct case studies 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
28 October 2008

The session explored CED solutions for immigrant and refugee populations in Canada and 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?

Dr. Stephen Ameyaw and Lindsay McBain gave a presentation focussing 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 enterprises are inclusive, accessible, community managed and owned, address multiple local issues, and have a broad impact on the community in which they operate.

Social enterprises are formed to provide needed commercial services in the community, which often have a social objective. They 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 Ameyaw and McBain's presentation, the participants discussed a number of issues:

- How can rural communities work with newcomers in a social enterprise context?

  – no specific examples of rural social enterprises were available; the success of the venture would depend upon the support in communities, existing industries, and the availability of training

- How can newcomers from different countries and backgrounds create unity in immigrant communities? Is there a platform on which 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 multinational organization

- Where can organizations go for a curriculum or training to set up a co-operative venture?

  – the Co-op Zone provides resources on setting up co-op ventures — www.coopzone.coop; training and development programs can be delivered regionally; SEED Winnipeg can provide development workshops

The social economy in Canada comprises 3.5 percent of the 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 better for the sector to bring the groups together without prejudice than to separate them. 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 in the area and proceeded to build a settlement. The strong Mennonite heritage has remained an integral part of Steinbach, contributing to successful local immigration strategies and a growing community.[3]

According to census data, Steinbach's population grew by 19.9 percent between 2001 and 2006; the community's current population is 11,066. This population increase is attributable largely to influxes of immigrants. Excluding Winnipeg, Steinbach has consistently ranked as one of the top three regional immigrant destinations in Manitoba (Manitoba Labour and Immigration 2007). Since 2005, Steinbach has welcomed more than eleven hundred newcomers and their families from countries such 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 have been arriving, significantly impacting what has been a predominantly Mennonite cultural base. In 2008, Steinbach welcomed people from more than thirty-two countries, including a recent influx of Filipino, Colombian, and Indian immigrants. The changing cultural base has necessitated a change in service delivery strategies to address new languages and cultural traditions.

In the recent past, Eastman Immigrant Services and the Steinbach Arts Council organized a community-based cultural event that created the impetus to expand the celebrations. The result was Culturama, which took place in November 2008 as a showcase of both immigrant and local heritage and culture, and provided newcomers with an opportunity to be included in a large community event. With door counts of 550–600 people, Culturama far exceeded organizers' expectations. It included 196 dedicated performers and volunteers who organized the event, cooked food, performed music, dance, drama, and some unique visual arts particular to different ethnic communities. There was Irish musical story telling, a Scottish Pipe Band, Irish singing, African singing, German music, Welsh singing, and Filipino music and dance. Ethnocultural groups involved in the event included Nicaraguan, Sudanese, Zimbabwean, Indian, Ukrainian, Paraguayan, Colombian, Filipino, Scottish, English, Irish, Russian, and German.

Newcomers cooked traditional foods for the event, which were offered to participants free of charge. Foods included fare from Colombia, Germany, Russia, the Philippines, Paraguay, the Netherlands, Ireland, and East Africa. Feedback was extremely positive and participants enjoyed learning about the authentically prepared food.

The case of Steinbach presents an interesting example of successful attraction, settlement, and retention of immigrants. Religion is a central part of the community, with approximately forty churches serving a population of about eleven thousand. The strong

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3. For more information on Steinbach's history, see www.city-of-steinbach.com/heritage.shtml.

religious affiliation, family connections, and cultural composition of Steinbach has offered a foundation on which to build effective networks that facilitate the arrival of immigrants intending to join family and settle in an area that holds similar cultural traditions and values. According to Silvius (2005), many newcomers are familiar with 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 illustrate how the groups function and what they need in order to form organizations. Since increased cultural diversity is an emerging trend in Steinbach, established ethnocultural communities are rare. The role of religion and centralized activities within the church negate the need for an ethnocultural organization for the largest group of immigrants in the area — the Mennonites. Recently, significant numbers of immigrants from the Philippines, Colombia, and India have settled in the area, changing the demographic and cultural base of the community. 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 numbers of other ethnocultural groups in Steinbach does not lend itself 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, although with a population of 41,511, it is comparably small. Over the past decade, Brandon has experienced population growth, largely through immigration. From 2001 to 2006, Brandon's population grew by 4.5 percent, compared to a 2.6 percent 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 predominantly of descendents of European immigrants. Recent years have seen 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 people 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.

Some of these source countries have limited or no immigration history in the community. The Maple Leaf Foods recruitment strategy focusses on 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, they 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 and Sormova 2008).

While the new arrivals have brought with them unique cultural resources and greatly expanded the cultural diversity of the city, this has also introduced new challenges for local service providers. The steady influx of new, temporary, foreign workers, combined with the difficulties faced by the second-wave arrival of families and dependants of new permanent residents, has introduced a need to expand the services currently provided by community organizations, as well as requests for other services such as child care, legal aid, and counselling. 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. The city, to date, has not been characterized by much diversity. Established, formal ethnocultural communities are rare, and those that do exist have deep roots in the area (e.g., Ukrainian, Scottish, and Irish). New immigrants may take a long time to build communities and organizations; they may not feel the need to do so, or may be unfamiliar with the process. Furthermore, with such small numbers, some ethnocultural communities in Brandon may not even allow for the formation of an organization because of their limited human resources and volunteers.

The changing demographics in Brandon have brought greater awareness of and interest in new cultures. The city's largest and most popular multicultural celebration is the annual Lieutenant Governor's Winter Festival, which originated in 2003. Since then, the festival has

continued to increase both in number of participants and in cultural pavilions. From year to year, it is not uncommon to have to wait in line to get into a pavilion or for pavilion organizers to run out of goods.

Each pavilion is organized by an individual ethnocultural group and showcases its cultural traditions. Visitors can count on traditional entertainment, food, and beverages. Participating groups receive funds from the City of Brandon to help cover some of the costs associated with operations. Attendance to the festival is free, although pavilions receive revenue from the sale of food, alcohol, and other memorabilia. The pavilions are each individual entities, responsible for renting the venue, organizing the programming, and meeting their expenses.

Ethnocultural organizations and communities in Brandon credit the Winter Festival with increasing awareness of and participation in cultural celebrations. 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.

A Language Co-operative

With funding support from the City of Brandon, Manitoba Labour and Immigration, and the United Way of Brandon and District, Westman Immigrant Services initiated the development of a self-sustaining language co-operative in January 2009. Once established, the co-operative will work independently of any sector or organizations and will provide interpretation services for the entire community on a fee-for-service basis. In the long term, the co-op is intended to become 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 co-operative is a grassroots response to the ever-growing need in Brandon for interpretation and translation services. Once implemented, the co-operative will benefit the community in a number of ways; it will

- 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 and rewarding them financially 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

- help the community establish and maintain the quality of interpretation training standards and minimizing the costs associated with accessing related services

The first phase of the language co-operative 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 took place in late March and early April 2009 and operations began in May.

Enhancing and Linking Ethnocultural Communities: A Discussion Session[4]

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 suggestions from the social enterprise and social economy literature, community members held a discussion session to begin developing networks and relationships between ethnocultural organizations/communities and other community-based groups.

The session targeted a small group of key individuals and presented an opportunity for ethnocultural groups, non-government organizations, and service providers to discuss the challenges facing Brandon's ethnocultural communities. The purpose was to discuss how ethnocultural organizations and communities can become and/or remain active contributors to the city's cultural diversity. The workshop built on research conducted by the Rural Development Institute between January and March 2008 and adopted suggestions from the ethnocultural social enterprise study conducted by the Canadian CED Network (2006, 2007).

Questions during the session included:
- What are the biggest challenges faced by ethnocultural groups/communities?
- What are some solutions to these challenges?
- What do ethnocultural groups need in order to form organizations?

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4. This session was held at Brandon University, 23 January 2009. For a list of participants see Appendix B.

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

- they often emerge to fill a specific need in the community

- they act in some capacity as service providers to their membership

- they maintain and celebrate cultural identity

- they 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 ethnocultural communities are relatively smaller than in larger cities. As mentioned above, many of the groups in Brandon thus do not have enough people to form associations, nor have they been in the area long enough to establish formal ethnocultural organizations. Other barriers include the lack of familiarity with the process and limited resources.

The lack of volunteers and human resources has been commonly identified as an issue for both ethnocultural groups and non-government organizations, with the threat of core volunteer and staff burnout an ongoing challenge. Limited financial and human resources also impact capacity building within organizations. Some groups identified challenges in establishing links and building collaboration with other groups as well as attracting new and youth membership.

Discussion Session (facilitated by Bob Annis)
The roundtable introductions of workshop participants brought to light a number of issues and challenges facing ethnocultural and non-governmental organizations, including:

- sharing information effectively across groups

- recruiting and retaining members

- addressing the lack of volunteers for newcomer support services and special events

- avoiding burnout among core volunteers

- encouraging member participation in organizations and events

- engaging the community at large

- forming new partnerships among organizations

The after-lunch discussion session focussed on sharing information among organizations

and addressing the challenges and issues raised during the roundtable introductions. The discussion revolved around the following questions:

- How can groups establish a more effective exchange of information 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 among various organizations and ethnocultural groups in Brandon?

Sharing Information Effectively across Groups

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

Another issue was the unavailability of a mutual, collectively owned space that could provide a venue for future meetings. The Westman Multicultural Centre had provided such a venue in the past, but without government support, the space disappeared.

One participant raised the question of how to establish a link between specific communities in order to share services and establish a collaborative relationship that would help alleviate the stress and demands on some organizations.

Recruiting and Retaining Members

The Provincial Exhibition expressed an interest in organizing another celebratory cultural event in the summer. The aim was to add to what was already happening in Brandon rather than competing with existing multicultural events. The event would be mostly volunteer driven and would depend on the will and availability of volunteers from various ethnocultural groups.

Volunteers within established ethnocultural organizations are often older people and recruiting new volunteers is a challenge. Some established organizations are seeking the involvement of younger people who otherwise are not learning their cultural traditions. But this is a challenge as younger people have limited 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

One participant raised the question of what existing organizations should offer newcomers and new members in order to secure their involvement and participation. The Westman Chinese Association was offered as an example of member recruitment. The organization 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. Chinese culture does not have the same concept of volunteerism as Canadian society, so it is not fully understood by Chinese newcomers. Fostering cross-cultural understanding and establishing a reciprocal relationship among individuals and organizations requires time and patience.

Language barriers limit many newcomers attempting to engage 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 with the community. Newcomers need 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) could help newcomers with this transition. The financial and human resource limitations of many non-governmental and service organizations make it difficult to take on new programs and events.

Family Reunification and Challenges Facing Immigrant Families

Some participants raised issues relating to family reunification and integration within Brandon society. In certain cultural contexts, "family" includes the extended family of newcomers, some of whom face the challenge of separation from family, spouse, and children for up to two years, which can contribute to alcohol abuse and extra-marital affairs.

The lack of housing, especially affordable housing, also negatively affects immigrants and their families.

How Do Ethnocultural Organizations Keep Value in Communities over Time?
While first-generation immigrants maintain close ties to their home countries and want to remember their original homes, this need lessens over time. So how do you highlight the value of maintaining cultural traditions for groups spanning several generations? Someone expressed the sentiment "Know the history, know the culture." Participants felt there was a need for education about the history of all peoples. Educating people about other cultures could help stop racism in communities, foster inclusiveness, and encourage co-operation. Encouraging communication, providing education, and valuing young people and their ideas could encourage them to become involved in organizations and help promote building diverse, inclusive societies.

Concluding Remarks — Observations and Suggestions — Roundtable Discussion
This session offered a venue for participants to share experiences and challenges, exchange ideas, establish communication, and raise awareness of ethnocultural groups and organizations already working or seeking to work with immigrant communities in Brandon.

Many 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 acknowledgement that issues and challenges faced by their individual organizations are echoed in other groups, and they took the opportunity to ask questions and gain insight from other participants on how to address these challenges.

Several participants noted that making contact with other groups and organizations by opening a venue for discussion opens a door to communication among groups and offers prospects for future collaboration. A shared forum also provides opportunities to learn from each other about the roles of specific organizations and raises awareness about other organizations' programs and services. Organizers circulated a contact list with e-mail addresses of all participants to everyone who took part in the discussions.

Participants discussed the importance of communication, keeping in touch with grassroots issues, and mobilizing a common strategy. They also raised questions about how to continue the following activities and agreed that these and other issues could become topics for future discussion forums:

- establishing links

- opening communication

- sharing services with other organizations

- linking with Aboriginal communities

- meeting and combating divides

- sharing volunteer resources

- finding the right people for specific tasks

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

1. *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 enjoyed by larger centres and thus face difficulties organizing ethnocultural communities and providing requisite services to newcomers. Immigration, however, presents new possibilities for rural communities. With 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, which 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.

2. *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 be a significant benefit to 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.

Multistakeholder 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 to raise awareness of services available in Brandon (for the final report see Appendix A). And the Rural Development Institute's discussion session on enhancing ethnocultural organizations made considerable progress in connecting various ethnocultural communities with non-government organizations.

The Enhancing and Linking Ethnocultural Communities discussion session was but a first step in bringing ethnocultural organizations together, developing capacity, and creating learning opportunities. Further engagement is needed. The workshop provided a foundation on which to build networks for newcomers and established ethnocultural communities. Such events offer a venue for sharing ideas and experiences. Groups cannot exist in isolation if they wish to develop capacity, and it is important to cultivate relationships and networks amongst ethnocultural communities which, for the most part, share common experiences and challenges.

One must not always assume that ethnocultural organizations are composed entirely of 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.

3. *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 groups 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 must 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, 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 these groups 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 the organizations and the communities in which they operate must embrace the 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. In rural areas, however, there are many steps to be taken before such concepts can be successfully introduced.

APPENDIX A:
SERVICE PROVIDERS' FAIR REPORT

Tapestry of Our Community

A Service Providers' Fair
Wednesday, 15 October 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) from 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 researchers' interpretations of 15 October 2008 activities.

Shawn Ankenmann, Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation

Mr. Ankenmann welcomed everyone to the Service Providers' Fair and thanked all participants in this inaugural event. He noted the importance of bringing different agencies and community organizations together to inform each other of their services, to note their challenges, 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 what is hoped will be an annual event. 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 people to the event, the next fair should be held at a more public venue such as the Town Centre.

Laura Moar, Brandon Friendship Centre

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

With sixty plus staff, the BFC attempts on an ongoing basis to develop new programs to meet the needs of people in the community. It often partners with other organizations in the area such as the Brandon Regional Health Authority, the 7th Street Access Centre, Samaritan House, and others. Its cultural worker/Elder works with other organizations in the community and offers information sessions regarding Aboriginal culture. Although its main focus is the Aboriginal population in Brandon and area, the organization also serves non-Aboriginal clients. It offers tours to interested clients or organizations on request.

The BFC's Kokum's Little Daycare provides care for thirty-six children and is currently full to capacity. The BFC also operates forty housing units in Brandon. The organization receives daily requests for housing; there is currently a three-year waiting list. Its Transitional House on 12th Street also has a long waiting list. The BFC is investigating the possibility of adapting another building to help alleviate the need for housing in the community.

Ms. Moar mentioned that the lack of housing is the BFC's number one issue. The shortage of adequate housing, together with high rents, has resulted in increasing numbers of homeless people in Brandon and affected those transitioning from other communities. There is a particular demand for apartments with three or more bedrooms to accommodate families with more than three 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 / Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre

The Elspeth Reid Family Resource Centre focusses on family issues, parenting, and the well-being of children. It offers a variety of services to its clients including parenting

courses, support groups, family literacy and preschool programs, parenting outreach programs, and others. The centre strives to serve families holistically. As Ms. Wotton noted, "Parents can't meet kids' needs if their own needs are not met."

Ms. Wotton highlighted a number of issues. The first was income, which can often be a barrier that places stress on families if it is inadequate. The lack of housing, particularly low-income housing, is an ongoing local problem. And a serious lack of child care, particularly infant spaces, is having an adverse impact on the well-being of today's families.

While the centre offers a wide range of classes and services, there are a number of barriers that prevent families from accessing them:

- parents' lack of time to meet needs (across all income levels)
- transportation
- limited employment opportunities, particularly for parents without secondary or postsecondary education
- the know-how to fit the services into a busy lifestyle
- feelings of isolation
- an environment that does not support the parents' role

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

Ms. Wotton encouraged the audience to read two recent studies on families that reflect Child and Family Services and the centre's concerns — a Winnipeg research project that examined 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 has the need for additional staff and resources. Services include public showers, washers and dryers,

phones, community voice-mail boxes, fax, Internet, partnerships with community service providers, and access to housing information. Clinical services include service navigators, community health nurses, addictions counsellors, mental health workers, a domestic violence counselor, an Aboriginal spiritual care provider, cultural facilitators (Spanish, Amharic, and Mandarin), a travel health nurse, a social worker, specialized supports facilitator, and a volunteer income tax program.

Once again, the critical lack of affordable housing in Brandon is another major issue for the centre and its clients. Many newcomers have limited or no understanding of landlord-tenant agreements or what rights they have. They require advocacy services and greater awareness of the issues.

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

Youth for Christ (YFC) 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 physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

The organization offers a number of programs, 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 looking for a new location; and Gymblast, a program delivered in partnership with the YMCA and the schools. The organization also co-ordinates trips for youth to expose them to different parts of Canada and recently organized 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 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 six to thirteen. The 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 for newcomers include drop-in nights for teenagers, trips to other parts of Canada, and pool tournaments (mainly for adult males).

YFC recently participated in a training session offered by the Search Institute in Minneapolis on healthy development and encouraged people to visit their website for more information. Topics include:

- ensuring the well-being of youth

- ensuring that people have the information they need

- providing free, visible, well-communicated services and community resources

- offering opportunities for youth to volunteer

- providing role models and mentors to youth

Yvonne Hodge, Brandon School Division

The Brandon School Division (BSD) offers alternatives to the regular schools operating within the system. Alexander School, for example, is in the process of becoming an art school, and Neelin High School — Off-Campus is attended by approximately two hundred students who work at their own pace towards graduation.

The BSD 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, which is part of Special Needs Programs directed at the preschool population. The BSD has also recently hired a full-time occupational therapist, whose 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 co-ordinates a program that assesses the 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 out of four children.

The EAL program has been developed to assist children from immigrant families. The BSD co-ordinates an English Language Assessment program for children and EAL teachers work with the regular classroom teachers. There are also a variety of visual supports available for children from non-English-speaking families. There is currently considerably more support available within the school system for children from immigrant families than there was during the first years of new immigration to Brandon.

There are a number of issues at Brandon schools, including:

- behavioral problems

- retention of Aboriginal children

- equipping children with basic skills to enter kindergarten

- cultural differences and integration of immigrant children

The BSD offers support for teachers dealing with immigrant families, organizing workshops and providing consultants and visual support for classes. There are also regular group meetings of teachers and principals, who are considering inter-cultural training among students, which could help address tensions and cultural issues, particularly in high schools.

Heather Sharpe and Colleen Erickson
YWCA Westman Women's Shelter

Opened in 1978, the Women's Shelter 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, counselling services, child care, crisis intervention, and referrals as well as information on legal, medical, housing, and employment needs.

The average age of women in the shelter is eighteen to thirty-two and the majority of clients are Aboriginal. Women can stay in the shelter for up to thirty days, a limit set by the government. The YWCA funding is based on "bed nights," or the number of beds occupied monthly. It relies heavily on private donations and also operates the Adopt-a-Room Program, under which businesses sponsor a room in the shelter. Additional programs organized by the YWCA include the Power of the Girl Conference, which focusses on self-esteem and leadership among young women.

The lack of housing, particularly low-income housing, adds considerable pressure to the YWCA's operations. Women in the shelter get only thirty days to rebuild their lives and find a new home, a timeframe which, coupled with a limited income, does not allow many women to find an apartment in Brandon. Some women end up returning to the relationships they left.

Language factors often prevent the YWCA from providing services to immigrant women. Other organizations have sometimes stepped in to help with language and immigration-

related issues, but language barriers, the lack of translation services, and the unavailability of literature in other languages result in many immigrant women being unaware of the shelter and its services.

Hope Roberts, Westman Immigrant Services

Westman Immigrant Services (WIS) provides a variety of programs and services to Brandon's immigrant community. Brandon is undergoing significant change with the growing immigrant population and WIS is looking for ways to link its 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 services. WIS employs thirteen teachers for its English classes and another ten workers for the settlement classes and programs. The organization also offers EAL support to programs in rural areas and anticipates an impact on its services due to increasing rural immigration.

The population seeking WIS's services are of various immigration streams, including Maple Leaf workers, refugees through sponsorships, business immigrants, family sponsorship, and others. In September 2008 alone, WIS opened ninety-six new client files, which Ms. Roberts noted does not include all family members. According to WIS, 181 immigrants arrived in Brandon in 2005, 172 in 2006, and 642 in 2007. For various reasons, these numbers do not reflect the true, new immigrant population in the city; it is estimated that the numbers are in the thousands.

WIS has made an effort to hire workers with a variety of language skills to provide services to immigrants with limited or no experience of English. They now employ staff fluent in Amharic, Spanish, Mandarin, and Tagalog. Ms. Roberts also noted that there are major needs arising in the community related to mental health and counselling services. WIS collaborates with a number of other organizations to develop and deliver new programs and services (e.g., Family Literacy and EAL, Sexual Health Promo Campaign).

New programs at WIS include the Entry Program, a core orientation course for newly arrived immigrants that provides information on the city, health, education, employment, and legal issues. And the WIS Assessment Centre conducts evaluations on eligible students entering a government-funded EAL program.

Ms. Roberts noted that one of the major issues at WIS, as with other organizations, is the

risk of core service-provider burnout. And some of WIS's programs depend heavily on volunteers.

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

Ms. Roberts encouraged other organizations to address issues related to the growing immigrant population by developing appropriate programs and services and collaborating 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

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

> ***Question One:*** *One of the issues that comes up again and again is communication among the sectors. Often we create and operate within "silos" that become focussed 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 co-operative 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 entities with which the Friendship Centre collaborates

include the Brandon Regional Health Authority, Community Health Matters, the 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, including 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 preschool and school programs. Our partners include Manitoba Health, Child and Family Services, the Elspeth Reid Centre, the Child and Adolescent Treatment Centre, Brandon University, Assiniboine Community College, and the University of Alberta. Some of the collaborative programs they operate include Kinderlinks, Roots for Empathy, and FAST (Families and Schools Together).

Sandy / 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, communicating effectively, and being actively involved in programming.

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

> *Question Two: We have numerous groups in our community that have been in existence for a number of years, such as the Brandon Race Relations Network (BRRN), which have been tasked with the role of creating programming that promotes racial diversity and cultural understanding. These groups frequently face a lack of funding, a dearth of people committed to leadership and volunteering, 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 percent 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 is not familiar with the immigrant experience and therefore is largely unattached to the issues arising. We should all begin by asking ourselves, "What can I do?" and create personal connections and linkages. Increasing and stabilizing funding for nonprofit 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 the same respect as paid staff.

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 (10 December) and the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March). 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, the continuity of activities, and the capacity to develop new programs. Organizations should set aside funding for volunteers (i.e., for volunteer appreciation dinners, etc.). A lack of funding often impacts the desire to volunteer.

> *Question Three: 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 undergoes 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. By June 2008, the number was 418, reflecting only a half-year of growth. These numbers comprise newcomers with landed immigrant status only and do not include temporary foreign workers, dependents on visitors' visas, those waiting for landed immigrant status, and those who were destined to go elsewhere but are living in Brandon.

If projections are realized, Brandon will experience at least a 10 percent population increase by 2010, at which point 10 percent 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 Brandon is experiencing arrivals through every immigrant stream.

Adrian / Youth for Christ: YFC's Spanish Soccer Program 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 Four: 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: We must encourage people to view local immigration as a permanent reality, not a temporary phenomenon. The housing shortage needs to be addressed. An interpretation and translation model needs to be developed. The Brandon Police Service has organized a list of people who will translate for them for an agreed-upon fee. The city is currently co-ordinating a translation of the relocation guide into Spanish and bus schedules are available in multiple languages.

We need to encourage activities that bring people from different cultural backgrounds together. 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 opportu-

nity for the city. It is important to focus on the positive and build on what we have. Meetings are being held to establish a nonprofit housing corporation in Brandon and introduce rent controls. 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 to introduce Aboriginal culture to newcomers. We must address the issue of homelessness and the lack of affordable housing in the city.

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 with the journey to independence.

The following community resources are available:

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

A P P E N D I X   B :
P A R T I C I P A N T   L I S T

Benjamin Amoyaw, Manitoba Labour and Immigration

Robert Annis, Rural Development Institute

Dave Barnes, Neelin High School

Esther Bryan, City of Brandon

Cristian Chavez, 7th Street Health Access Centre

Ryan Clement, Marquis Project

Naty Delbridge, Westman Immigrant Services; Filipino Community

Lorraine Dooley and Immaculate Nabisere, World University Service Canada,
    Brandon University

Craig Ebbers, Provincial Exhibition

Nellie Gillespie, Ukrainian Society

Lori Gould, Brandon Race Relations Network; Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal
Corporation

Muguleta Haile, Westman Immigrant Services; Ethiopian Community

Ian He, Westman Chinese Association

Lee-Ann Jaworski, Drew Caldwell's MLA Constituency Office

Dorothy McHarg, Westman Scottish Association

Richard McIntyre, Irish Association

Alison Moss, Rural Development Institute

Lonnie Patterson, Brandon Arts Coalition

Hope Roberts, Westman Immigrant Services; Brandon Race Relations Network

Monika Sormova, Rural Development Institute; Brandon University Community Outreach

Frank Tacan, Sr., Cultural Worker, Brandon Friendship Centre

Manfred Wicht, German Society of Westman

Eileen Wang Yu, Westman Chinese Association

APPENDIX C:
ETHNOCULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS
IN BRANDON

Westman Scottish Association

Year Established	active since the 1970s
Priorities/Objectives	• to ensure a place to meet other immigrants and socialize • to promote interest in Scottish culture
Organization Type	informal; do not feel that being formally recognized is necessary
Organizing Body	elected committee with a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and five committee members
Governance Meetings	• annual general meeting every April • all-committee meetings held throughout the year with recorded minutes
Membership	voluntary
Events/Activities	• 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 (e.g., contributing to moving costs or in the event of a disaster)
Funding Sources	self-funded
Winter Festival Involvement	has operated a popular pavilion since 2005

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Holy Ghost

Year Established	the Ukrainian National Home was built approximately two generations (eighty years) ago
Priorities/Objectives	• to provide whatever help they can to Ukrainians in the community, including hospital and nursing-home visits • maintenance 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	has provided items to immigrants when they first arrive in Brandon
Funding Sources	• 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 a pavilion together to promote Ukrainian culture

Irish Society of Western Manitoba

Year Established	has been in existence for about seventeen years
Priorities/Objectives	• 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	• 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	• offers human resources and assistance to newcomers; do not necessarily need to be members • provides newcomers from Ireland with practical assistance regarding living and working in Brandon • offers volunteer opportunities
Funding Sources	• has received two small grants from the provincial government in the past • organization is increasingly self-sufficient • donates profits from the Winter Festival to local charities

The Icelandic Canadian Club of Western Manitoba

Year Established	since 1967
Priorities/Objectives	N/A
Organization Type	member of the Iceland National League of North America
Organizing Body	N/A
Governance Meetings	N/A
Membership	N/A
Events/Activities	• Tombolla / Thorablot (Icelandic supper); Christmas party • group field trips • picnics • regular monthly meetings • gives 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; began informally in 2007
Priorities/Objectives	• to assist new immigrants in learning the Canadian way and provide language instruction, settlement services, housing, orientation, and cultural integration • 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	• informal, but in the process of becoming formally recognized • volunteer-based
Organizing Body	• management committee of twenty people • in the process of establishing a formal board of directors
Governance Meetings	in the planning process
Membership	• actively seeking members • planning a membership drive to increase member base to one thousand • members from outside of Brandon
Events/Activities	• 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-based public forum • see website at http://www.westmanchinese.com/
Funding Sources	have not looked for funding elsewhere, but hope to in the future
Winter Festival Involvement	• participated in the Winter Festival for the first time in 2008 • used to have a small involvement in the Global Village pavilion

German Society of Westman

Year Established	established in 2005, based on desires expressed after initial participation in the Winter Festival
Priorities/Objectives	• to preserve, promote, and encourage interest in German language and culture • to promote a better understanding of German-speaking areas and people through social and educational activities • to establish a school to teach the German language and culture to students of all ages; also aspires to having its own dance group and band in the future
Organization Type	N/A
Organizing Body	• executive committee meets regularly, with a president, vice-president, second-vice president, treasurer, and secretary • has a constitution • has a social events committee
Governance Meetings	annual meetings with an agenda
Membership	• members do not have to be able to speak German, but must desire to promote and celebrate cultural traditions • there are membership fees
Events / Activities	• a social events committee co-ordinates functions such as potlucks, picnics, barbeques, etc. • Stammtisch (a regular monthly social outing) • camps • Halloween parties • Brandon Travellers Day Parade • Sommerfest (held in July and prompted by the success of their pavilion at the Winter Festival)
Services Offered	see website at http://www.germansocietyofwestman.ca/
Funding Sources	N/A
Winter Festival Involvement	• first invitation to participate was in 2004 • German pavilion was one of the most popular

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