

**PLANNING FOR INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL
VOLUNTEER-SENDING ORGANIZATIONS:
THE CASE OF CANADIAN CROSSROADS INTERNATIONAL**

by

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates what implications the shift to programming based on the emerging capacity development paradigm has on participant diversity in international volunteer-sending organizations (VSOs). It examines the case of one such organization, Canadian Crossroads International (CCI), through primary document analysis, key informant interviews, a focus group discussion, a questionnaire, and the author's personal involvement in the organization. While it is recognized that the term "diversity" is surrounded by complexity, this thesis assumes that by recruiting diverse participants, a VSO can enhance its: capacity to fulfil its mission; contribution to sustainable and equitable development; maintenance of historical ties to peace and anti-racist movements; and its potential to benefit a broader range of individuals.

VSOs are currently re-assessing their programming in order to better meet the demands of both their donors and their Southern partner countries. Some VSOs, including CCI, are coordinating South-South and South-North exchanges based on specific skill sets, and are facilitating partnerships between similarly focused non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the North and South. These changes pose both opportunities (e.g. increased First Nations participation) and constraints (e.g. continued exclusion of low-income individuals and people with disabilities) on diverse participation in CCI. Four key lessons for other VSOs can be derived from the case study of CCI. First, increased diversity is the result of structural changes, not simply rhetoric that encourages diversity. Second, while participation by volunteers from Southern partner countries increases the overall ethno-cultural diversity, participation at the volunteer level alone is not enough to shift power dynamics between North and South. Third, partnerships with, and recruitment from NGOs that are organized by or work with minority communities can potentially increase the participation of members of those communities in that VSO's programs. Finally, increased diversity is not necessarily a goal in and of itself; replacing racist or otherwise oppressive culture with respect for difference is the underlying goal of promoting diversity.

As VSOs play a role in a larger social movement, ensuring that their programs are accessible increases the overall push for global social justice.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Problem

The concept of 'inclusiveness,' particularly as it applies to participation in the planning and implementation of North-South development projects, is cumbersome at best. Not only does it imply an understanding of *who* has been excluded from the process or activity in question and *why*, but also an analysis of *who should be* included in the process and *how* the process must change in order to accommodate the needs of those individuals who had previously been excluded. Categorizing individuals into 'included' or 'excluded' groups proves even more problematic: it requires drawing lines between individuals along a multitude of gendered, socio-economic, ethno-cultural, and personal axes in order to determine which shared characteristics or circumstances are worthy of inclusion and which are not. This process, of course, risks further exclusion (or oppression) of those who are not deemed worthy of inclusion, and perhaps even a sense of alienation among those who carry the traits that are considered worthy, as they immediately become defined by how they differ from some accepted norm, rather than valued for their ability to contribute to the process in question.

Post-colonial, feminist authors have shed some light on the paradoxes inherent to organizing and planning around difference. Mohanty (1991) and hooks (1981), for instance, have critiqued the construction of women (specifically of 'third world women' in the case of Mohanty) as one, homogenous, oppressed group. They argue that such a division along gendered lines alone fails to recognize oppression occurring between and among women, within North America and across the globe. From an anti-racist perspective, Razack (1998) further warns that an emphasis on tolerance for cultural diversity in educational and legal settings "too often descends, in a multicultural spiral, to a superficial reading of differences that makes power relations invisible and keeps dominant cultural norms in place" (p. 9). Likewise, Bannerji, (2000) looks critically at how the discourse surrounding 'multiculturalism' and 'diversity' in Canada has served to reinforce feelings of racist orientalism and "the status quo of dominance" (p. 555) by

white, French or English-speaking Canadians of European decent. By labelling certain ethnic or cultural groups as 'diverse,' or '*multi-cultured*,' individuals belonging to these groups become "targets for either assimilation or tolerance" (Ibid, 551). Together, these authors send out a loud caution against a romantic or over-generalized representation of the 'other' in any attempt to mobilize against oppression, or, for that matter, to plan for inclusiveness.

Nevertheless, systems and processes catering to individuals with relative social power continue to exclude, or oppress non-dominant groups, both locally and around the globe. Recognizing that this is so, some theorists have called for new approaches to planning; approaches that acknowledge and work to shift the imbalance of power that results from gendered, socio-economic, ethno-cultural, and personal difference. Radical planning theory, advanced by such practitioners as Patsy Healey, Allan Heskin, Jacqueline Leavitt, John Friedmann, Lisa Peattie, and Leonie Sandercock, calls for the empowerment of those who are the very casualties of social oppression (Sandercock, 1998). As early as 1973, for example, Friedmann suggested re-establishing the relationship between planner and client through processes of mutual learning, thereby equally respecting both the experience-based knowledge of the client and the expert knowledge of the planner. Similarly, Parpart (1995) questioned the dominance of outside (white male) expertise in international development processes, and challenged practitioners to expand the definition of expertise to include local, experience-based (female) knowledge. Sandercock (1998) further emphasized the need "to pay attention to – acknowledge and respect – difference and diversity in [planning] theory and practice" and to revise planning models so that they "incorporate – but not uncritically – the concept of 'difference'" (p. 111).

And so, while it is recognized that coming to terms with concepts such as inclusive participation, difference, diversity, and oppression is both an awkward and sensitive process, planners concerned with social injustice must nonetheless go through this process as a starting point for action that contributes to equitable development. Despite its definitional complexity, using the term "diversity" allows us engage in dialogue

around which aspects of the status quo could change to not only become more inclusive, but also more effective.

In this thesis, I engage in this dialogue and explore the concept of diversity as it relates to volunteer-sending organizations (VSOs)¹ working in the field of international development planning. Just as the feminist and radical planning theorists cited above have challenged mainstream planning practices, this thesis uses ideas from a body of literature, which I refer to as the ‘capacity development paradigm,’ to analyse the deficiencies in historical approaches to international development, and more exclusively, to understand programming changes occurring within VSOs. Specifically, I look at the case of one VSO (Canadian Crossroads International), and tell the story of its struggle to reconcile the value of diversity while at the same time responding to the stated needs of Southern partner country organizations. This study shows that the changes occurring to increase diversity and promote capacity development in Southern partner countries are not mutually exclusive. Instead, a symbiotic relationship emerges, whereby the programming changes put in place to promote capacity building in Southern organizations appear to be promoting diversity as well, and, in turn, the push for diversity has the potential to increase organizational capacity both abroad and within CCI.

With an acknowledgment that this concept is wrought with complexity, this thesis assumes that promoting participant “diversity” in volunteer-sending organizations is important for four key reasons:

First, because the ability of an organization to realize its mission rests on its volunteers’ performance overseas, recruiting individuals with skills that enable them to be effective on their volunteer placement is essential. While VSOs in general –and CCI in particular– have historically² recruited university-educated individuals belonging to dominant

¹ VSO is used in this text to indicate “volunteer-sending organisation,” not to be mistaken with the more common acronym for the international agency: *Voluntary Service Overseas*, with branches in the UK, Canada and the Netherlands.

² In using the word “historically” throughout this text, I am referring to the period prior to significant programming changes. Programming changes began occurring in the Western Region during the 2001 recruitment campaign. These changes are discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 5.

Canadian society to participate in their programs, these individuals may not always be the most qualified to participate in development work overseas. Instead, people with experience-based knowledge about CCI's development sectors and partner countries might have skills to offer that these typical volunteers would not. For example, people who have a first-hand understanding of indigenous development issues because they themselves are indigenous will likely have a more in-depth understanding of the complexities and challenges facing people, NGOs, and community-based organizations (CBOs) working in that sector. Likewise, people originally from the country or region where the volunteer has been requested probably speak the language and have an understanding of the cultural norms in the country where they are to be placed. Therefore, these skills acquired from a participant's position outside mainstream Canadian society can potentially enhance the VSO's capacity to meet its mission.

Second, voluntary social activity has long been celebrated as an expression of citizenship, and as a pillar to democratic society. International development NGOs, particularly VSOs, have historically relied on volunteers to carry out their programs both locally and abroad. While the role of volunteer-sending organizations has changed considerably over the years, they continue to promote global awareness, global voluntarism, and global citizenship. It could thus be argued that in encouraging their volunteers to become more globally aware citizens, volunteer-sending organizations are playing a role in a larger social movement pushing for equitable and sustainable development around the world. However, if the very institutions set up for citizens to contribute to sustainable and equitable development (e.g. VSOs and other development NGOs) systematically exclude individuals who would otherwise want to make a volunteer contribution (for example, people with disabilities or people coming from a low socio-economic background), then the movement cannot benefit from the unique skills and talents of those individuals. If all concerned citizens are able to somehow participate in VSOs, the movement itself can only be strengthened.

Third, although its roots can likely be traced back before this time, the history of the volunteer-sending movement is typically associated with an influx of workcamps

marshalled throughout Europe during the 1920s. From the beginning, these voluntary efforts have aimed to fulfil two objectives concurrently (Cobbs Hoffman 1998, Morris 1973). On the one hand, they served to reconstruct devastated villages across Europe following the First World War, thus meeting an objective of infrastructure construction and development. On the other, they were designed to bring together nationals from previously warring nations in order to rekindle a sense of solidarity amongst European countries, thus meeting a more socially oriented objective of fostering peace and goodwill through cross-cultural exchange. Similarly, Canadian Crossroads International was originally based on this workcamp model, and was inspired by the anti-racist advocacy work of the African-American reverend, Dr. James Robinson. Just as Robinson brought together people of diverse ethnic backgrounds to combat racism, CCI has continued to emphasize personal growth through cross-cultural learning as the starting point for social transformation. Even as CCI and other VSOs have undergone significant change since their original programming models, the simultaneous focus on development, cross-cultural understanding and personal growth remains an integral component of the volunteer sending concept. Ensuring that people of diverse socio-cultural backgrounds participate in their programming therefore allows VSOs to be true to their socially-oriented agendas, both at home and abroad.

The final assumption is that because voluntary development work is not rewarded financially, participation is motivated by personal or professional rewards derived from involvement. These rewards include, but are not limited to: work experience, an opportunity to conduct research, or a chance to travel. From one perspective, participation in volunteer-sending organizations can thus be viewed as a means to accessing benefits. Participants in a VSO, then, are at once the (unpaid) workforce *and* some of the beneficiaries of this type of program. While the professional qualifications and function of overseas volunteers is addressed in literature surrounding these organizations, no systematic attention is paid to the question of accessibility to programming. Removing barriers to participation ensures that the benefits derived from participation are accessible to a broader range of individuals.

In summary then, this thesis assumes that CCI, and indeed any VSO, should address the question of diversity so that it can enhance: its capacity to fulfil its mission; its contribution to the movement of sustainable and equitable development; its ability to uphold the integrity of historical ties to peace and anti-racist movements; and its potential to benefit a broader range of individuals.

In the introduction to “Working Together: Producing Synergy by Honouring Diversity,” Angeles Arrien (1998: 1-2) captures different understandings of the concept of diversity, and sheds more light on the complex nature of any discussion this topic:

“Diversity is known by many different names – pluralism, unity, harmony, tolerance, inclusion, conflict mediation, facilitation, equity, intercultural understanding, antibias, multicultural education, equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, cultural competence, global competitiveness, social justice, racial understanding, and being politically correct.”

The nuances implied by each of the above terms can propel conversations about diversity in multiple directions. Correspondingly, the question of why diversity is important and what it means in the context of volunteer-sending organizations cannot be answered in simple terms. Despite this challenge in simply initiating a discussion on diversity, Arrien goes on to suggest that, “All these terms reveal a need to relate, communicate, and work from a deeper place of respect, honour, integrity, heart, and wisdom” (Ibid: 2). It is this final statement that reflects the basis of my interest in the diversity question in CCI: a desire to reflect upon and improve CCI as an organization so that it is better able to carry out its work from this place of respect, honour, integrity, heart, and wisdom.

As mentioned above, I link these presuppositions about diversity with a widespread shift in the field of international development: the capacity development paradigm. This paradigm has come about as people in the South, development theorists and practitioners alike have recognized that past development efforts have, for the most part, not had the desired impact of fostering independence and sustainable development. Some have suggested that this failure is due to the narrow scope and short-term nature of development projects, and also because efforts have been primarily driven by outside

interests rather than the internal needs of the developing countries themselves (Morris 1998, Qualman and Bolger 1996). In addition, there has recently been an acknowledgment that the environment in which individuals, organizations, institutions and states operate affects their capacity to be productive and effective (UNDP 1997). Hence, the development impact of programs that focus exclusively on technical cooperation, such as those administered by volunteer-sending organizations, is being re-evaluated by the Canadian International Development Agency. Although many continue to operate, funding trends suggest that volunteer-sending organizations in their most popular forms are beginning to fall out of favour (Smillie 1993, CIDA 2002).

Theories of capacity development call for the creation of a supportive “enabling environment,” while at the same time enhancing a country’s capacity on the individual, institutional and state levels (UNDP 1997). Models based on capacity development theory recognize that development efforts must be linked more closely to local interests and initiatives in order to ensure their long-term success. This changing nature of international development has called into question the role of the ‘foreign expert’ (Parpart 1995), and requires that volunteer-sending organizations re-evaluate their place amidst global development efforts. Little by little new volunteer initiatives are attempting to meet local interests and enhance local capacities, for instance through the facilitation of South-South and South-North exchanges. VSOs are also playing a part in fostering partnerships between compatible non-governmental and community-based organizations in the North and South. Although these changes present some challenges, they are slowly transforming the familiar role of volunteer-sending organizations and reshaping relationships between North and South.

1.1.1 Canadian Crossroads International

Canadian Crossroads International (CCI) is a volunteer-sending organization that came into existence in the late 1950s as a spin-off of its American counterpart *Operation Crossroads International*. Over the years, CCI’s programming has changed significantly from Dr. James Robinson’s original model similar to 1920s volunteer workcamps mentioned above, to a variety of group and individual exchanges for Canadian and

partner-country youth and adults of all ages. Driven by the Canadian public's overwhelming interest in international voluntarism, its most popular and most highly funded program has been the *Overseas (OS) Individual* program. The OS program has historically sent over two hundred Canadians abroad per year through four regional³ offices in Canada, and has worked in approximately twenty-seven countries worldwide.

In recent years, however, CCI's programming –specifically the Overseas (OS) Program– has undergone significant adjustments in order to more accurately reflect the changing philosophy underlying development efforts in this decade. Where once a placement was arranged for *almost* any Canadian who demonstrated a sufficient combination of technical skills and personal attributes, greater attention is now being paid to the stated needs of CCI's partner countries. Rather than focusing primarily on cross-cultural exchange, Canadian volunteers are presently being recruited through more specialized job descriptions in order to meet those specific needs. In addition to the increased focus on technical skills, the OS program in CCI's Western Region is currently being merged with two other programs that arrange work placements for non-Canadian volunteers in Canada or in CCI's other partner countries. These are the *To-Canada* and *Interflow* programs. With this change, the number of Canadians in the Overseas program has been reduced to match the number of partner country volunteers working in Canada.

Although some obstacles have arisen in implementing the programming changes, and some details of the new programming are yet to unfold, all future volunteer efforts managed through the Western Region over the next three years will be concentrated in selected partner organizations in Canada, Bolivia, Guatemala and Suriname. It is hoped that these designated 'partner' organizations will have more control over the administration of CCI's new programming than was historically the case. Although a number of volunteer committees are already in existence, a new level of governance, i.e. the 'Project Committee,' is in the process of being established through which Southern country representatives will exert more influence. It is expected that these project

³ These are: the Atlantic, Ontario, Québec and Western Regions, which are discussed in further detail in Chapter Three.

committees will take over responsibility for tasks such as recruitment and fundraising, thus exhibiting greater ownership of the projects on which CCI works. In making these changes, CCI is attempting to enhance its overseas development impact and more effectively address the interests of its Southern partners.

Much of the discourse stemming from capacity development theories is apparent in CCI's programming changes. Likewise, several trends that reflect the capacity development model are becoming evident in volunteer-sending organizations in general. Rather than simply providing an extra worker unaccounted for in the organization's payroll, more emphasis is now being placed on the Southern country's organizational development. As such, Northern volunteers are often expected to work with a counterpart in their host organization in order to avoid leaving a gap to be filled once they return to their home country. The exchange of best practices is also being facilitated through partnerships between similarly focused organizations. Moreover, many VSOs are realizing the benefits of South-South and South-North exchanges, and are incorporating various opportunities for volunteers from their partner countries into their programming. For the most part, however, North-South exchange continues to take priority in most organizations.

The Western Region of CCI has established a model for partner country organizational development that lies at the foundation of its programming changes. This model is based on a definition that sees capacity-building as "a process of continuous reflection and learning" where an organization enhances and/or strengthens its resources, skills, and abilities through identifying and undertaking specific activities (CCI West Online). Through its new programming, Canadian volunteers will assist in these 'capacity-building activities,' thus contributing to the partner organization's sustainable growth. Specifically, in establishing partnerships with Canadian organizations that work in the same field as those in its Southern partner countries, CCI hopes to facilitate the exchange of skills and people in order to nurture relationships that will endure long after CCI's initial involvement. These changes to CCI's programming have been influenced by the greater capacity development paradigm.

Southern host organizations for CCI volunteers have historically had little control over the volunteer they received, and were often not consulted during the recruitment and selection process. Instead, volunteer country representatives of CCI were told about the recruited Canadians' skills and interests, and were subsequently responsible for finding host organizations that would best suit these volunteers' needs. This approach placed Southern organizations in a passive role of recipient, rather than a more active role of taking steps to enhance their own organizational capacity. Technical cooperation based on capacity-building and the establishment of partnerships are the two key elements of the recent changes to CCI's programming that attempt to ensure that Southern partner organizations play a more active role in the development of their own capacity.

CCI's new model of technical cooperation assumes that under certain circumstances, Southern partner organizations can benefit from the work of an outside volunteer consultant. Ideally, these circumstances occur when a partner organization identifies an organizational weakness and decides that bringing in someone with specific skills and expertise is the best way to address this weakness. In this way, CCI is able to contribute to that organization's capacity development by recruiting the requested volunteer from Canada or from one of its other partner countries. The role of volunteers in supporting organizational capacity building is expected to be more empowering for Southern partner organizations than CCI's previous approach, in that these organizations are more in control of the terms of outside involvement in their organization.

Additionally, the partnership model is potentially rewarding for all parties involved because linked organizations can learn from each other while cooperating to achieve mutually beneficial goals. In this model, the assumption is that all participants are deemed to be 'experts' in their own right, and partners in addressing the problems identified in their development sector. They have knowledge based on the experience of working in their respective organizations, and while this local expertise is respected, it is not presumed to be immediately transferable to other organizations. Thus, organizations can learn from each other and choose which strategies, tools, and techniques might be

applicable in their home organization. All organizations can potentially benefit, and again, Southern partner organizations are more in control of their own development process.

At the same time as it has been moving forward with these programming changes, CCI has also been attempting to reconcile an old debate about diversity. Participants and staff have noticed that CCI's Overseas program has attracted a fairly homogeneous demographic profile: the majority of its participants were middle-class, university-educated women in their twenties. Over the years, some CCI volunteers, staff and management have made attempts to *diversify* the participant base of its Overseas Program by conducting outreach targeted at specific ethno-cultural groups. However, few –if any– changes were made to the program design itself until 2001, and as a result, CCI continued to generally attract a majority of its participants from the same demographic group until this time. As an organization working to raise awareness of global inequities, the realization that most Canadians participating in its programs come from a place of relative social privilege has caused it to look inwards at what barriers to inclusive participation may exist within the organization. For this reason, some members of CCI have invested much time into contemplating why its programs are not accessible to people of all social, economic and cultural backgrounds. As the Western Region of CCI changes its programming in response to the capacity development paradigm, some opportunities for more inclusive participation are beginning to appear.

Indeed, hints that this self-reflection and assessment is a trend in other volunteer-sending organizations are evident in the way they market their programs. The *U.S. Peace Corps*, for example, publicizes the number of visible minorities it sends overseas per year and includes stories of these *diverse* volunteers' experiences abroad on its official website (Peace Corps Online). Likewise, the Canadian division of the organization *Voluntary Service Overseas* (VSO Canada) gives specific instructions for physically challenged applicants who are interested in attending one of its recruitment sessions. It also makes its programming information and application packages available in large print, on

audiotape or through a reading/writing service for visually and hearing impaired applicants (VSO Canada Online).

This thesis tells the story of CCI's struggle to understand and reconcile the issue of diversity as it relates to volunteers participating in its programs. While the concept of diversity is not limited to these specific human characteristics or situations, this thesis looks at the past and present demographic profile of Canadian participants in the Western Region of CCI's Overseas Individual Program in terms of their ethnicity, culture, education, class, age, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and location.

By considering the case of Canadian Crossroads International, this thesis discusses what new demands for diversity the capacity development paradigm creates, as well as what constraints on diversity it poses for volunteer-sending organizations.

1.2 Research Questions

The goal of this paper is to explore the questions:

What impact has the shift to programming based on the emerging capacity development paradigm had on participant diversity in volunteer-sending organizations? What are the implications for programming in such organizations?

Specifically, this research looks at the case of Canadian Crossroads International and attempts to determine:

How has technical cooperation based on organizational capacity-building and partnership affected participant diversity and inclusive participation in the Western Region of Canadian Crossroads International?

These research questions are explored through three subsidiary sets of questions:

The first set of questions looks at the historical context for volunteer-sending organizations and Canadian Crossroads International:

1. What is the historical development of the international volunteer-sending movement?

2. What are the roots of volunteer sending in Canada?
3. What is the history of Canadian Crossroads International?

The second set of questions examines programming in volunteer-sending organizations, particularly that of Canadian Crossroads International:

1. How have volunteer-sending organizations responded in the era of capacity development?
2. How has the capacity development paradigm influenced CCI's programming?
3. How have organizational values shaped CCI's programming?

The final set of questions relates specifically to the relationship between programming and volunteer participation:

1. How has CCI's past programming affected the profile of its volunteer participants?
2. How have programming changes affected the profile of its volunteer participants?
3. What implications might the new programming have on future volunteer participation?

1.3 Research Methodology and Methods

This research was informed by a range of literature both within the realm of planning, and outside. Specifically, post-development writers such as Rahnema (1996), Escobar (1995), and Hancock (1989) challenged my assumption that international development efforts were always well intentioned, and presented me with a more critical starting point in researching one organization involved with international efforts. Post-modern and feminist writers, such as Marchand and Parpart (1995), and hooks (1981) heightened my awareness of oppression in social and development contexts, and allowed me to re-define the notion of "expertise." The work of Sandercock (1998) referenced above, reinforced my desire to prioritise "diversity" as an area of concern in the domain of social planning, while Bannerji (2000) encouraged me to re-examine the discourse of diversity itself. Finally, post-colonial and anti-racist theorists such as Razack (1998) and Mohanty (1991) persuaded me to question my own interest in diversity, and pushed me to speak from a more humble place in my own writing on the subject.

1.3.1 Literature Review

In order to situate the Canadian Crossroads International experience within the broader context of voluntary development action, a wide range of resources on non-governmental organizations in international development were consulted. Specifically, case studies and some official websites of volunteer-sending organizations were examined because of their historical and comparative significance. Literature on capacity development was also reviewed to provide a secondary level of analysis from which I could understand the process of programming change within volunteer-sending organizations, and specifically within Canadian Crossroads International. These bodies of literature were helpful in forming this study's analytical framework.

1.3.2 Case Study

Primary research for the case study comprised seven key informant interviews, one focus group discussion, a questionnaire returned by eighteen respondents, review of 114 application forms for the Western Region's Overseas Individual Program over the past four years and analysis of primary organizational documents. While some data from other CCI regions and VSOs are included for comparative purposes, it should be clearly stated that this case study is concerned primarily with the *Western Region* of CCI. Hence, all CCI members consulted during the study currently reside in this region, and unless otherwise specified the discussion refers to programming and policies in the Western Region.

As many of the working relationships within CCI are based on trust, issues of confidentiality were considered with much caution while conducting this study. For that reason, ideas or direct quotes are never associated with a name throughout the text. Names of all interview and focus group participants, as well as questionnaire respondents are compiled in one list, which is included as Appendix A. Interview and survey questions are included as Appendix B. Responses to the key questions of diversity in CCI are included as Appendix C.

Key informants were chosen based on their current participation in, and knowledge of, Canadian Crossroads International, their proximity to Vancouver, and their scheduling availability. Three former staff members and four volunteers were interviewed. Two of these volunteers presently hold recognized positions within the organization. Interview questions were related to values about who participates in the OS program, diversity, and how CCI's programming affects participation. Though the same template of questions was used in each interaction, interviews were conducted in an open manner in order to promote discussion on the topic. Some prompting and clarification of questions were necessary. Two interviewees supplemented original responses with subsequent comments submitted by e-mail. The views of these key informants were coded as "Respondents" A through G.

The focus group was conducted with staff and management in the Western Regional Office. Questions were open-ended and primarily related to the implications of the new programming on participation in the organization and on staff and management views on diversity. The views of these individuals were coded as "Focus Group Participants" A through D.

A questionnaire was distributed to the nineteen participants present at CCI's 2002 Annual Regional Assembly, and to an additional pool of one hundred and eighteen volunteers in person and via e-mail. Recipients were asked to submit completed questionnaires either by mail, by e-mail, or in person. Despite its wide distribution throughout the organization, the questionnaire yielded responses from only eighteen recipients. Still, the contribution of these few volunteers was deemed important, and reference is made to their ideas in some parts of the study. The views of these individuals were coded as "Survey Respondents" 1 through 18.

A wide range of primary documents from the Western Regional Office of CCI was examined, including strategic planning documents, annual reports and interviewing materials. Publications available on the national CCI website were accessed and official publicity material, such as program brochures and posters, were also analysed.

Application forms for the last four program cycles⁴ (1998-1999 to 2001-2002: one hundred and fourteen applications in total) were available through the Western Regional Office and statistics on participants' demographic profiles were compiled from this source. The statistics are compiled in a series of tables, which are included as Appendix D.

Additional data for the study was gathered through my role as a participant-observer in the organization from August 2000 until present. During this time I have been involved in both volunteer and social activities, and have interacted with over one hundred Canadian and partner country volunteers, staff and managers throughout the organization. In addition to my own participation in the Overseas Individual Program⁵, since my return to Canada in August 2001, I have also coordinated development education workshops, attended the internal facilitation training, assisted in the organization and facilitation of trainings for new volunteers, sat on the Vancouver local committee, taken part in recruitment activities, and provided social support to participants on placement. Information included in this thesis that is the direct result of conversations with members of the organization, who were not key informants, survey respondents, or focus group participants is indicated as "Personal Communication."

1.4 Personal Position in the Research

The personal inspiration for this research began in January 2002 when I was invited to participate in a small working group on the issue of accessibility in CCI's programs: the "Diversity Working Group." Since that time, I have been collecting data for this study through both formal and informal channels in the organization. My position as an *insider* has entitled me to a much more in-depth understanding of CCI than would have been

⁴ I use the term 'program cycle' throughout this text in reference to the period of time beginning when a participant is recruited (usually in the summer) through to the end of their placement. Officially, CCI's program cycles correspond to funding contracts, which typically begin when the participants actually depart for their placements, not when they are recruited.

⁵ These key programming components of the Overseas Individual Program are further discussed in Chapters Two and Three.

possible from an outside perspective. However, as a relatively new⁶ Canadian volunteer in the Western Region, I recognize that my perspective is neither identical to that of all partner country and Canadian volunteers, nor to that of staff, management and other stakeholders in the organization. Caution was therefore taken to ensure that my own experience was not presented as being characteristic of all CCI members. Information deduced from personal experience is clearly stated as such, and several individuals in the organization kindly reviewed earlier drafts in order to check for misguided assumptions. Nevertheless, rather than weakening the analysis presented in this study, drawing on my own experience has enabled me to illustrate some of the arguments in more detail than would otherwise have been possible.

It has been said that researchers themselves are the primary readers of knowledge created through research (Havelock 1969, cited in Rothman 1980). In an attempt to create a document that would be read by individuals beyond this academic circle, my intention in conducting this study was to compile information that would also be useful to individuals in CCI and in other VSOs. It is hoped that this document gives voice to some of the multiple perspectives on diversity in CCI, and provides new insight on the “diversity question” in light of recent programming changes.

1.5 Organization of the Study

The chapters in this study have been organized to provide the reader with general information about volunteer-sending organizations and their role in international development, followed by closer scrutiny of CCI as one example of such an organization.

Chapter Two introduces the concept of volunteer sending, and traces the emergence of volunteer-sending organizations as a means to carry out international development work. Capacity development theory is then presented as an appropriate lens through which

⁶ My two and a half year involvement in CCI is “relatively new” in comparison to the commitment lengths reported by other volunteers. For example, as stated in the recent national newsletter, one Canadian volunteer who went overseas with CCI in 1961 has recently accepted a position as the new “Alumni Chair” (CCI *Sankofa*, November 2002).

programming change in VSOs can be analysed: an overview of the theory is followed by a more detailed discussion of those concepts relevant to volunteer-sending organizations.

Chapter Three turns to the case of Canadian Crossroads International. After a summary of CCI's history and the Western Region's key programs, a description of the demographic profile of past participants and CCI's organizational culture is presented. The chapter ends with a discussion on how the organizational focus on diversity has come about, and what actions have been taken to address the "diversity question" thus far.

The next two chapters discuss how CCI's programming, policies and procedures have influenced who has participated in the organization. As the Western Region has been slowly implementing programming changes over the past two years, the programming/participation relationship is analysed both before and after the year 2001 when the first major changes occurred. Chapter Four constructs the profile and participation of the "Typical Crossroader" in CCI's old programming model. Subsequently, Chapter Five shows how CCI's programming changes since 2001 have been influenced by the capacity development paradigm, and then analyses the potential for volunteer diversity in the context of the new programming.

A concluding chapter summarizes the contents of this study, including key opportunities and constraints for diversity in CCI, and what implications the study may have for other VSOs. It also offers recommendations for inclusive participation in CCI together with several areas for further research. The paper ends with some reflections on what role VSOs play in a broader planning context, and how the question of diversity will continue to be important for development efforts in the 21st century.

CHAPTER 2: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE CHANGING ROLE OF VOLUNTEER-SENDING ORGANIZATIONS

Volunteer-sending organizations have been intricately linked to official development efforts since the end of World War Two. Since that time, however, the nature of foreign aid has changed substantially. More recent development efforts have increasingly been organized around a concept known as *capacity development*. This Chapter shows how concepts emerging from the capacity development framework have been applied to VSO programming. It begins with an historical account of the volunteer-sending movement, and justifies VSOs as one form of development NGO. It then gives an overview of the major tenets of capacity development theory and presents some challenges inherent to the changing relations between North and South. New roles for development NGOs are then discussed. Finally, it examines how new forms of technical cooperation and partnership have been incorporated into volunteer-sending organizations' programming.

2.1 Development NGOs and the Volunteer Sending Movement

The field of international development has seen an escalating number of voluntary associations dedicated to the social and economic advancement of poor countries from the early 1900s until present. While the concept of humanitarian service is neither unique to a particular people, nor to a particular era in global human development, certain charitable activities have been institutionalized in the form of non-profit, or non-governmental organizations within the last century (Smillie 1995, 2000). After the First World War, it was predominantly church-based organizations such as the Catholic CARITAS or the 'Save the Children' Fund that wore the international face of benevolence (Clark 1991). From that time onwards, a plethora of secular Northern-country-based development NGOs have been gaining momentum. Moreover, since the 1970s, NGOs in the South have surfaced either in imitation of, or in defence against imported ideologies from the North (Smillie 1995, Lewis 1998). Today, a complex web of development NGOs spans across the globe, with projects and programs in areas ranging from disaster relief and environmental preservation to micro-credit and appropriate technology.

Although foreign aid is sometimes questioned as being self-serving or corrupt (Hancock 1989, Smillie 1995), it is popularly understood that development NGOs have emerged from a philosophy based on altruism and compassion for fellow human beings. Seeing that they are not driven by a profit incentive, many of these organizations depend on volunteers in some capacity to carry out their programs both locally and abroad. Over the years, *volunteer-sending organizations* have evolved as a unique approach to international development, where volunteers are recruited exclusively to work on international development projects. Mirroring the emergence of NGOs, a variety of volunteer-sending initiatives also developed during the period following World War One. These initiatives include Quaker organizations, such as the Nobel Prize-winning British Friends Service Council and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), as well as the World Student Christian Federation and the European Student Relief (Woollcombe 1965, AFSC Official Website, WUSC Official Website).⁷

While the above groups were engaged in similar endeavours, secular VSOs are often traced back to the proliferation of *volunteer workcamps* that spread throughout Europe during the post-WWI period, (Smillie 1999). The introduction of this workcamp model to Europe in the 1920s is historically credited to Pierre Ceresole, a Swiss engineer and pacifist who had been imprisoned several times as a result of his conscientious objection to the First World War (Cobbs Hoffman, 1998, Morris 1973, Woollcombe 1965). Following the war, Ceresole's vision was to cultivate peace at the individual level, which he accomplished by coordinating a group of volunteers from England, Switzerland, Hungary and Germany to rebuild a devastated village near Verdun, France. This first cross-cultural, post-war, reconstruction workcamp snowballed into a movement of similar operations across Europe, which Ceresole formally recognized through the creation of Service Civil International (SCI) – an organisation that continues to organize volunteer workcamps today (SCI Official Website). What he set out to accomplish in that first workcamp was far greater than the reconstruction of buildings alone; it was the

reconstruction of a sense of kinship and solidarity between individuals from previously warring nations.

The creation of new international bodies throughout the 1940s pushed governments and non-governmental organisations alike to redefine their roles in the reconstruction of Europe and the advancement of poor countries. The Bretton Woods Institutions (i.e. the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) and the United Nations, which were originally designed to assist Europe following World War II, soon adjusted their agenda to include the development of Third World countries. Accordingly, organizers of the workcamp movement began coordinating projects in developing countries as well. During this period, the relatively small volunteer movement carved out a niche in the international community, and in 1948, UNESCO supported the establishment of the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Workcamps⁸ (Morris 1973, Woollcombe 1965). The formation of this committee marked the symbolic endorsement of the volunteer-sending movement at an international level.

Throughout the 1950s, a new model of international volunteer projects began to emerge with a design and intentions that differed from the workcamp. The year 1951 saw an inter-governmental agreement between Australia and Indonesia which led to the creation of the first organization specifically designed to assist Third World development through long-term volunteer service. This model was unique in that the participating Australian volunteers would work, learn, and live alongside local Indonesians as colleagues, and would receive a stipend equivalent to the earnings of a local Indonesian doing the same job. The sentiment toward this type of program was immortalized in the words of the Indonesian Ambassador to Australia in 1959:

The fact that for the first time in our experience –and our experience includes many long years of European rule– white people have been ready and eager to live among us on our own standards of salary and living, to share family life with us, to become in truth real members of our

⁷ These Quaker organizations are still in existence, and the World Student Christian Federation later evolved into the secular NGO: WUSC, an acronym for the World University Service of Canada (AFSC Official Website, WUSC Official Website).

⁸ This name was later changed to the Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service (CCIVS) to reflect the involvement of other types of volunteer organisations (Morris 1973).

community, is indeed striking. Such a contribution is worth immeasurably more to us than the rupiahs which it saves our treasury. It is a demonstration of goodwill and understanding which has moved our hearts greatly and which we feel can do more than all the speeches of people in high places to cement friendly relations between our two nations (quoted in Smillie 1999 [online], and Woollcombe 1965: 13).

This project provided the philosophical foundation for the establishment of government sanctioned non-governmental volunteer-sending programs in Australia and around the world. While many of these volunteers had little or no professional experience, their enthusiasm carried them a long way: during this time, Canada, the United States and most Western European countries, as well as Australia, New Zealand and Japan all established programs to send their young idealists abroad.

Though it was not the first organisation of its kind, the formation of U.S. Peace Corps in 1961 added “a new dimension in scale and governmental participation” to the growing international voluntary movement (Morris 1973: 6). In the year of its inception the Peace Corps “more than doubled the total number of volunteers at work overseas” (Ibid: 5). Under the Kennedy administration, the Peace Corps became a household name in the American public, and the popularity of volunteer-sending organisations grew to new heights throughout the 1960s and 70s. Inspired by President Kennedy’s call to action, and encouraged by mass media campaigns, thousands of young idealists from across the country flocked to the Peace Corps. By 1963, 7,300 Peace Corps volunteers were working in 44 countries around the world (Peace Corps Official Website). This explosion was unprecedented in the history of the movement and added new credibility to the concept of sending volunteers abroad to assist with development efforts.

Meanwhile, Canada had embarked on its own path of developing volunteer-sending organisations, which complimented the large-scale accomplishment of its neighbour to the South. Established in the same year as the Peace Corps, the Canadian University Service Overseas – now only referred to by its acronym, “CUSO” – was set up as an attempt to coordinate over 40 universities and groups interested in overseas service (Morris 1973).

Volunteer sending from the 1960s until now has flourished in both French and English-speaking Canada. The country is said to have “an unusually large number of volunteer-sending NGOs” (Smillie 1993: 108) and has “more development assistance NGOs per capita than most OECD Member countries” (Ibid: 115). In addition, the Canadian volunteer-sending culture is unique in that it is well supported by the federal government’s Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Most Canadian VSOs fall under the administration of CIDA’s Institutional Co-operation and Development Services Program (ICDS), along with a pool of over two hundred youth and university international exchange programs (CIDA 2002, Smillie 1993).

Indeed, in Canada there exist programmes targeted at retired professionals, inexperienced youth, students, professors, recent graduates and almost everyone in between. There are also individual and group exchanges of varying lengths – ranging from a few weeks to several years. Among the hundreds of short and long term volunteer projects, youth exchanges, and university programs in existence today, some prominent Canadian VSOs include World University Service of Canada (WUSC), Canadian Executive Service Organisation (CESO), the Canadian branch of Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO Canada), Canada World Youth (CWY), Youth Challenge International (YCI), *le Centre Canadien d’Études et de Coopération Internationale* (CECI), *l’Organisation Canadienne pour la Solidarité et le Développement* (OCSD), and of course Canadian Crossroads International (CCI).

The efficiency and general effectiveness of running so many organisations has been called into question in recent years, as many Canadian programs operate independent of each other in the same foreign country, at the same time. Moreover, funding trends seem to suggest that volunteers might not be as integral to international development efforts as they once were: CIDA allegedly stopped entertaining requests for the establishment of new VSOs in 1993 (Smillie 1993). While there was a marginal overall increase in CIDA assistance disbursements to (international and) non-governmental organisations/institutions from \$240.83 million in 1999 to \$255.97 million in 2001 through the ICDS,

most funding to VSOs declined or remained the same during that same period (CIDA 2002). To illustrate the point, funding to CUSO had decreased from \$18.00 million in 1987 to \$11.63 million in 1999; a number that was further reduced to \$8.36 million in 2001 (Smillie 1993, CIDA 2002).

In order to meet the changing priorities of funding bodies such as CIDA, many VSOs have had to adjust their programming according to emerging theories in the larger field of international development. The following section presents the concept of *capacity development* as one theory influencing the direction of volunteer-sending organizations.

2.2 Overview of Capacity Development Theory

The philosophical orientation and primary endeavours of international development cooperation have undergone considerable transformation from the 1950s until now. This is true particularly in terms of the impact of foreign aid on public, private and third sector⁹ institutions in developing countries. Development efforts have shifted from the creation of institutions in the public sector necessary to carry out the main functions of the state and the subsequent strengthening of those institutions, to a broader social development objective focused on meeting basic human needs in developing countries. The 1980s, in particular, saw a rise of private and non-governmental activity in Southern countries, and NGOs began to serve as intermediaries between citizens and the state. By the 1990s it was evident that aid efforts for comprehensive societal advancement involved change at multiple levels – from the individual, to the organization, to the nation, to international relations (UNDP 1997). This change promoted at multiple levels of a society falls under the theory of *capacity development*.

The term capacity development (CD) is understood differently according to the particular bias and orientation of those who seek to define it. Various answers exist to the questions *capacity for what?* and *capacity for whom?* As such, simply presenting a definition as a

⁹ The term 'third sector' is used here to refer to non-governmental, non-profit, voluntary, and community-based organizations. For a debate on the nuances implied by these terms, please see Smillie and Helmich 1993, De Oliveira and Tandon 1994, Edwards and Hulme 1996, or Hall and Banting 2000.

starting point proves somewhat problematic. Bolger (2000), for example, defines capacity development as “the approaches, strategies and methodologies used by developing country, and/or external stakeholders, to improve performance at the individual, organizational, network/sector or broader system level” (Ibid: 2).

Alternatively, Morgan (1997) presents a view of capacity development that monitors growth and change in organizational relationships and abilities, that is, “those changes in organizational behaviour, values, skills and relationships that lead to the improved abilities of groups and organizations to carry out functions and achieve desired outcomes over time” (Ibid: iii). Though the terms are often used synonymously, *capacity-building* is generally viewed a subset of capacity development as it only “takes place at the meso (institutional) and micro (project) levels” (Angeles and Gurstein 2000: 39), rather than the societal level.

It is evident from the beginning that the terms themselves encompass a wide range of ideas. Thus, providing an example of one framework for capacity development action will help to illustrate the scope at which CD is undertaken:

In 1997, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) proposed a framework for capacity development that promotes sustainable action in four interconnected dimensions: *individual*, *entity*, *inter-entity*, and *environment*. The first dimension relates the various components that influence an *individual* person’s productivity, such as their skills, training, and decision-making abilities; their role, responsibilities, incentives, and salary structure; and their accountability, values, expectations, and power relations. It is recognized, however, that the sum of these factors does not ensure that individuals will be effective; an assessment of the entity within which they work is also necessary. The *entity* dimension refers to public, private, non-governmental or community-based organizations and institutions. A sound organizational structure with clearly stated goals, mission, functions, and systems along with adequate resources such as finance, information, technology, and infrastructure are all necessary to support successful employees. The third dimension is concerned with systems, or *interrelationships between entities*. For example, a microcredit system might comprise a credit institution,

relevant government ministries, various NGOs, small businesses and women's collectives. Effective coordination between these constituencies as they interact for a common purpose is seen as an essential component of capacity development (UNDP 1997).

The final dimension of capacity development considered in the UNDP framework is typically described as the *enabling environment*. Developing sustainable capacities for the previous three dimensions necessitates "a positive enabling environment for addressing cross-sectoral issues relevant to all parts of society – the state, civil society and the private sector" (Ibid: 4). This dimension is dissected into four interrelated components:

- *Institutional*: development policies and plans, legal frameworks, ability and willingness [to] reform, distribution of institutional responsibilities, public sector and human resource policies, incentives, and so on.
- *Socio-political*: society's vision; formal and informal values and standards; democratic processes; power relationships, particularly the role of women; sources of consensus and conflict; human security and the special cases of countries in crises or transition that need to be taken into consideration.
- *Economic*: stable and equitable fiscal and monetary policy; management and distribution of resources and assets; the impact of the external sector, particularly trade, investment, official development assistance, technology and debt management.
- *Natural Resource Management and Environment*: the impact and importance of the natural resource base and the sustainable management of the environment (Ibid: 3-6).

An assessment of these four environmental components is said to be necessary before the implementation of a project or program at individual, entity, or inter-entity dimensions. Analysis of these interconnected dimensions provides a comprehensive understanding of needs, problems and wider contextual issues involved in any development activity.

Other frameworks for capacity development have been advanced by a wide range of sources (see, for example, Development Assistance Committee 1995, Eade and Williams

1995, Fowler 1997, Morgan 1998, Bolger 2000). Through these multiple frameworks, it is invariably believed that the capacity of individuals must be viewed in relation to the capacity of a larger social context, and vice versa. Development efforts at any level of intervention must therefore acknowledge the multiple relationships between individuals, institutions, states and transnational bodies. Efforts must also be focused on indigenous ownership in order to ensure their long-term sustainability. In reality, this re-orientation towards capacity development is an acknowledgement that the last fifty years of development have, for the most part, failed to yield sustainable results, which is due in part to the fact that they lacked an understanding of this systematic interdependence, (Qualman and Bolger 1996, UNDP 1997). Frameworks of capacity development draw on these decades of experience and put forth a more integrated, holistic and sustainable approach to development.

2.3 Critique of Capacity Development

Despite its wide acceptance and enthusiastic promotion, the concept of capacity development is undergoing some scrutiny. At this point, it is difficult to judge whether this concept is truly revolutionizing development, or if it is only a new term to mask unchanged efforts (Angeles and Gurstein 2000). The fundamental assumption that institutions based in the North are *able to* facilitate capacity development in the South has been criticized as being somewhat paternalistic (Godfrey et al 2002, Fisher 1994). Moreover, Qualman and Bolger (1996) assert that developed countries must first acknowledge, “that the institutional framework governing the relationship between developed and developing countries is a major constraint to CD” (Ibid: 8). Developed countries must therefore work to transform global systems, in which all countries operate, thereby increasing the capacity of developing countries to perform more effectively.

If capacity development efforts are to be pursued with integrity, clearly this has implications for donor agencies as well as for the developing countries in which they operate. Bolger (2000) observes that in order to work effectively within this new paradigm, donors must re-evaluate “the terms of their relationships with developing countr[ies] and other partners” as well as “their own management systems, organizational

structures and skills” (Ibid: 6). Their conventional task of identifying a problem and then designing and implementing a project to ‘solve’ it is undermined by the new demand to support and enhance a country’s capacity to solve its own problems. As outsiders, then, donors’ roles must be negotiated within each particular context, rather than assumed. This calls for significant adjustments in power relations toward a more equally shared sense of accountability (Ibid). Development projects must therefore be “linked to locally generated goals based on participatory development principles,” where indigenous commitment, social energy and local ownership are recognized as critical for their success (Angeles and Gurstein 2000).

2.4 Northern Development NGOs and Capacity Development

Parallel to these general critiques of CD, there is also debate surrounding the changing role of Northern development NGOs. Their potential to contribute to capacity development is questionable as they “themselves suffer from significant organizational weaknesses and weaknesses in capacity” (Lewis 1998: 505). Furthermore, in countries such as Bangladesh where local NGOs have developed to a point where they are among the largest and most professional NGOs in the world, the need for Northern NGOs’ continued presence in the country is dubious (Ibid). In fact, it has been observed that Northern countries have much to learn from some development efforts in the South (Lewis 1998, 1999). Nevertheless, in response to the goals of capacity development theories, Northern development NGOs have refocused their efforts in order to have more sustainable impacts in the countries where they work.

In his 1990 publication “Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda,” David Korten proposed a framework of four ‘generations’ of strategic action in which an international NGO may engage. The first generation is characterized by relief efforts where the volunteer works to meet the immediate needs of its target group, for example, by providing food, health care or shelter following a natural disaster or war. Second generation strategies call for volunteers to play the role of empowerment-oriented community mobilizers, working in village level projects – the typical arena for volunteer-sending organizations. Third generation action requires a coordinated approach to

development that recognizes the larger power dynamics at play in community development efforts. NGOs work to strengthen the capacity of the community to meet their own needs, while simultaneously building alliances with “enlightened power holders in support of action that makes the system more responsive to the people” (Korten, 1990: 121).

At that time, Korten also suggested that a fourth generation of voluntary action was in the process of evolving. In essence, this last generation is an acknowledgement that many of the multiple crises gripping Southern countries are due in part to the unequal distribution of power and wealth across the globe. As such, any advances made by communities are often undermined by these inequities. Fourth generation action, then, works as a broad-based movement penetrating arenas from the household to the state (Smillie 2000). This fourth generation of NGO activity is indicative of two things: first, Northern NGOs have realized that their grassroots efforts are greatly influenced by the larger environment in which they work; second, with the expansion of Southern NGOs over the past two decades, Northern NGOs have had to innovate new roles for themselves. Now, rather than carrying out their own projects overseas, NGOs in the North increasingly playing a primary role of support to Southern NGOs in the implementation and fulfilment of their own projects (Lewis 1998).

This shift in focus in development efforts questions the very *raison d'être* of volunteer-sending organizations. As their principal –and often only– activity is the temporary transfer of human (rather than financial or material) resources from North to South, VSOs have been left with the task of justifying the continued exchange of volunteers. The following section discusses how VSOs have responded to the changing demands of funding bodies and Southern countries alike through the integration of new approaches to technical cooperation.

2.5 VSOs and Technical Cooperation

As the scope of their operations has continued to be limited to activities at an individual or organizational level, the role of VSOs in development assistance has been likened to

that of technical cooperation. A well-documented trend in VSOs since the 1960s has been an increase in the technical knowledge of the average volunteer. This trend has involved a change in the nature of the community projects that VSOs support, as well as the type of volunteer sent to fill the positions. During the 1960s and 70s, the typical volunteer was a recent university graduate, who worked as a teacher and normally engaged in grassroots community organizing activities outside of the classroom. This type of volunteer was characterised by the term *BA generalist*, seeing as most had neither official teaching certification, nor any professional experience to compliment their university educations (Brodhead et al 1988, Hoffman 1998, Smillie 1999).

As Southern countries began to develop their middle level human resources, specialized skills were deemed more integral to development efforts than amateur zeal. During the 1980s, VSOs responded by recruiting older development workers with training and experience as doctors, public health nurses, engineers, agronomists, etc. This trend is exemplified in CUSO's successive advertising campaigns:

"A 1975 ad stated that 'We don't offer much money, fringe benefits or promotional opportunities, we offer involvement'; by 1985, a similar ad called on readers to 'share your skills overseas... gain a lifetime of experience,' and promised a 'generous benefits package' " (Brodhead et al 1988: 75).

The Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO) and *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) are further examples of organizations that only target skilled professionals in their recruitment efforts (CESO Online, MSF Online).

The *professionalization* trend was accompanied by a concerted effort to put forth a more professional image of VSOs in general, and do away with the amateurism implied by the word 'volunteer' (Smillie 1999). Although VSOs embarked on this mission at varying intervals, CECI and CUSO's choice to name their participants *cooperants*¹⁰ is evidence itself of the negative stigma attached to the word 'volunteer' (Morris 1973). Attracting and accommodating older, more specialized personnel has consequently raised the

administrative and field costs associated with volunteer placements. However, in their more professional form, VSOs remain a cheaper alternative to *technical aid*, which usually employs experts to work on official development agency projects for (high) expatriate salaries. These VSOs are thus partially justified to funding bodies in terms of their relative cost-effectiveness for providing a similar service as development experts (Smillie 1999).

The wave of volunteer professionals is in harmony with a more widespread trend in the professionalization of development efforts in general. The fact that universities now offer certificate, diploma, and degree programs in development studies, which turn out “experts” at exponential rates, is illustrative of this trend. The role of the expert, however, has not been well received by all. Parpart (1995) cautions that this faith in development experts is deeply rooted in modernist thought, which devalues, ignores and undermines development beneficiaries –particularly women’s– own localized knowledge and ability to innovate solutions to their own problems. While she is not arguing for the complete “abandonment of technical assistance” or the “rejection of technology transfers” (Ibid: 240), she concludes that development motivated by a pursuit for an equitable world will require a broader spectrum of understanding on what constitutes knowledge and expertise, a willingness to really listen to beneficiary voices. Most importantly, it requires “the humility to recognize that established discourses and practices of development have often done more harm than good” (Ibid).

There is much research to support this loss of faith in the development expert. Peter Morgan (2001) begins his overview of the successes and failures of technical assistance with a statement that “regular reappraisals of the value and effectiveness of technical assistance (TA) for development cooperation have taken place for many years” (Ibid: 1). In fact, there have been a myriad of publications addressing this concern from the mid-

¹⁰ Though the term is not widely used in the Western Region, CCI’s official website does make reference to its volunteers as ‘cooperants’ in a few instances. However, the words ‘volunteer’ or ‘participant’ continue to be used most often to refer to those individuals who participate in one of CCI’s volunteer exchanges.

1980s until present.¹¹ As technical cooperation has been the primary means of development since the 1950s, most of its criticisms fall under the same rationale used to advance the capacity development paradigm. These include the historical involvement of technical assistants in donor-driven, rather than locally owned projects, the discouragement of local capacities through the use of expatriate personnel in frontline rather than advisory positions, and the support of short-term rather than sustainable outcomes. While some examples of effective TA have been reported, the necessary changes have been slow to match recommendations (Morgan and Baser 1993, Morgan 2001).

The implicit assumption that Northerners are most qualified to deliver development assistance is also beginning to be contested. VSOs have been able to respond to this challenge by incorporating South-South and South-North exchanges into their programming. In reference to information technology-related volunteer placements (the Netcorps program), Smillie (1999) suggests,

“The placement of a Ghanaian volunteer in Sierra Leone would be less expensive and might be far more appropriate in some cases than the placement of a European or North American. Building relationships and technical collaboration between developing countries is as important in this field as building North-South relationships” (Ibid: 25).

South-South linkages are valuable as the “exchanged knowledge and experience drawn from comparable contexts may be more relevant than that drawn from the North” (Lewis 1998: 505). Moreover, these exchanges can be justified for the same reasons as youth-focused initiatives in Canada: they provide young people with international work experience, career development, and promote friendly relations between their home country and the world. Although the challenge remains in organizing these exchanges from Northern headquarters, these South-South exchanges potentially offer a more culturally appropriate and cost-effective solution to Southern country needs.

¹¹ See for example, Cassens 1986, Berg 1993, Morgan and Baser 1993, Baser and Bolger 1996, Gray 1997 and Godfrey et al 2000 and 2002.

2.6 Partnership

Another manner for VSOs to support Southern development efforts is through *partnership*. In this context, partnership has been defined as “a long-term reciprocal relationship which results in mutual benefit to co-operating parties who share goals, decision making and risk” (Morgan and Baser 1993: 13). Specifically, the partnering of similar agencies in the North and South has come to be known by the term “twinning” (Ibid). The business of partnership, however, is cumbersome at best. Although the term itself suggests a meaning of equality, North-South partnerships are rarely that. Lewis (1998) asserts that most such relationships usually have characteristics of dependency rather than partnership, and are often entered into by “Southern partner recipient[s]” because they are viewed primarily as an opportunity for the transfer of resources (Ibid: 504). He claims that true partnerships can only be established through “ongoing processes of negotiation, debate, occasional conflict, and learning through trial and error” (Ibid). Morrison (2002) complements this discussion by suggesting that while donor states and institutions endorse policies of participation and partnership, individuals responsible for the implementation of those policies may not have the means nor the motivation to carry out projects in a manner parallel to the expectations of donor countries. Furthermore,

“[Partnerships] require explicit understanding of expectations and assumptions, particularly the modernist hierarchy implicit in much development discourse and planning, along with detailed discussions of logistics and lots of good will. These are rare, and will continue to be so until the difficulties inherent in joint activities is acknowledged and dealt with” (Parpart 1995: 240).

These authors call for a re-evaluation of partnership strategies and a better understanding of the power dimensions inherent in North-South relations.

Meanwhile, although partnership implies that Northern ‘partners’ also derive various benefits from their involvement, it has been noted that, especially in partner relationships involving academic institutions, these benefits “are usually not included in formal project plans and therefore are not monitored or assessed” (Lusthaus et al 1996: 2). Furthermore, because Northern partners have a direct relationship with the funding agency, they also

have a higher level of control over programming decisions and allocation of resources. In this way, partnerships are often seen as “biased in favour of the agenda and interest of the Canadian partner” (Ibid). In light of these difficulties, many questions are still to be considered:

“Can the accountabilities of the Canadian partner be shared with the local partner? What are the choices for allocating decision-making power and control? Is joint decision making a viable approach? What are the issues involved in shifting from a 'donor-recipient' relationship to a partnership? Are partnerships the best way to deliver products and ensure performance? How should the financial resources of a project be shared and on what basis? What is the best use of technical cooperation in what kind of partnership arrangements? What organizational re-structuring will donors have to undergo to support partnership on a broad scale?” (Morgan and Baser 1993: 13).

Clearly more research into the creation and maintenance of equal partnerships remains of central importance.

Partnership models falling under the rhetoric of capacity development are among the many experiments in strengthening the effectiveness of technical cooperation. Despite the obstacles discussed above, partnerships of various formations are beginning to take shape within volunteer-sending organizations. A potential model for North-South linkages is advanced by Gaventa (1999) who proposes that opportunities for “mutual learning” exist between Southern and Northern NGOs and CBOs working in the same field in their respective countries. Rather than Northerners entering the equation as experts, this model promotes the sharing of experiences, challenges, successes and best practices between organizations, and enhances learning opportunities for all. In his evaluation of four case studies, he found that:

“For participants from both North and South, seeing similar problems in other parts of the world helped to highlight the universal nature of the problems they were addressing, and to reinforce that they were rooted in larger patterns of development rather than in their own particular circumstance” (Ibid: 36)

Some VSOs have acknowledged these benefits and are moving in this direction by attempting to facilitate partnerships between similar organizations in the North and South. These partnerships are, of course, subject to the obstacles presented above.

Whether a central focus on learning rather than the transfer of resources will enable them to move forward through these challenges is yet to be determined.

Having reviewed the development of volunteer-sending organizations, as well as some of the opportunities and challenges facing VSOs in the era of capacity development, the following chapter narrows its focus to the specific case of Canadian Crossroads International.

CHAPTER 3: BACKGROUND TO THE CASE STUDY: CANADIAN CROSSROADS INTERNATIONAL

This chapter provides an overview of Canadian Crossroads International. It begins with an examination of its historical development, and then describes in more detail the experience of volunteering with CCI. Volunteer composition and organizational culture, are then discussed. Finally, CCI's current focus on diversity is explained, and an overview of its accessibility initiatives thus far is provided.¹²

3.1 History of Canadian Crossroads International

Canadian Crossroads International credits its original vision to the anti-racist work of Dr. James H. Robinson. Robinson was an African-American man born into poverty in Knoxville, Tennessee in 1907. Escaping his humble beginnings, Dr. Robinson attended Lincoln College on scholarship and went on to study at the Union Theological Seminary in New York City (CCI James Robinson Society). Like many black activist leaders of his time, Robinson used the ministry as his catalyst for societal change, and embarked on a consciousness-raising mission for 'white' Americans about the realities of both the African *and* African-American experience. Throughout the 1950s he preached across the country and eventually around the world, about the inequalities that existed between white and black people at the time, and called for the end to racism in the United States. He had a vision of creating "One World" where people of all backgrounds could live together with mutual respect for racial and cultural differences (CCI Official Website).

Reverend Robinson is said to have been a charismatic speaker, so much so that individuals – university students in particular – would approach him following his sermons and ask what they could do to further his cause. Seeing the opportunity to engage young people in personal and social transformation, Robinson founded Operation Crossroads Africa in 1957. The organisation began as an operation working to break down racial barriers between Americans, and imitated the workcamp model, which had

¹² It should be noted again that current information on CCI given in this section is based on research conducted in the Western Region.

started in Europe three decades previous. Robinson organized grassroots development projects in Africa where young Americans of African, Latino and European descent would work and live alongside young Africans (Operations Crossroads Africa Official Website, Respondent F). Robinson believed that people were fundamentally more similar than dissimilar, and that living and working together would create a 'crossroads' of cultures and personal experience which would instigate change at an individual level (CCI Official Brochure 1998, Annual Report 1998, Official Website).

In 1958 the Reverend visited a United Church in London, Ontario where he gave a speech that inspired the birth of Canadian Crossroads International. So moved by his powerful vision and by the description of his work with Operation Crossroads Africa, a group of young Canadians took up a collection which they presented to Robinson following his sermon. The Reverend allegedly denied the donation and challenged the group to take action themselves instead (Personal Communication). Indeed, they rose to the challenge, and began operating what was then known as the Canadian branch of Operation Crossroads Africa. In 1969 Canadian Crossroads International was founded in Ontario as an independent, federally chartered, non-profit organization (CCI Official Website).

Over the years CCI has partnered with twenty-seven countries in Africa, Asia, South America and the Caribbean and has facilitated the exchange of over two hundred volunteers per year. As CCI grew to a nation wide organization with volunteer committees across the country, central administration through a national office in Ontario was no longer practical. Accordingly the organisation decentralized into four regional offices across Canada. In 1997 the Western Regional Office (WRO) was established in Vancouver to oversee volunteer activity in the Prairies, the Territories (not including Nunavut) and British Columbia. This office continues to operate today through the voluntary efforts of committees in its three current partner countries (Bolivia, Guatemala and Suriname), several active local and regional Canadian volunteer committees, three paid staff members, and a Regional Director.

At present, the WRO coordinates a variety of international volunteer placements: The *Overseas Individual Program* sends Canadian adults to work in non-governmental organisations in CCI's partner countries. The *To-Canada* and *Interflow Programs* allow volunteers from partner countries to have similar work placements in NGOs in Canada or in other partner countries respectively. Two other programs are limited to youth between the ages of 18 and 30, the *Youth International Internship Program*, and the *Netcorps* Program. *Netcorps* volunteers must specifically have skills and or experience in Information Technology and Communications. By the end of 2002, the Western Region of CCI coordinated volunteer placements for thirty-nine individuals.

Returned volunteers have traditionally played a significant role in the administration of CCI's programs. As part of their contract was to contribute a minimum of two hundred hours to the organisation in the two years following their return, CCI Alumni¹³ were traditionally responsible for perpetuating the program through the recruitment, interviewing and selection of new volunteers; assisting with volunteers' re-integration upon return to Canada; and various activities in between. Alumni have also been responsible for arranging host families, work placements, and social activities for To-Canada participants during their stay in Canada. Some alumni go on to participate in CCI's *Animateur*, or facilitation training, which enables them to design and facilitate the orientation and "Homeward Bound" sessions for To-Canada participants and "Pre-departure" and "Re-orientation" sessions for Overseas participants. Alumni also participate in regional fundraising activities, information outreach sessions and slide shows, programming committees, local committees, and various other *ad hoc* committees or individual incentives around issues that arise within the organization.

3.2 The CCI Experience

CCI's Overseas (OS) Individual Program has historically been the most popular and well-funded CCI incentive, and was originally intended to serve as a first time overseas

¹³ I use the term "Alumni" throughout this text to refer to any returned volunteer, whether they are actively participating in CCI or not. However, CCI specifically uses the term Alumni to refer to individuals who have participated in CCI, but are no longer active volunteers.

experience for Canadians over the age of eighteen. Although it has changed significantly in recent years, the 'CCI experience' originally entailed a fourteen-week placement in an organisation arranged by volunteers in the host country. Individuals would apply to CCI approximately one year in advance with the understanding that they would be matched to the country that was seen to benefit most from their specific skills. Usually, volunteers were assigned to countries a few months prior to the time of travel, and frequently little was known about the nature of the placement until the volunteer actually arrived in the host country.

Until recently, the primary focus of the OS Program has been to provide Canadians with an international *experience*, rather than promote sustainable development. While on placement, volunteers would normally live with a host family and receive a small stipend approximating an average local salary. Although this has changed somewhat over the years, the work placement itself was originally intended to serve as an entry point to the community, rather than a place of work. In this regard, the program was set up much like the original Australian example given in Chapter Two: it was designed to encourage the volunteers to integrate into their host communities as much as was possible so that they could "experience life in a developing country first-hand" (CCI Brochure 1998). This same brochure assured potential applicants that the "Crossroads Experience" provided "an invaluable cross-cultural learning experience" and was a:

"unique opportunity: to gain a life-enriching *experience* in another country; to increase awareness of global social justice issues; for *personal growth* and the development of valuable leadership skills; and to contribute to grass-roots sustainable development efforts" (CCI Brochure 1998, emphasis added).

CCI's focus on facilitating an international experience is not unique. Despite the professionalization trend discussed in Chapter Two, it is not unusual for VSOs to continue to market their programs as a "life-changing experience." Voluntary Service Overseas Canada, for instance, calls their program "The Experience of a Lifetime," and encourages individuals to apply because:

"The volunteer experience is a life-changing one. I know from my own experience, as a volunteer in Malawi, that a decision to work with a community to reach their development goals is unique and fundamentally

rewarding... I guarantee you will echo the thoughts of many of our Returned Volunteers when they say that they got back so much more from the experience than they could possibly give" (Mary Stuart, Director of Voluntary Service Overseas Canada, quoted Online).

Likewise, the Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI) explains, "on the strength of their *very rewarding experiences* in volunteer activity, many volunteer cooperants then move into professional technical cooperation" (CECI Official Website, emphasis added). Figure One below illustrates the point that Peace Corps volunteers as well were often said to be deeply impacted by their time abroad.

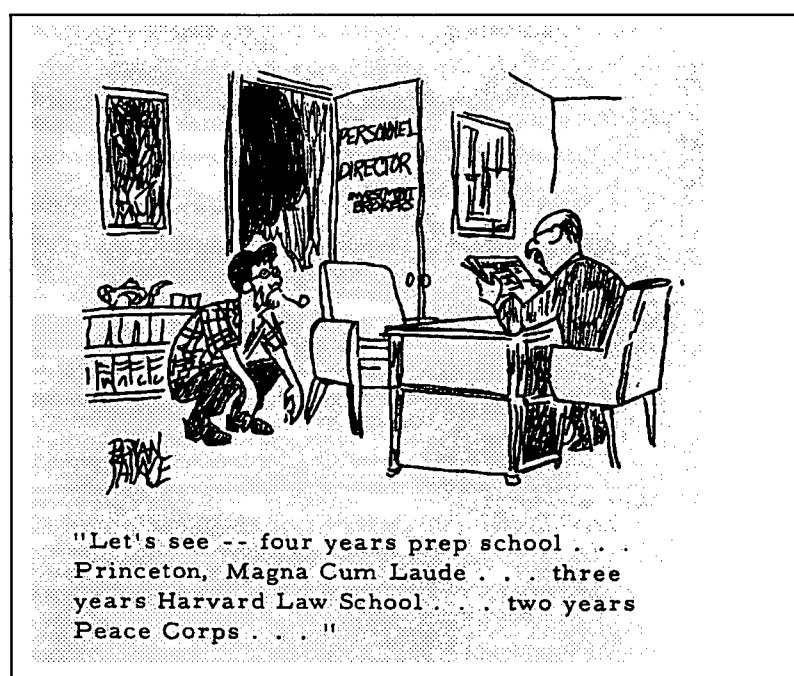


Figure 1: "Volunteers often saw themselves as having been shaped more by the Peace Corps than by any other preceding experiences."
Source: *Saturday Evening Post* 1963, in Cobbs Hoffman 1998, p 130.

In addition to the time overseas, the 'CCI Experience' has traditionally included intense pre-departure training and group work. In the period leading up to their departure, volunteers were expected to raise \$2250.00 each, an amount that accounted for approximately one quarter of the cost of the fourteen-week overseas placement. Under the guidance and encouragement of returned volunteers, local groups of new recruits

would arrange dinner auctions, craft fairs, casino nights, walk-a-thons and many other schemes to raise the money. While many VSOs today do not require volunteers to make a financial contribution toward their overseas placements, historically it has not been uncommon. Though this is no longer the case, "in CUSO's early days, the volunteer would literally canvas his home community to raise the price of his air fare" (Morris 1973: 64). In CCI, the fundraising component of the programming has been said to not only to contribute to costs associated with the overseas placement, but also to symbolize the volunteer's personal commitment to international cooperation (Personal Communication).

Canada is respected as a leader in public education on global issues, with 'development education' playing a significant role in the Canadian volunteer-sending culture (Smillie 1993, Brodhead et al 1988, Morris 1973). It is therefore not surprising that CCI's Overseas volunteers would typically participate in various development education activities in addition to their fundraising efforts. These "Dev Ed" activities attempted to promote a more informed understanding of development issues and global inequalities before participants embarked on their overseas placement. The education incentive in Canada is credited to the first wave of returned CUSO volunteers who, upon their homecoming, wanted to educate fellow Canadians, and correct misconceptions and negative stereotypes surrounding people in developing countries (Smillie 1993). These efforts have historically been informed by such theorists as Paulo Freire and Ivan Illich, and were grounded in the pedagogy of rooting education in people's own experience, and connecting education to action (Ibid). Some fundraising initiatives, such as *Feast or Famine* dinners, have also served as public education around specific issues (e.g. the politics surrounding global food distribution). Both the fundraising and development education components of the 'CCI Experience' have indirectly served as practice for grassroots community organizing, skills that many volunteers would call upon while overseas and upon their return to Canada.

CCI has claimed that participation in its OS program has fostered a commitment to global voluntarism among its participants. Moreover, it has promoted volunteering overseas as

“the ultimate global learning experience” (CCI Official Website). This combined focus on global voluntarism and learning was reflected in the first sentence of the mission statement in use until 2002, which was, “to build a constituency of global citizens committed to voluntarism, international development and social action in the new millennium.” Indeed, there is evidence to show that CCI has been successful in accomplishing this mission: more than half of its participants have gone on to pursue a career in international or community development following their overseas placements (CCI 1998 Annual Report). However, the suggestion that volunteering with CCI entails personal reward begs the question of *who* is given the opportunity to participate in its programs?

3.3 The Typical CCI Volunteer

Canadian Crossroads International’s Overseas Individual Program (OS program) has, according to its publicity material, been open to any Canadian citizen or landed immigrant. The minimum age requirement was historically 19, and –health permitting– there was no maximum age. Indeed, the most senior participant recorded in the Western Region to date was seventy-three years old at the time of application. Theoretically, the program was also accessible to individuals of all income brackets as the majority of costs associated with participation were reimbursed through fundraising efforts. These broad parameters for membership notwithstanding, CCI’s composition has generally remained homogeneous over the years. A quick scan of the room at most CCI functions would likely leave an observer with the impression that the Canadian contingent of CCI predominantly consists of white women in their twenties. According to data collected from the OS program application forms from the 1998-99 to the 2001-02 Western Region program cycles, this impression would not be incorrect. The gender and age profile are easily confirmed: since 1998, the Western Region alone has recruited one hundred and fourteen volunteers for their Overseas Individual Program. Of those participants, ninety-nine of them have been women. That is, 87% of participants in the past four program cycles have been female. Likewise, the question of age is straightforward in that the

(median) average age of participants in each of the four years was consistently between twenty-four and twenty-five, and 65% of all who applied were in their twenties.¹⁴

Many participants have commented that CCI is by and large a 'white middle class' institution [Respondents A, E and F].¹⁵ Though this assertion might be intuitively correct, objectively it is difficult to prove – no records have been kept on participants' skin complexion or economic status. Furthermore, the concepts of 'white' and 'middle class' are somewhat difficult to define concretely, and the application of these terms could be seen as more politically than biologically and economically determined.

Rather than entering into a debate around 'degrees of whiteness' or the Canadian class structure, these concepts are expressed below as functions of education level, language, place of birth, and citizenship. Through further analysis of data collected from the above-mentioned application forms, the following conclusions can also be made about participation in the Western Region's OS program:

- Most volunteers have completed formal post-secondary education. Of the 114 participants over the past four years, only 14 reported to not have any post secondary education at the time of their application to CCI. Meanwhile, 72 (63%) held, or were in the process of completing bachelor's degrees, 9 participants (8%) had undergone master's level education, and 17 (15%) had completed some other form of post-secondary schooling such as college, registered nursing certificates, or technical diplomas.
- Most volunteers speak English as their first language. A low 7% of participants from the past four years (only 8 participants) reported that English was not their first language. Additionally, 37 participants (32 %) reported to speak English only.

¹⁴ The information in this section is based on data compiled from the 114 application forms of volunteers from the 1998-99 to the 2001-02 program cycles. Please see Appendix D for a chart of this compiled data.

¹⁵ This viewpoint was also supported to various degrees by focus group participants.

- Few immigrants are volunteers. Although CCI states that it is open to landed immigrants as well as Canadian citizens, only 18 participants (16% over the past four years) reported that they were born outside of Canada.
- Few French-Canadians participate. Only 6 participants (5 % of four year total) reported that they were born in Québec.
- Finally, almost no Aboriginal (First Nation) individuals participate. Only 2 participants declared Aboriginal status in the past four years – less than 2%.

While the above features might not be direct determinants of class or race, the data do support that the majority of OS volunteers belong to dominant Canadian culture by being born into English-speaking Canada and are privileged enough to have undergone post-secondary training. The “Typical Crossroader,” then, can be described as a university-educated, English-Canada born, twenty-something female.

3.4 Organisational Culture

Perhaps the values of these ‘Typical Crossroaders’ reflected in the organizational culture is what makes individuals label CCI a ‘white middle class institution.’ Although ‘organizational culture’ is a fairly elusive phenomenon, Lewis (2002) draws from literature surrounding business management to explain the concept. He notes that organizational culture can be explained in terms of “the way of life in an organization” (Hatch 1997: 204), or as “a process of reality construction that allows people to see and understand particular events, actions, objects, utterances, or situations in distinctive ways” (Morgan 1997: 138), or finally, when organizations are seen as “communities, mini-societies, rather than machines, then it is natural to expect that each community will have its own taste and flavour, its own way of doing things, its own habits and jargon, its own culture” (Handy 1988: 85).¹⁶ As a microcosm of Canadian society, the values of

¹⁶ These authors are cited in Lewis (2002), pp 5-6.

dominant Canadians who have historically participated in CCI have undoubtedly become embedded in the organization's culture.

Certainly, it is difficult to capture the essence of CCI's culture in concrete terms. Furthermore, the organisational culture is a fluid rather than a fixed entity, as individuals contribute their own particular characteristics and idiosyncrasies during their involvement. One volunteer simply describes CCI as a "wish-washy granola-type organisation" (unknown volunteer, cited in Rolston 1998: 13). However, through my interactions with other volunteers in both social and quasi-professional settings, it is my observation that many (though not all) CCI members are likely to:

- Hold left of centre political values;
- Fit their beliefs about gender roles somewhere on a spectrum of feminist theory;
- Claim to be ecologically aware or at least interested in recycling, composting, vegetarianism and alternatives to driving;
- Make an effort to be conscientious consumers, particularly when it comes to choice of coffee, shoes and outdoor equipment and clothing;
- Appreciate the value of charity, and have an understanding of the Christian faith based on their family upbringing (though they may not be religious themselves);
- Work in the non-profit or public sector; and finally,
- Be activists, advocates or financial supporters of at least one humanitarian cause.

While these descriptions may seem light-hearted if not somewhat comical, it could be argued that those who believe in CCI's mandate, yet do not share in most of the above traits and philosophies, are highly aware of how they deviate from the CCI norm; or, if they are not aware themselves, others are likely conscious of their "difference." In this way, CCI has been perceived as somewhat exclusionary to those who do not identify with its organizational culture (Respondent F, Focus Group Participant A).

The subtlety of this exclusion is difficult to pinpoint: it is not intentional, and it is not a policy or procedure that can simply be eliminated. It has more to do with group dynamics, the challenges of interpersonal communication, and norms that are taken for

granted by most, but not accepted by all. An example might be a man ducking out of room full of women criticizing the opposite sex. Or a meat-eater chastised for unknowingly bringing steak to a potluck dinner hosted by vegetarians. It could take the form of a business-minded volunteer who is frustrated with the group's optimistic focus on "lessons learned" from an unsuccessful fundraising event and interprets it as a lack of concern. Or someone with no academic background in international development feeling excluded from a technical conversation about capacity-building. In these circumstances, the *intention* of the group is not to be exclusionary, and in fact, many people would easily overcome these challenges or not be bothered by these events at all. However, if there is constant friction between one individual and other members of the group, that person will likely not be interested in participating in the group functions that remain such a high priority in CCI. The key problem here is that many individuals have observed that it is often those volunteers outside of dominant Canadian culture who do not feel comfortable in these group settings (Respondents A, E, F, G and Focus Group Participant A).

A more concrete example is one volunteer who, fed up with the manner in which a training was being conducted, scolded me in private, "you CCI people are so politically correct – why don't you just say what you mean?" (Personal Communication). While she believed in the goals and values of CCI, and was committed to the success of her volunteer placement, she was frustrated by some difference in communication style that she identified as being somehow inappropriate or dishonest. One of my key informants recalled speaking to an ethnic minority participant who revealed a similar discomfort with the organization:

"... I think that Crossroads has spoken in a language that...will feel unacceptable to [some people who don't fit into the norm], and they often walk away... [For the minority participant in question] there was a real blend of personal things, and who knows, bigger things, about what made her connect or not connect with the group. And also with the educational programming... the kind of spirit of 'Let's come together and do lots of jumping jacks and warm up,' like things I love, the things I find really comfortable to do in a group that she absolutely didn't find comfortable to do in a group for lots of her own cultural and other reasons... [Respondent F].

She goes on to speak of many people who have been accepted to CCI, but have chosen to leave the organization because they do not “fit in:”

I think about those people, because they are the people who have been failed... [and because of] that, Crossroads lost its claim diversity... And the people who feel comfortable there, I really think need to look really critically at themselves [and ask] ‘what feels so comfortable there?’ It shouldn’t feel so comfortable there if the focus of conversation is around difference and coming together around those issues.”

Given that it is an organization that aims to promote “cross-cultural understanding” and awareness of “the root causes of inequitable development,” the homogeneous make up and exclusive organizational culture have become the focus of much attention in Canadian Crossroads International.

3.5 The Diversity Focus

Although it is not known precisely at what point in CCI’s development participants began to contemplate its Canadian composition, the ‘diversity question’ has been present within the organisation since the 1980s at least, and likely well before that time. One might speculate that James Robinson himself is responsible for the focus on diversity: as discussed in section 2.6, a diverse socio-cultural American participant composition was essential for the desired learning around racism to take place. Moreover, Robinson’s vision continues to be celebrated within CCI, and in the past few years it has been conveyed to new generations of Crossroaders at pre-departure training events, and reiterated to Alumni through publications sent out by the ‘James Robinson Society’ monthly giving plan.¹⁷ Whether it was James Robinson’s influence or the overall socialization that occurs as participants pass through CCI’s Overseas program, it is little wonder that some began to question who participates in this organisation.

During the late 1980s, grassroots volunteers in Halifax formed a group whose primary concern was the anti-racism component of CCI’s programming. They are said to have consulted with different ethno-cultural communities in order to determine the

organizational barriers that hindered more diverse participation in CCI (Respondent F). The work of this group eventually resulted in the formation of the RAPOE (Representation; Accessibility; Participation; Opportunity; Equity) Committee. This committee was supported at a national level and its main objective was to provide the Board of Directors with recommendations on how to expand ethnic diversity within CCI (Rolston 1998: 7). The members of this group were inspired primarily by the original vision of James Robinson, which is evident in the title of their 1993 final report: "Getting Back to the Vision."

The extent to which this group did manage to *diversify* the organisation is questionable, however. Rolston explains that while eight out of nine RAPOE recommendations were passed by the Board of Directors, there was little follow up and an overall sense that CCI's leadership had not made an organizational or personal commitment to the cause (Ibid 7-8). This lack of personal commitment among CCI leadership is demonstrated by one interviewees' story about the former Executive Director of CCI who drove an Afro-Canadian participant to tears when he did not seem to acknowledge that the historical role of CCI as an anti-racist organization was equally relevant in contemporary Canadian society [Respondent G].

Over the years, various other projects have been initiated around the diversity question at multiple levels within the organisation. Documents from the national office cited in the early 1990s began to show initiatives aimed at increasing participant diversity (for example, A.R.A Consulting 1991 and CCI Local Committee Handbook 1993; cited in Rolston 1998). More recently, the Regional Director of the Ontario CCI office used an "Equal Opportunity Analysis System" to examine the representation of various groups within CCI as compared to the broader Canadian context (Anglin 2002). Following this analysis, specific target numbers for the inclusion of people with disabilities and people of First Nation backgrounds were set for the next three program cycles.

¹⁷ This plan was established to solicit financial donations from returned CCI volunteers.

Later in 2002, a team of Regional Directors across the country also submitted a proposal to Heritage Canada requesting funding to assist staff and core volunteers in better implementing policies surrounding diversity at a local level. To date, the proposed project is entitled “Enhanced Diversity Through Partnership and Outreach,” and its goals are:

- To develop more inclusive, accessible and equitable recruitment, selection, and training strategies;
- To develop partnerships with ethno-cultural groups that are linked with CCI’s partner countries;
- To conduct targeted outreach to ethno-specific communities to encourage involvement in the CCI program;
- To conduct training that will sensitise CCI volunteers and staff to diversity issues and their impact on recruitment, selection and orientation; and
- To audit current recruitment and selection practices, and develop a plan to ensure that these do not create barriers to equity-seeking groups (CCI Management Team 2002).

In the Western Region, a small working group (Diversity Working Group - DWG) consisting of staff and volunteers was consulted to provide input for the writing of this project proposal, and some of the results of this initiative are already beginning to take shape in this region.¹⁸

Inspiration for the above initiatives likely came from multiple sources, including participants’ own awareness or opinions about diversity prior to contact with CCI. It is important to note, however, that because much of CCI’s educational programming (including development education, pre-departure training workshops, and *Animateur* training) has incorporated modules to foster an understanding of privilege, both in Canada and in an international context, it follows that as participants pass through the program they begin (or continue) to analyse the status quo from different perspectives. Some of that self-reflection is captured in this journal entry of one participant on placement in Nigeria:

“...And what of Canadian Crossroaders. Do we ever send Native Canadians? This year I saw none. And two Afro-Canadians. Although I must admit there was a fairly decent representation of races. Mostly I see that it is *educated middle class* Canadians perhaps with a few exceptions.

¹⁸ These results are further discussed in Chapter Five.

Of course we have the uneven division of the sexes, mostly womyn and mostly university students..." (1991 Overseas program participant, cited in McDonald and McLeod 1996: 80-1, emphasis added).

Similar sentiments are expressed in this personal position statement in a paper entitled "Project Report on Diversity":

"Since the outset of my involvement with CCI [in 1991], I have been curious about which groups have been represented in the organization. In my first year, for example, there were no male participants and only one or two men involved as local volunteers. Although there were a few people of colour, the numbers were not representative of the Canadian population. I was told at that time that I represented the 'typical' Crossroader, as I was a *white middle-class, university-educated woman under 25 years old*. As I looked around, I saw many other new and alumni volunteers who resembled me and I began to wonder why" (Rolston 1998: 4, emphasis added).

These statements acknowledge the racial and gendered composition of CCI and hint at an analysis that the event of travelling overseas is perhaps a function of social class or privilege.

Although most agree that the fact that CCI is not diverse is important to address, there is little consensus within the organization as to *why* CCI should be concerned about the diversity of its membership. Rolston, for example, cites a 1995 RAPOE discussion paper that attempted to classify CCI's reasons for diversifying into five main categories. These categories included:

- *Moralistic*: we should diversify because it is the "right" thing to do;
- *Egocentric*: CCI would receive recognition and be an example to other organisations;
- *Financial*: it would attract new sources of funding and CIDA expects it;
- *External*: the grassroots volunteers want to diversify and similar organisations are starting to do it; and
- *Visionary*: the concept of diversity is essential to the vision of James Robinson, and a diverse membership would create more opportunities for learning thereby enriching the lives of volunteers and staff.

In addition to these five categories presented by the RAPOE group, my questionnaire respondents expressed a range of other opinions about why diversity is important in CCI.¹⁹ While half of the questionnaire respondents were also motivated by the “visionary” desire to increase the potential for cross-cultural and cross-societal learning within the organisation, other reasons included: strengthening the Crossroads *movement* and ensuring the sustainability of the program by extending it to other Canadian communities, and inducing more equitable policy and programming changes through the leadership of people with perspectives outside of CCI’s mainstream. Some respondents also spoke directly of the implications of the diversity question on CCI’s partner countries, for example, that more experienced (rather than just out of university) participants would have a greater positive impact overseas; that the concept of diversity included the direct involvement of Southern beneficiaries in all stages of CCI’s program planning; and that issues of diversity needed to be addressed in the recruitment of To-Canada foreign participants as well Canadians.

Not all are in agreement that CCI should focus its time and resources on diversity, however. One survey respondent overtly stated that:

“It does not matter what race, religion, or ethnic background the participant is. What matters is the ideas that sustain them. If CCI wants to achieve their mission they must recruit people who have [the required skills and abilities]. This can be achieved by different diverse groups, but it can also be achieved by one group; it all depends on the individual. We cannot assume that by simply diversifying we will enable CCI to achieve its mission. We need to examine every applicant for the proper qualities needed for the program, and avoid generalising by the need for diversity” [Survey Respondent 12].

This volunteer sees the Southern partner organisations’ needs and CCI’s ability to recruit volunteers with matching skills as the top priority. Issues of program accessibility within Canada are relegated to a secondary level of concern. Surprisingly, this was the only survey respondent who expressed concern about CCI’s focus on diversity, which suggests that there remains great interest in the diversity question in CCI today.

¹⁹ Please see Appendix C for a complete list of responses to this survey question.

3.6 Recent Diversity Initiatives

As a result of the ongoing dialogue about diversity within the organization, several accessibility statements have recently begun to appear in most official CCI publications.

At the national level, the most notable examples are:

1. As part of CCI's Personnel Policies, the national Board of Directors approved an *Equity and Access Policy Statement* in March of 1998, which declares that in light of CCI's goal of "eliminating the root causes of inequitable development," the organization is "committed to ensure that [all levels of] the organisation [are] accessible to all groups irrespective of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, and class."
2. This commitment is reaffirmed in a principle declaring 'equity in programming strategies' in the national 2001-2005 Strategic Directions (CCI Strategic Directions).
3. The 2002 official poster and brochure, and various paid and volunteer job postings contain the following declaration:

"CCI is committed to principles and values of access and equity. We encourage applications from people of colour, individuals with disabilities, First Nations individuals and individuals from other marginalized communities" (CCI Equity Messaging 2002).
4. The 2001-2002 annual report has included a statement of values and beliefs which claims that among a dozen other points, "CCI, as an organization, adheres to... respect and embrace diversity" (CCI Annual Report 2002)

In the Western Region specifically,

1. The Regional Council established a definition of diversity which encompasses:

"...race, colour, ethnicity, ancestry, place of origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities/qualities, socio-economic status/class, education, language, family and marital status, religious beliefs, political beliefs, and criminal background" (CCI Diversity Definition 2001).

2. The volunteer application form no longer requests people to state their marital status, number of dependents, and place of birth, and the question of gender is left open rather than only providing a choice of male or female.²⁰
3. The 2001-2002 application process also included an optional section providing the opportunity for participants to self-identify as being a member of various minority/equity-seeking groups. This section was prefaced with a statement that “CCI is committed to principles and values of access and equity. Because of our commitment to diversity we encourage you to self-identify” (CCI Application Form 2001).²¹
4. Staff and volunteers have also created an interview manual in which clear parameters are set to ensure that applicants to the Overseas program are not discriminated against on the grounds of any of the personal characteristics in the diversity definition, or those outlined in the Code of Human Rights (CCI Interview Manual 2002).

In addition to the above accessibility statements, CCI’s educational programming—including the pre-departure training and *Animateur* training—has also undergone two significant changes. First, two new workshops are being incorporated into trainings: one focusing on “Anti-oppression” and the other on “Anti-heterosexism.” These workshops are designed to encourage participants to reflect on forms of oppression present in CCI, in Canada, and in an international context. Second, for the first time in its history, the 2001 national *Animateur* training was open to participants who were not returned participants from the OS Program. Although it was met with much resistance by many long-term volunteers, To-Canada participants who were on placement in the Ontario

²⁰ The 2001-2002 application form included a choice of female, male and ‘transgendered,’ however, this was replaced with the open-ended question for the 2002-2003 program cycle.

²¹ This section was removed from the 2002-2003 application forms. However, the more specific participant information available for the 2001-2002 participants provided in Chapter Five was compiled from the responses provided with these applications.

Region,²² and one volunteer from the Western Region who was not a CCI Alumnus participated in this training. As *Animateur* training had originally been designed for Canadian Alumni who would go on to facilitate workshops for CCI in Canada, the removal of this barrier marked an important shift in organizational policy.

CCI does not appear to be alone in grappling with the question of diversity. The statements below suggest that questions of accessibility, equity and inclusiveness have surfaced in other VSOs as well. Some VSOs are now actively encouraging the participation of people from otherwise excluded communities, for example, Voluntary Service Overseas Canada explicitly states that it:

“...welcomes applications from people with disabilities, and seeks to enable you to fully participate in our volunteer assessment process. For this reason, we request that you inform us of your needs prior to attending an Assessment Day. The Assessment Day requires some physical activity, and we request that applicants with restricted mobility notify us in advance so that appropriate arrangements can be made”
(VSO Canada Official Website).

This organization also provides application forms in large print or on audiotape, a reader/writer service, and sign language interpreters upon request.

There appears to be an equally strong interest in ethno-cultural diversity in the American Peace Corps. It claims to conduct targeted outreach in minority communities and goes to the extent of publicizing the number of minority participants it sends overseas every year (Peace Corps Official Website). There is evidence that this has not always been the case, however, as the first group of Peace Corps volunteers was composed of sixty-two men who were said to be “largely from native-born²³ families,” while more applicants who were rejected came from immigrant families (Stein 1966, 71). Nevertheless, it seems that the voiced concern about diversity is paying off, as NGOs focused on development appear to be more ethnically diverse than ever before (Lewis 2002).

²² The Quebec Region of CCI is said to have included To-Canada participants in its *Animateur* training before this time (Personal Communication).

²³ The term “native” in the phrase “native-born families” is not synonymous with First Nation or Aboriginal. It is referring to non-immigrant families in the United States.

Despite the ongoing interest in diversity in CCI, and the overall trend observed in development NGOs, some individuals remain sceptical about how accessible and inclusive CCI truly is. This scepticism is illustrated in the quote:

“Talk is cheap. Currently CCI does not take diversity as a serious issue. CCI is a very white – conservative - middle class organization that does not challenge the current dominant system. Most of its programming is designed to meet the needs of an able-bodied middle-classed (Euro/White) Canadian” [Survey Respondent 13].

This opinion is supported by another volunteer who stated,

“I think that there are tons of people that we eliminate from our *diverse* organization because we create an environment that is really quite narrow in its opinion and focus. Even though we claim to be diverse, I bet that less then 20% of the people our region serves would feel comfortable in this organization... For an organization that promotes diversity we're pretty homogeneous in our political, philosophical and social opinions and views” [Survey Respondent 9] (emphasis added).²⁴

Furthermore, regarding the “Equity Messaging” statement on current brochures and job descriptions, it has been suggested that:

“If you have that on there, there must be a reason why it’s on there... by putting that on there we’re making ourselves feel like we’re being more inclusive than we actually are... it’s also making a value statement [in that] not all people from those groups feel marginalized... how can a group of middle class white people define an inclusive statement to do with diversity?” [Focus Group Participant A].

These concerns suggest that while time and resources have been allotted to the complex issue of diversity in CCI, barriers preventing inclusive participation continue to exist.

The above initiatives demonstrate that rather than actually removing barriers to accessibility, CCI’s primary goal has been to “diversify” by trying to attract various socio-cultural groups to the existing program, or by attempting to ensure that those “diverse” applicants who wish to participate are granted entry through equitable selection

²⁴ This respondent had stated earlier in the questionnaire, “It would be great to have some people with marketing or business backgrounds.”

practices. Rolston (1998: 11) explains that by failing to remove these barriers, the assumption of many individuals in CCI is that:

- The program worked for me, therefore, it will work for others;
- I think the program is fabulous, therefore, you will too;
- The personal growth and the intercultural awareness I gained helped me. You can do the same.

The danger in this kind of thinking is that individuals who adamantly believe that CCI is fundamentally a “good” program may be blind to the aspects of that program that are exclusive to individuals outside the CCI norm. For example, Rolston goes on to argue that CCI’s past focus on personal growth over a work placement with tangible results may have discouraged men and ethnic minorities from participating. As well, people with more communitarian values, or those with extensive family networks may not be as interested in CCI’s high emphasis on group work, team-building, and becoming part of the CCI community. Therefore, the very aspects of the program that CCI holds in such high esteem might be contributing to the lack of diversity in the organization.

The following chapter considers more closely key aspects of CCI’s Overseas Individual Program that have contributed to CCI remaining a “white middle class” organization.

CHAPTER 4: CONSTRUCTING THE PROFILE AND PARTICIPATION OF THE 'TYPICAL CROSSROADER'

The previous chapter suggested that despite the rhetoric that has been present in the organization since the 1980s, data gathered from the last four program cycles shows that CCI has largely remained a 'white middle class' female institution. This chapter addresses the diversity question from two perspectives: First, it inquires whether individuals with the demographic profile described earlier as the "Typical Crossroader" have been independently attracted to CCI. Second, it inquires whether CCI has perpetuated this attraction by designing its programming and policies to fulfil these individuals' expectations of an overseas experience.²⁵ This attraction between CCI and the "Typical Crossroader" is referred to as a phenomenon of *mutual attraction*.

This chapter considers the mutual attraction phenomenon by examining external pressures that may influence individuals' interest in a program such as CCI's Overseas Individual Program. It begins with an initial examination of gendered socialization, and then discusses the relevance of family socialization and the importance of timing. Following this discussion, the chapter goes on to analyse how CCI's advertising and recruitment, the interview and selection process and the time and financial commitment necessary to participate in the program have served to reinforce the mutual attraction.

This chapter draws heavily on my understanding of CCI's Overseas Individual Program based on my own participation therein. Although I am using a reconstruction of my personal experience (as indicated by the italicised paragraphs below) to exemplify this concept of mutual attraction, I realize that this is certainly not representative of all those involved in CCI. I should also note that while there are a substantial number of "Typical Crossroaders," there are also people from a wide variety of backgrounds, in Canada and in CCI's partner countries, who have participated, and continue to participate in the organization. However, the statistics presented in the previous chapter, as well as

²⁵ This chapter looks specifically at elements of CCI's past programming model. Significant changes that were made to the programming in 2001, and the effects of these changes are considered in Chapter Five.

examples cited from other volunteers, and my individual observations lead me to believe that many aspects of my own experience can be generalized to a broader context.

4.1 Gender

The gender composition of CCI has been treated with some ambiguity in the context of the organization's discussions on diversity. Participation in an overseas placement has been perceived by some CCI volunteers quoted in Chapter Three as a function of privilege. Therefore, as women are more commonly understood to be at a disadvantage to men, there have been no systematic attempts to increase male participation in the organization. A former staff member made the point clearly by stating that the purpose of diversifying was to "increase the representation of underrepresented groups that have been marginalized in Canadian society... NOT men!" [Respondent A]. While there has been some concern about the overrepresentation of men in higher decision-making levels relative to the percentage of women throughout the organization (Anglin 2002, Rolston 1998), the fact that the majority of CCI participants at the volunteer level are women is left—for the most part—unchallenged.

It is interesting to consider why it has mostly been middle-class white women who have participated in CCI. Somehow, these women are socialized to believe that they are well suited to carry out development efforts overseas. Twenty-five percent of applicants for the 2001-2002 program cycle explicitly indicated on their application forms that they had been seeking out this type of opportunity, and had found CCI through their own research, and 56% had looked up CCI on the internet prior to applying.²⁶ In this way, they already had a predisposition for doing international development work and were self-motivated to seek out a program that would enable them to go overseas.

The idea of travelling abroad to "develop" another country has been said to have colonial rather than gender-specific underpinnings (Respondent A, Focus Group Participant B).

²⁶ Statistics from previous years were not available. The question of "Where did you hear about CCI?" was only added to the application form in the 2001-2002 program cycle. Other means of recruitment are discussed in section 4.3.1 below.

However, it is possible that the historic construction of Victorian (i.e. Anglo-Saxon Protestant) woman as the “benchmark of civilization” (Parpart 1995: 224) lingers in the consciousness of middle class Canadian women to this day. Newman (1999) suggests that because of their own oppressed status in patriarchal society, white women have historically held a certain affinity with racially oppressed groups. Thus, from their place of relative privilege during the 19th and early 20th centuries, elite white women took it upon themselves to be the *civilisers* –that is, the educators, nurses, moral counsellors, and overall force of assimilation– of non-white peoples in North America. Later, under the auspices of American imperialism, these women were able to develop “new identities for themselves as missionaries, explorers, educators and ethnographers” (Ibid: 19-20). A satirical image of a nurse, a schoolteacher and various other clichéd white women embarking on an overseas civilizing mission is depicted in Figure 2 below. Although CCI and most development VSOs are (now) secular organizations, it could be argued that individuals inspired by a sense of noblesse oblige share something in common with their Victorian predecessors.



Figure 2: “Off to civilize the primitive...” Caption at the bottom reads: “If only they’ll be good: Uncle Sam – You have seen what my sons can do in battle; now see what my daughters can do in peace.” Source: *Puck* January 31, 1900, in Newman 1999, p 27.

While the above analysis is consistent with a belief that volunteering abroad is a function of social privilege, the gender question could also be analysed from a different perspective. Although volunteering is no longer the only respectable career choice for middle class women (Kaminer 1984), societal power dynamics may still have some effect on women's activities as volunteers. According to the 1997 *National Survey on Giving Volunteering and Participating* (Hall et al. 1998), women are now only slightly more likely to volunteer than men.²⁷ That is, while over four million Canadian women aged 15 and over (or 33% of all Canadian women) are said to participate in formal volunteer activities, this figure only comprises 54% of the total number of recognized Canadian volunteers. That being said, this survey does not systematically analyse the actual activities of volunteers along gendered lines.

Likewise, a recent publication entitled *In Praise of Women Volunteers* gives a historical account of women's involvement in such events as the 'war effort' and 'suffrage movement,' but does not give current data on women's volunteer activities (Government of Canada 2001). However, as many CCI volunteers go on to pursue a career in international or community development, it could be argued that many women use this experience as a way to advance their careers. Moreover, although no statistics have been calculated, it has been observed that the gender mix among CCI's To-Canada and Interflow participants, as well as its Country Committee volunteers is much more balanced. Hence, one volunteer concluded that because they may not have as many options, Southern men might be more attracted to CCI as a way gain an experience that allows them to move forward in their careers [Respondent G].

4.2 The Phenomenon of Mutual Attraction

As engaging in volunteer work is always a personal choice, different individuals applying to a program such as CCI are undoubtedly motivated by an infinite number of incentives. However, some general trends that influence an individual's attraction to international voluntarism can be drawn from the narrative below. This section investigates how family

²⁷ Unpaid domestic work is not recognized in this report as formal voluntarism.

socialization and the importance of timing impact the choice of the “Typical Crossroader” to seek out an overseas volunteer experience.

4.2.1 Socialization

If a person were to look carefully at some of the events in my life, she would see traces of my future orientation toward global social justice even in my childhood. My parents, both university-educated and raised in Christian families, attempted to make me aware of my privilege even at the earliest age. “You should be thankful, there are starving children in Africa,” is the phrase they would chastise me with as a child when I refused to finish my dinner. This commentary stayed with me without much critical thought as to its origins or the assumptions behind it. My parents’ words were reinforced by images of early evening television infomercials featuring emaciated children tugging at the pant legs of white aid workers. These benevolent workers called out to me to “Please help,” as they cordially rocked starving babies in their arms. At some point in my adolescence came a realisation that the inequities causing children to starve in parts of Africa were present to a certain extent in my own country as well. Nevertheless, my motivation to make a small difference –that is, a small difference on the other side of the world–endured. While I had travelled fairly extensively, I had never done so in a manner where I felt I was contributing something “meaningful” to my host society. An opportunity not only to travel but also to do something “good” for the world appealed to me as both a challenge, and a great adventure!

As can be deduced from the above narrative, my family experience nurtured in me the inclination to “help those less fortunate than myself.” While an upbringing similar to mine is not necessary to participate in CCI’s programs, this value of charity, along with several other elements of my socialization parallel the description of CCI’s organizational culture presented in the previous chapter. For example, both parents hold left-leaning political values, have been activists for several causes, and have belonged to various consumer and housing cooperatives throughout their lifetimes. Moreover, my mother works as an integration support teacher, and my father runs a non-profit organization for people with disabilities. To complement my family socialization, my own interest in

travel and my participation in previous volunteer activities heightened my attraction to an organization such as CCI. Rather than simply giving money in response to an infomercial, an overseas volunteer placement appealed to my desire to take action in addressing what I had identified as a global problem.

4.2.2 The Importance of Timing

I first recall actively pursuing a volunteer placement abroad during the summer of 1999. As I had recently completed my undergraduate degree, was working in an uninspiring job, was freshly single, and was living –for the first time in several years– back at home, I found myself restless and eager to change my circumstance. With a sense of purpose, I set out to discover which organisations would enable me to become one of those benevolent volunteers I had seen on television. I followed links from one Internet site to the next and spoke to receptionists throughout Vancouver's Lower Mainland - only to discover that no one would put me on a plane the following week. It seemed that "those poor people" on the other side of the world would have to wait to benefit from my newly acquired degree in Linguistics, and my work experience in the hospitality industry... After a few more phone calls, and even a few long-distance fax applications (sent behind my boss' back), I shelved the idea of volunteering abroad –at least temporarily– and pursued other endeavours. By the following year, however, I had some new experience in the non-profit sector, and had recently been accepted to a Master's Program in international development. It seemed that the time was right to try again.

As described above, when I thought the time was right, I too sought out the opportunity. Although my undergraduate degree and professional experience were unrelated to international development, I still felt I had something to give – namely, my time. In retrospect, a belief that my services were needed in some other part of the world seems somewhat presumptuous, and the fact that I was shocked to find that no one would send me out to the field immediately was undoubtedly naive. Nevertheless, my own assumption can be justified on the grounds of historical precedence; recent university graduates have a long history of involvement in international volunteer-sending organizations.

Rare are the instances when people wake up in the morning and decide –out of the blue– that they want to travel overseas on a volunteer placement. Rather, many already have a predisposition to do so, and arrive at a period in their life where they finally feel it is possible. In most cases this coincides with a looming period of life transition: high school or university graduation, a career change or retirement. It is also interesting to note that CCI has historically sent volunteers abroad for fourteen weeks in the summer, and in the fall. A former staff member stated that the summer option was always the most popular because it corresponded well with a break from university during summer months, or with the end of the final winter term [Respondent E]. This detail explains the high number of recent university graduates participating in CCI.

4.3 Reinforcing the Mutual Attraction

While the previous sections discussed some of the external pressures that may influence individuals' desire to seek out an international volunteer experience, this next section examines how CCI's advertising, recruitment, application and selection practices have reinforced the attraction of the prototype to the organization.

4.3.1 Recruitment

Almost a year later I found myself doodling at the desk of a new job, when a radio announcement caught my attention. This time though, it didn't plea for me to "help," at least not financially. This advertisement appealed to my sense of wanting to have an "amazing experience" while "making a difference" in the lives of individuals on the other side of the world. Perfect! The next time I heard the ad, I caught the name of this organization that wanted to send me away: Canadian Crossroads International. My longing to leave the country resurfaced as I picked up the phone to request more information.

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the recruitment of new OS participants has historically been left up to Alumni volunteers. These Alumni have told their friends, family, co-

workers and classmates about the program and encouraged anyone interested to apply. Crossroaders have also hosted slide shows and information sessions, set up information booths at universities and career fairs, and made use of brochures, posters, radio stations, and resource books as well as community and mainstream newspapers to get the message out in their communities.

However, the most often cited form of recruitment has been through personal contact with someone in the organization: the RAPOE (1993) report stated that 60% of volunteers were recruited via 'word of mouth,' (cited in Rolston 1998) and 75% of all 2001-02 program cycle participants, (as calculated from the application forms from that year)²⁸ mentioned that they had found out about CCI through a conversation with a past participant. The top two ways that survey respondents found out about CCI were through their university (31%) and again through 'word of mouth' (61%). These recruitment trends are consistent with the 1997 and 2000 *National Surveys of Giving, Volunteering and Participating*, which both state the most common reason why individuals volunteer is that someone in the organization asked them to get involved (Hall et al 1998, McKeown 2002). However, it has also been stated that CCI in particular has reproduced itself over the years for the simple reason that participants' friends, families, and colleagues typically have similar socio-economic and cultural backgrounds as the participants themselves (RAPOE 1993 cited in Rolston 1998). Recruiting through 'word of mouth' and university publicity therefore seems to have supported the perpetuation of the "Typical Crossroader."

4.3.2 Advertising

The information package, which arrived in the mail later that week, included a professionally designed program pamphlet, with bolded navy blue words drawing my eye to the slogan inscribed across the front: "Working Towards One World." The cover image was a faded out black and white picture that boasted the smiling face of a fair

²⁸ Most survey respondents and 2001-02 applicants listed multiple ways in which they were recruited. For example, one respondent heard about CCI through a university friend and subsequently researched the

skinned, healthy-looking young woman with shoulder length blonde-hair. Looking obviously out of place in this context, she is wearing a white T-shirt, shorts, hiking boots and a stopwatch, and is also sporting a bandanna tied around her forehead. This young woman is bending down next to a darker-skinned, heavy-set and presumably African woman, who is wearing a long, loose-fitting skirt and polka dot blouse with sleeves rolled up past her elbows. This black woman, however, is faceless. The image fades out where her face would be, and your eye is drawn instead to the “One World” slogan.



Figure 3: Official CCI Brochure, distributed circa 1998-2000

In the background, a child-like person stands beside a sitting, collarless dog. This presumably male child is faceless as well, as the pamphlet edge cuts him off at shoulder level. All that is seen is his long-sleeved sporty jacket with white racing stripes along the trim, and a diaper-like undergarment covering his waist and genitals. His legs are bare and his right hand strokes the head of an attentive canine friend. The whole scene takes place outside in a notably arid climate, with a few gnarly sticks and shrubs speckled

organisation on the internet. the statistics given in this section are representative of the number of times this means of recruitment was listed.

about the area. In the forefront, the two women are engaged in some kind of activity that requires kneeling on the barren earth and placing something in a shallow pot. As the white woman smiles and places both hands inside the pot to pose for the camera, she gives the impression that she is trying to assist her host with some kind of domestic chore. The inside pictures are not unlike the cover shot: youthful and fair skinned men and women assisting their darker skinned counterparts with day-to-day activities... After reading through this brochure, I decided to apply.

As mentioned above, local volunteers have previously gone about their recruitment independent of each other, which resulted in a multitude of strategies and approaches to attracting new volunteers to the organization. However, the national CCI office prints posters, pamphlets, annual reports and other promotional material to be used across the country. These publications are subsequently distributed to the various regional offices and then on to the local committees for use at their discretion. The images and words appearing on these publications change considerably with each publication, although the front cover of brochures typically follow the same format: they showcase one central image, several peripheral images, the logo and the slogan in use that year. Normally, a description of each of the programs; contact information; a statement of vision, mission, or goals; and a list of partner countries are found inside the brochure. Also, because CCI is partnered with countries where the dominant race is not white, usually it is clear that the white people in the images are supposed to represent Canadians (Rolston 1998).

The three most recent brochures list “Working Towards One World” (1998), “Where Change Begins – Your Life, Our Communities, The World” (2000), and “Be a part of change” (2002) as the various catch phrases. The central images have changed significantly in these subsequent publications as well, which is indicative of the concerted effort to depict people from the partner countries in a more respectable manner. In fact, CCI’s board has now signed a messaging policy that states:

“All communications to the public by CCI must respect the dignity, values, history, religion and culture of the people supported by its

programs. CCI is bound by the CCIC²⁹ Code of Ethics Messaging Policy. In particular, CCI shall avoid the following:

- Messages which generalize and mask the diversity of situations.
- Messages which fuel prejudice.
- Messages which foster a sense of Northern superiority.
- Messages which show people as hopeless objects for pity, rather than as equal partners in action and development”
(CCI Messaging Policy, 2002).

While CCI never went to the extent of printing images of emaciated black children in its publications, the representation of people in the partner countries in its brochures has improved since the one I received in the mail. Needless to say, the simple fact that front-page images in recent publications actually *show the faces* of nationals in the partner countries is an improvement in itself. Admittedly, the 2000 brochure images place much more emphasis on people from the South acting in leadership positions.³⁰ The front page shows an African teacher with her pupils, and two women of colour discuss over a computer on the inside flap. This publication also blurs the image of the typical Crossroader, as only one image of a blonde, bearded white man, and one tiny little picture of a female brunette appear on the cover (See Appendix E). It is therefore hard to tell whether a few of the other smiling faces are Canadians, To-Canada, or Interflow participants.

The 2002 brochure places an even greater emphasis on the activities of people in the South: the central image shows three African women sorting grain while the Canadians are relegated to the peripheral or inside images. The wording also suggests that this brochure might be suitable for distribution in the Southern countries themselves, where before they were only targeted at Canadians. However, with the exception of the ambiguous smiling participants in the 2000 brochure, the image of the typical Canadian volunteer in 2002 continues to be a white female. These white women being displayed throughout official CCI media publications perhaps have had an impact on who has been interested in applying.

²⁹ Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC)

³⁰ Copies of the 2002 and 2000 Official Brochures are included as Appendix E.



Figure 4: Canadian women depicted in CCI publications from 1998 – 2002.

In addition to the images, CCI's emphasis on an "overseas experience" has likely continued to attract unskilled participants. As the applicants were previously not competing for a specific position with an international development project, particular professional skills were often not perceived as being as important as the "soft" skills required for this type of experience. This statement is illustrated by the following description of CCI's selection criteria:

"[CCI chooses its volunteers] on the basis of their cultural sensitivity, adaptability and commitment to promoting international awareness. Basic knowledge and skills in a trade or vocation are useful. Applicants who have special skills are easier to place but non-skilled people are selected as well" (Government of Canada, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Official Website).

In addition, although these restrictions are no longer in place, up until the year I applied (2000) applicants must not have:

- Been overseas with a development organization for more than four weeks;
- Lived in a developing country for more than eight weeks after the age of 14; or
- Spent 13 or more consecutive weeks travelling in one or more CCI specified developing countries after the age of 14 (Ibid).

This final stipulation was later changed to allow immigrants from CCI's partner countries to have a "CCI Experience" in a country other than the one where they were born [Respondent G]. According to the above stipulations, CCI was set up as an organization open to un-travelled and non-professional individuals interested in an overseas experience. While many skilled professionals have participated in CCI over the years, individuals with extensive travel or international development experience would previously not have qualified for the Overseas Individual Program. With the ambiguous nature of the placements, and the focus on soft skills rather than professional or technical skills, it is no wonder that this program has appealed to individuals who were fresh out of high school, university, or college and had little professional experience. Moreover, given the historical relationship between universities and volunteer-sending organisations, it is understandable that inexperienced "BA Generalists" would continue to apply.

As will be discussed further in Chapter Five, CCI's programming has recently undergone significant change that will require future volunteers to meet the stated needs of Southern partner organizations. However, there still appears to be some resistance among Canadian volunteers to recruiting overly skilled volunteers. For example, when asked: "what skills are necessary to participate in CCI's Overseas Program?" some survey respondents prefaced their answers with qualifiers such as "While skills are important, I believe qualities of acceptance, wanting to explore and share one's culture are more useful," [Survey Respondent 3] or, "I think traits are overall more important than actual skills" [Survey Respondent 1]. One returned volunteer even warned, "We should be cautious about recruiting and sending people with too high a skill level. I don't think that

a developing country can absorb too much technical information and infrastructure at first” [Survey Respondent 7].

While most survey respondents (56%) indicated that technical or professional skills that matched the host organisation’s needs were necessary, and two interview respondents were adamant that volunteers must be able to make a tangible contribution to the host organization, the majority of volunteers consulted continued to list attributes such as maturity, flexibility, adaptability, honesty, determination, communication, self-awareness, people skills, et cetera as being of utmost importance. One volunteer suggested that this resistance is rooted in the belief that many Alumni volunteers would not have been selected under the new criteria [Respondent G]. As many Alumni feel that the CCI experience had a profound impact on their lives, they may want others like them to continue to have access to a similar opportunity.

4.3.3 Application Procedure

The application process was three-fold and included a six-page application form, three reference forms, and an interview. The first page of the application form requested standard personal information, including my birth date, place of birth, citizenship, marital status, number of dependents and gender. The following pages requested employment, voluntary sector and education details; skills, interests and language proficiency; and two pages of questions relating to my life experiences, lessons learned and how work with CCI fit in with my future goals. My referees were expected to speak to my organizational, group and leadership skills, as well as my personal characteristics and suitability to this type of program. They were then to mail the form directly to the Local Recruitment and Selection Coordinator, and I was to wait for my response. Shortly after the deadline, I called to confirm that my application had been received. At that time I asked –out of curiosity– how many candidates were usually selected to participate. The person on the other end answered that there were no fixed numbers – it depended on how many people applied, and most applicants were accepted. Already convinced that I was a prime candidate, and being aware of these flexible parameters, I wasn’t surprised when word came that I had been short-listed for an interview.

Although most people who met the criteria outlined in the previous section and went through the application procedure were said to have been accepted to the program,³¹ it has been suggested that the very act of applying to CCI may be somewhat exclusionary [Survey Respondents 9 and 13]. While the application form has changed in style and content over the years, the application process remains lengthy and somewhat arduous. It requests applicants to submit a resume, a completed application form and three letters of reference. The 2000-2001 application form consisted of six pages, which has since been reduced to five pages, though the information requested is generally the same. The reference form is to be completed by one personal and two professional referees, or one person who knows the applicant in a community or voluntary setting. Though this amount of paperwork might be perceived as standard protocol, it may be a barrier for people with less experience applying to formal institutions, or less experience with paperwork in general. Those who have passed through university or other bureaucratic systems certainly would feel more at ease with this lengthy procedure.

4.3.4 Selection

As I waited for my turn on the day of my interview, I struck up a conversation with another young female candidate standing beside me in the hallway outside the Crossroads office. This woman told me of her desire to return to Fiji to be reunited with her family, and of her will to contribute to the political struggle of Indo-Fijians. Another young, energetic, white woman joined the conversation and explained that ever since she was a child she had dreamed of going to Africa. I held off on revealing my biases until the interview, at which point I told the interviewers of my recent acceptance to a graduate program focusing on international development, and my longstanding interest in 'helping' those less fortunate than myself. The interview itself was conducted by two friendly, yet somewhat serious CCI alumni, one male, one female, and both in their mid to late twenties. The interview lasted approximately half an hour, during which time they

³¹ No information could be gathered on individuals who applied, but were not accepted to the program, as their application forms were not kept on file.

elicited examples of my cultural tolerance, flexibility, adaptability and commitment. I confidently and eloquently answered all their questions, shook hands, and wished the others good luck on my way out. I later realized that the woman longing to return to her homeland did not make the final cut. The African dreamer did.

The Indo-Fijian applicant faced many barriers in applying to CCI. Even if the prior stipulation that applicants may not have lived in one of CCI's partner countries had been waived, had her politically-motivated reasons for applying to CCI been expressed during the interview, it likely would have raised some eyebrows. Also, as volunteers previously had no choice as to which country they would be placed in, her inflexible desire to return to Fiji may have contributed to her disqualification as well. Moreover, given that CCI severed its relationship with Fiji following the 2000 coup d'état, and no volunteers have been sent there since that time, it is not surprising that she was not selected for an overseas placement in that same year. This particular occurrence notwithstanding, the Western Region of CCI is beginning to see the benefits of recruiting individuals from specific ethno-cultural groups who speak the language, and have a vested interest in the sustainable development of the current partner countries. However, striking a balance between an applicant's overly political or religious motivations and CCI's non-partisan, secular position might prove to be a challenge.

The Western Region's "Interview Manual" states that the primary reasons why individuals abandon their paid or volunteer positions are that their personal values do not match those of the organization, or that the organization does not fulfil their expectations associated with the position. While CCI has recently attempted to standardize its interview process through the creation of this manual, overall, the interview is a preliminary assessment of whether or not the candidate is a "good fit" with the CCI's Overseas Program. Determining this "good fit," however, is potentially quite a subjective or instinctive process. This point is especially pertinent to an organization that has historically not recruited on the grounds of professional qualifications and work experience. It is therefore likely that interviewers' personal values have had (and may continue to have) some influence on who is accepted to the organization.

As Alumni volunteers have been primarily responsible for conducting the interviews, they likely had strong preconceived notions about which answers were characteristic of the right match. If the interviewers had been successful while on placement, chances are good that they responded most positively to people most like themselves. That being said, the fact that most applicants were said to have been accepted to the program suggests that with the exception of cases such as that of the Indo-Fijian described above, many individuals who were not a “good fit” likely did not even apply.

According to CCI’s list of interview questions, (i.e. the “interview grid”), the candidates’ motivations, expectations, commitment and ability to contribute to the organisation; maturity, coping mechanisms, mental strength and stress management abilities; flexibility, adaptability to new environments; and skills in conflict resolution, cross-cultural communication, time management and organization are all assessed during the process. As most questions are primarily example-based, the ability to draw upon a breadth of experience as well as a sense of self-awareness is essential. Furthermore, demonstrating the appropriate motivations for wanting to volunteer abroad is especially important during the interview.

From my experience, many volunteers with CCI would likely identify as having a mix of practical and frivolous motivations along with a healthy dose of altruism. As stated earlier, many are looking for something to bridge the gap in a period of life transition; recent graduates are often seeking practical experience in their field, and graduate students may be looking for research opportunities. Still others are seeking to advance their career by adding international experience to their resumes. Aside from these more practical motivations, many are often propelled by desires for a new challenge: to travel, to learn a language, to experience a foreign culture, to try different food, to gain a sense of independence, to meet diverse people, and to have an adventure. As demonstrated by the approval of my own personal and academic interests in international development, having some combination of the above motivations would likely be seen as a good match with CCI’s expectations.

Interview questions notwithstanding, it has also been suggested that the “typical North American” interview style, where representatives of CCI ask questions while the interviewee responds, might be perceived as somewhat confrontational or uncomfortable for some [Respondent E]. A more conversational or informal interview style might yield better results from people who are not accustomed to the current style.

4.4 Continued Participation

Passing through the selection process can mark the beginning of a long involvement with CCI. The following sections discuss how having a positive experience with the organization can influence future participation. The financial commitment necessary to participate, and the process of “de-selection” are then discussed.

4.4.1 A Positive “Experience”

Approximately one month after my interview, in a makeshift meeting space in the Tenants’ Rights Action Coalition office on East Hastings, I had my first encounter with three (female) CCI alumni and a group of nine other recently recruited volunteers – people with whom I would soon develop an exclusive bond. Of the other new recruits, all but two were female, all but three were in their twenties, all but three were born in English-speaking Canada, and all but one had some, if not extensive, post-secondary education. I quickly felt at ease as we introduced ourselves to one another and were indoctrinated into the organisation. Some present were seeking friendships with like-minded individuals, a sense of independence, an opportunity to learn, or were propelled by a dream of fulfilling something they had “always wanted to do”- many of the same intentions as I had. When I discovered that one person in the room wanted a health-related international experience to beef up her application to Med School, I breathed a sigh of relief: I too had a practical motive of conducting research for my thesis while overseas. And so, amidst this group of kindred spirits, I embarked on the eight-month journey of preparation for my mission to a Southern country...

Whether participants have a good relationship with the organization prior to (and during) their overseas experience might determine the extent of their future participation. My own feeling of ease right from the first meeting with other participants has undoubtedly influenced my continued involvement with CCI to this day. Following the out-of-country placement, participants are expected to contribute an additional 200 hours of volunteer time to the organisation. However, as these hours are not officially monitored, CCI relies on its volunteers' sense of personal commitment to the organization. This being the case, participants who had a good "experience," or felt comfortable with the organizational culture might be more interested in taking part in future meetings and events. For example, one volunteer who has been involved with CCI since 1996 says that although she currently holds no formal positions, she remains attached to the organization because "many of my friends are involved in CCI as volunteers and staff" [Survey Respondent 5]. While some survey respondents reported commitment lengths of up to twelve years, other participants loose touch with the organization following their placement.

The very design of CCI's pre-departure program has an effect on an individuals' ability to participate. For example, the time commitment expected of participants in the pre-departure period is quite phenomenal. The meeting described above was the first of many for me – a minimum of one per week for the duration of my eight-month pre-departure period. It was not uncommon to spend over ten hours per week participating in meetings, or organizing and taking part in events.³² These hours were in addition to two weekend training sessions.³³ The extent of this time commitment makes it challenging for individuals with a full time work schedule to participate, let alone for anyone with other commitments such as a second job, or extended family responsibilities, including young children or elderly parents. Typically students, retirees, unemployed individuals or those with a flexible or part-time schedule would find it more realistic to participate in the OS program simply due to the time commitment required.

³² In cases where a participant was recruited from an area where no other CCI volunteers were present, their time commitment may not have been as significant. However, these volunteers were still expected to fundraise the \$2250.

³³ This has now been converted to one five-day training session.

However, once participants have been recruited the perception of *why* an individual does not participate in group meetings or activities, or does not want to participate has often been attributed more to “personal” reasons, rather than to systemic reasons associated with the design of CCI’s program. For example, one long-term volunteer recalls her experience of working with a local group of CCI volunteers over ten years ago:

“...and there was this one woman who was the only non-white person on the committee [who] had three jobs, and had a whole lot of other things happening for her. The rest [of the volunteers] were not all university students, but many were, and many people were very flexible and were able to come to meetings. She wasn’t very flexible and then sometimes wasn’t able to come to the meetings for an assortment of other reasons. And there was a real blend of personal things, and who knows, bigger things, about what made her connect or not connect with the group” [Respondent F].

The expectation that participants will place their involvement in CCI above other life priorities has continued to cause some controversy. It was said that when an Indo-Canadian participant within the past three years expressed values about her family commitments that were different from others in her group, “Many of the ‘standard’ Crossroaders were not able to understand – and hence, were intolerant towards – her different obligations to her family... Especially when this impacted on their ‘group’ experience” [Respondent G]. The fact that the group work in CCI is intended to instigate *personal development* might make the program less attractive to “many non-dominant groups whose cultures value the community over the individual” (Rolston 1998: 12).

4.4.2 Financial Commitment

Time commitment and comfort in the organization notwithstanding, the most significant barrier to CCI’s OS program is thought to be the cost associated with participation. Not only must participants have access to enough resources to be able to take four to six months off work unpaid, they are expected to make a financial contribution of \$2250 to the organisation as well. As mentioned earlier, this amount is meant to be covered by participants’ fundraising efforts. In practice, however, fundraising efforts are not always successful and many participants have reported paying some of the cost out of their own pockets (Personal Communication). Those participants who are successful are often able

to solicit large donations from friends and family, or at least convince them to attend fundraising events. These friends and family must therefore be part of a socio-economic group that not only believes in the vision of CCI, but can also afford to contribute to its cause. In addition to the time commitment described above, fundraising might be particularly difficult for people who have small social networks, are new to an area, or whose friends and family hold different values about donating to this type of an organization.

In addition, there are several peripheral costs associated with the placement: participants are required to pay for medical examinations, travel insurance and any vaccinations or prescription drugs necessary to travel to their placement country. Many small costs associated with involvement in the organisation during the pre-departure period—for example, gas mileage, bus fare, the odd photocopy, or snacks provided when hosting a meeting—are normally absorbed by the participant without question. Additionally, as the overseas living allowance CCI provides is very minimal, most people bring extra “spending money” so that they can enjoy some extra luxuries or travel after their placement, and some participants, including myself, have had to “call home” for extra funds (Respondent G and other Personal Communication). Finally, after their placement, volunteers must have some form of safety net to return to after not working for three to six months. One focus group member described the dilemma inherent in CCI’s programming as,

“The nature of any sort of volunteer-sending organization is that the only people that can afford to go without wages for six months come from a place of privilege, and I don’t know how we can get around that... We also want to maintain the culture that they live on subsistence wages that their co-workers live on as well, so we don’t want to pay them Canadian wages. But they have bills to pay back home, so that excludes a huge class section of society, so I don’t know how we get around that... It’s a matter of priority of where we spend our money, because we don’t have that much money” [Focus Group Participant C].

Although the cost has been identified as a major barrier to inclusive participation, no extra financial support has been put in place to increase accessibility to the program. If

removing this barrier is a concern for CCI, it is in the organization's best interest to seek out additional sources of funding which would enable them to provide additional support to those in need: "If the *real* goal, and aim, and desire is to diversify the group of people heading overseas, then it requires some real basic material things like money - funding for some people who can't afford to do it" [Respondent F]. Otherwise, CCI will likely remain an organization that is only accessible to individuals of middle, or upper middle class backgrounds.

4.4.3 "De-Selection"

Throughout their participation in pre-departure activities, volunteers were continually assessed in terms of their demonstrated skills and characteristics; group participation and commitment; ability to deal with stress and overall suitability to the organisation. In the case where a volunteer did not meet the organization's expectations, they ran the chance of being 'de-selected,' which meant they would be asked to leave the program and subsequently not be sent overseas. However, one former staff member said that there has been much reluctance to 'de-select' volunteers, as many CCI Alumni felt that the time overseas would be a "good learning experience" for any volunteer [Respondent G]. In conjunction with CCI's shift in focus toward sustainable development, it has been recognized that a "bad" volunteer's "good experience" might have been at the expense of their overseas hosts. The Western Region has now standardized the de-selection process into a "progressive disciplinary approach," which emphasizes the need for open communication and clearly defined expectations on behalf of CCI. No participant would be deselected without first receiving a series of verbal and written warnings, and those who are de-selected have the opportunity to appeal the decision by contacting the National Program Council Chairperson (CCI Procedure for Addressing Participant Behaviour).

Interestingly, CCI has not conducted any systematic analysis of 'de-selected' participants, nor of applicants who were rejected during the application process, nor of participants who withdrew themselves for other reasons. This could be interpreted simply as a lack of interest, time or research resources, or it may have more meaningful implications: as

analysis of these applicants and participants may highlight trends as to who is not able to participate, this lack of analysis could be interpreted as lack of consideration for systematic barriers to participation in CCI programs.

This chapter has attempted to demonstrate how many aspects of CCI's past policies, programming and procedures have perpetuated the attraction between the "Typical Crossroader" and CCI. Some of the key points of this "mutual attraction" (namely: a predisposition to international voluntarism, an acknowledgement of being relatively 'fortunate,' a university education, perfect timing, and a "good fit" with the organization) are demonstrated in a personal description of one volunteer's attraction to CCI:

"I had always had an interest in international development. Since I was a young child, I knew that one day I would work towards volunteering in a developing country to help people that were less fortunate than myself. Throughout university, I continuously contacted NGOs for information on their volunteer programs. CCI was one organization that I had found through internet searches. Approximately three years after completing university, I came across an ad in [a community newspaper stating] that CCI was recruiting for overseas positions. I felt that the time in my life was right, and so I applied to CCI, and was accepted..." [Survey Respondent 15].

In summary, middle class white women are attracted to the idea of "helping" overseas and seek out organizations such as CCI. In turn, CCI has targeted these women in its advertising images, and has marketed its program to appeal to unskilled, un-travelled Canadians wanting an international experience. This program has systematically discriminated against immigrants to Canada from developing countries, and particularly from CCI's partner countries. Moreover, as CCI has primarily recruited from universities and the social networks of Alumni volunteers, people from other communities who may otherwise be interested might not even have had information that such a program exists. The application and interview processes are standard of dominant Canadian culture, though they may be daunting for people not used to this protocol. Finally, even if someone felt comfortable in the organizational culture, the time and financial commitment might not be realistic for those with inflexible schedules or those of a low economic status.

Having examined how elements of CCI's past programming have affected who has wanted to and who has been able to participate in the Overseas program, Chapter Five now turns to look at how changes to CCI's programming have influenced participant diversity in the organization.

CHAPTER 5: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMING IN CCI: IMPLICATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

In recent years, CCI's core programming, particularly the Overseas Individual Program, has undergone significant change in order to more accurately reflect the changing priorities of international development. This chapter looks at those programming changes, and what consequences they have for volunteer participation in this organization. The chapter begins with an overview of CCI's strategic directions, and discusses key programming changes that occurred in both the 2001-2002 and the 2002-2003 program cycles in the Western Region. It then shows how these changes have come about as a result of the capacity development paradigm discussed in Chapter Two, followed by an examination of how those changes that were implemented last year have already affected volunteer participation. Opportunities and barriers for future inclusive participation in CCI's programs are then assessed based on information about new programming changes in place for this year. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of what implications a more diverse participant base will have on CCI.

5.1 Strategic Directions and Programming Changes

Canadian Crossroads International is currently in the process of implementing new strategic directions for the years 2001 to 2005. The organization's strategic planning committee has identified four key areas in need of attention: sustainable development programming, global volunteerism, financial stewardship, and organizational effectiveness. The Board of Directors approved a plan to enhance these key areas in 2001, and the organization has been gradually implementing changes since that time (CCI Strategic Directions 2001). This section focuses on the framework for sustainable development programming and its execution in the Western Region.

Instead of sending a flock of volunteers out to several different countries in various sectors every year, the proposal for sustainable development programming states that CCI will work in clearly defined program sectors, namely: Human Rights and Advocacy, Basic Education and Literacy, Health and Health Care, Rural Development and Micro-

credit, Natural Resource Management, Capacity Building and Enhancement of Civil Society³⁴ (CCI Strategic Directions 2001). The projects in these program sectors will take place in a reduced number of partner countries, which will be clustered geographically to match the Canadian regions of CCI. The quality of volunteers' pre-placement training will also be improved, and placements will be lengthened from fourteen weeks to six months. Finally, CCI will be involved in the creation and administration of partnerships between similar organizations in the North and South. After a period of three to five years, it is hoped that these organizations will have a sustainable relationship independent of CCI.

The Western Regional Office (WRO) has already implemented many elements of this plan for sustainable development. Throughout 2001, staff visits to partner countries, and much consultation lead this region to concentrate its efforts in the areas of HIV/AIDS and Indigenous Community and Rural Development. After much deliberation, it also completed the 'country-reclustering' process in 2002, deciding to maintain links with Bolivia, Guatemala and Suriname while discontinuing its relationships with Botswana, Swaziland and Indonesia (CCI Annual Report 2001-2002, CCI Western Regional Update September 2002). During the 2001-2002 program cycle, the Western Region also introduced the first key changes to its programming: six months placements³⁵ and pre-determined job descriptions. Although the lengthening of placements necessitated a significant decrease in the number of Canadian participants sent overseas,³⁶ it is hoped that the longer placement duration would enable volunteers to have a greater impact during their time in the host institution. These key decisions, along with the initial changes are beginning to shape the new terms of CCI's involvement in its partner countries for the next three years.

³⁴ Not surprisingly, these sectors match the CIDA's funding priorities reported in its 2002 report on "Maximising Aid Effectiveness."

³⁵ Due to last minute funding cuts, some placements were subsequently shortened to three, four, or five months.

³⁶ While recruitment numbers in the Western Region had been slowly decreasing from forty participants in 1998, to thirty in 1999, and twenty-eight in 2000, this number was significantly reduced to only sixteen participants in 2001.

With the introduction of these changes came a higher expectation of both the necessary skills to participate in the program and the outcomes of the overseas volunteer placements. In the previous model, where cross-cultural learning and exchange was highly promoted, the degree of development impact was based almost completely on the individual volunteer's skills. Therefore the development impact varied a great deal according to age, experience, education, and character. While some volunteers were said to have achieved impressive results, the short-term nature of the placements restricted the volunteer's ability to have a long-term impact. In this program design, small successes and personal growth were celebrated more often than tangible impacts on partner organizations overseas. Rather than using general calls for applications, more detailed job descriptions are now used to determine who qualifies to participate in the program. Furthermore, volunteers are given instruction on CCI's understanding of "sustainable development," and "results-based management"³⁷ in the Pre-Departure trainings, and they are encouraged to include strategies for building organizational capacities in their work plans once they arrive on placement.

In addition to these placement changes, the process of formalizing partnerships with Canadian organizations has been underway since 2001. Specifically, a formal relationship with the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College (SIFC) was established, through which two participants were recruited and sent overseas in 2002. Subsequently, the Western Region made an effort to link organizations in Canada with similar NGOs or community-based organizations in its three remaining partner countries. Thus, the SIFC linkage progressed into a partnership with the Multicultural Centre for Democracy in Guatemala, as both organizations work to foster empowerment and capacity building in their communities. Likewise, in time for the 2002-2003 program cycle, a new partnership was established between the *Stichting Mamio Namen* Project in Suriname and HIV-Edmonton, as both organizations work to educate the public on HIV/AIDS issues and provide support and advocacy for HIV-positive individuals. In early 2003 a final partnership was confirmed between the Production Support Studies Program in Bolivia,

³⁷ CCI's 'Results-Based Management' is linked with CIDA's Strategy for Sustainable Development (CIDA 2001).

which works to promote community economic development through access to micro-credit, and the Centre for Community Enterprise based in Port Alberni, BC.

The new partnerships between the countries and organizations described above are part of a model of development that the WRO has termed 'Project-Based Programming' (PBP). With the WRO's help, these partners are expected to establish joint projects upon which Canadian and partner country volunteers will work during the next three years. These projects will be managed through a new voluntary body called 'Project Committees,' which will essentially consist of representatives in the Southern and Northern organisations with the support of already existing country and local committees of CCI volunteers and staff. Much of the responsibility for the administration of the projects—including supervision and evaluation, volunteer recruitment, and fundraising—will eventually be transferred to these new Project Committees. Through this new model, Southern partners are expected to have greater influence over the terms of their participation in CCI than in the past. Conversely, Northern Alumni volunteers will have less decision-making power. As this is a complete overhaul to the long-established structure of CCI, the new programming model has created some confusion throughout the organization. Nevertheless, it is hoped that once the model is up and running, it will have a long-term impact and promote sustainable development in CCI's partner countries (CCI Project-Based Programming 2002).

The justification for these programming changes has come from multiple directions. For example, the specific partnership with SIFC is the direct result of outreach targeted at First Nations communities, which was initiated through the organizational focus on diversity. There is also evidence that these changes are more representative of partner country—as opposed to Canadian—demands. Two interviewees who had participated in an evaluation and consultation process in partner countries³⁸ expressed that partner country committee members were requesting older, more skilled participants [Respondents F and G]. Furthermore, there has been a move to balance the number of Canadian and partner country participants in the Overseas and To-Canada programs. In

³⁸ Referred to by CCI as a *Bridges Internship*.

late 2002, nine positions had been advertised for Canadians, (three positions in each of the countries), mirroring the number of To-Canada participants expected to arrive in 2003 (three from each country for a total of nine). Three Interflow participants (one per year from each country³⁹) are also expected to exchange between Southern partner countries. As the number of Canadian volunteers was typically double or triple that of the partner country, these changes can be interpreted as a significant shift in thinking within the organization. However, CCI's two remaining programs (Netcorps and the International Youth Internship) continue to target Canadians only. While their Pre-departure Training is expected to be combined with that of OS participants, how the participants in these programs will be integrated into the new programming model is yet to unfold (CCI Strategic Plan Benchmarks 2001-2004, Personal Communication). Nevertheless, these new directions show that CCI's programs are no longer solely driven by Canadians' continued interest in volunteering overseas.

5.2 Capacity Development Programming

Evidence of the capacity development paradigm can be found in the Western Region's proposed "Development Model" which includes a subsidiary "Partnership Model" and "Model of Capacity Development" (CCI West Official Website). This region has overtly expressed that the role of its volunteers is to provide technical cooperation and management assistance with a primary focus on promoting organizational development. Volunteers are to accomplish this by assessing organizational capacity, managing change, and choosing the appropriate mix of capacity building activities. The "Model of Capacity Development" put forth by the Western Region is based on the following definition of capacity building:

"Capacity building is a process of continuous reflection and learning by which an organization identifies an activity or activities that will enhance and/or strengthen its resources, skills, and abilities to ensure its ongoing sustainable growth" (CCI West Official Website).

From this definition, the Western Region recommends that the following principles guide volunteers working to advance Southern partner organizational development:

³⁹ For linguistic reasons, the Interflow exchange may only take place between Bolivia and Guatemala.

- *Action Learning* - A type of learning which takes place by staff, volunteers, and leaders going through changes and reflecting on what has happened regularly.
- *Group Facilitation* - Skilled group facilitation involving bringing facilitators, similar to change agents, into the organization, instead of taking individuals out for training.
- *Stakeholder Judgments* - Process of capacity building has to be assessed through the perspective of those who have a legitimate claim on the organization.
- *Internal Participation* - Adopting methods which engage everyone and create space in terms of time and resources. This is to ensure that responsibility and ownership is situated within the Southern NGO and/or CBO and not with outside "experts".
- *Acknowledging the Informal* - Organizational development should not be treated in isolation from interpersonal relationships and external links that influence how a Southern NGO and/or CBO operates" (Ibid).

Despite this elaborate emphasis on organizational development, many of the challenges inherent in capacity development programming discussed in Chapter Two are also present in the Western Region's new "Model of Development." Parameters surrounding the appropriate use of technical assistance and the terms of partnership, for example, will be particularly important to negotiate over the next three years.

From the above definition of capacity-building, and the guiding principles for organizational development, one might imagine that most CCI volunteers are participatory development practitioners, organizational consultants or facilitators. This is not necessarily the case, however. Some examples of volunteers requested by partner organizations this year include a documentary film producer, a physician trained in the administration of antiretroviral therapy, and a dairy livestock advisor. Extra training in inter-cultural awareness may be required to ensure that these 'experts' are able to transfer their skills appropriately to co-workers and counterparts in their respective organizations. Moreover, in a six-month period it may be unrealistic to expect that volunteers would be able to undertake a thorough assessment of the partner organization's capacity, facilitate a thorough process of implementing change in addition to transferring their professional

skills. Although the new directions demonstrate an attempt to move towards programming that encompasses capacity development theory, these obstacles suggest that the new “models” might not always match what happens at the grassroots level.

The Western Region’s proposed “Partnership Model” will likely need to be evaluated as well, as the implementation process to date has already presented a few hurdles to overcome. During the recent recruitment cycle, there was a significant delay in the posting of volunteer positions on CCI’s website. When the positions were posted, the main pool of candidates from which to choose volunteers consisted of Canadian partner organizations and their networks. However, the nature of many of the positions requested by Southern partners, such as those mentioned above, did not always match the areas of expertise of the Northern partners. It has therefore been necessary to carry out targeted recruitment throughout the region beyond partner organizations and their networks. As a result, the deadline for recruitment has been postponed, throwing the whole program cycle off by at least one month. With the passing of time and reflection upon lessons learned, it is hoped that these initial difficulties will be resolved in time for the next program cycle.

Despite the challenges of implementing programming changes, the Western Region will continue on this path over the next three years. What effects these changes have on participation are assessed throughout the remainder of this chapter. The assessment is presented in two sections: the first is an evaluation of volunteer participation resulting from the first stage of changes implemented during the 2001-2002 program cycle. The second determines the opportunities and barriers for inclusive participation that exist as the Western Region moves forward with its new programming.

5.3 Participation in the 2001 Program Cycle

While the old model of programming had been open to individuals of all ages and skill levels, it was determined in Chapter Three that the structure tended to primarily attract white women. As this trend was expected to continue, several interviewees were surprised to see that there appeared to be greater *diversity* among the 2001-2002 Overseas

Program participants than in previous years. This subjective observation was verified by my examination of the 'self-identification' section added to the 2001 application forms.⁴⁰

According to these forms:

- Four of the sixteen participants (25%) reported to be a 'person of colour' or 'visible minority';
- Two participants were of First Nations background;
- One participant was French-Canadian; and
- One participant self-identified as belonging to a group listed as "lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered."

Meanwhile,

- No participants claimed to have immigrated to Canada within the last four years, although five reported a place of birth outside of Canada, and two reported that English was not their first language;
- No participants indicated that they had a disability;
- Only two men participated; and
- The majority of participants (10 of 16) were still in their twenties, with an average (median) age of 24, though the ages did range from 19 to 59.

Although no significant change is observed in the representation of men, recent immigrants, people with disabilities, or older participants, and no comparative data is available on sexual orientation, these numbers are significant when compared with statistics compiled in other CCI regions. The Ontario Region, for example, reports an average of 18% participation by visible minorities from 1998 to 2002, with only one person of Aboriginal origin participating during that time (Anglin 2002). Diversity in the recent pool of the Western Region's participants looks even better when compared with CCI's earlier data. Rolston's 1998 report stated an overall average of 12.5% visible

⁴⁰ This 'self-identification' section was discussed in Chapter Three. It should be noted that participants were not required to complete this section, therefore, representation of different groups may in fact have been higher than what is presented here.

minority representation in CCI between the years 1995 and 1997.⁴¹ The Western Region's total of 37.5% non-white representation (including the two Aboriginal participants) shows a definite increase in ethnic diversity for the 2001-2002 program cycle.⁴²

Given that previous attempts to "broaden the participant base" have resulted in little change in participant demographics, much contemplation has taken place within the Western Region as to the exact reason why this shift has suddenly occurred. One key informant interviewed was unsure as to the trend in general, but knew that the increase in Aboriginal participation was a direct result of the new partnership established with the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College [Respondent A]. Likewise, it was suggested that recruitment through the internet was accessible to people of a wider range of backgrounds, whereas the traditional means of recruitment were perhaps more exclusive [Respondent C]. In addition to recruitment efforts through partners and the internet, another hypothesis was that the increased diversity was the direct result of using specific job descriptions. Furthermore, it was suggested that ethnic minorities in Canada, who live in a visibly "different culture" every day of their life, may not feel the need to go overseas to have a "cross-cultural experience" [Respondent F]. Respondent A added that a job placement is appealing to a broader audience because it is viewed as "something concrete for people to put on their resume," whereas previous placements were simply "*experiences* for privileged middle-class students."⁴³ As the significant increase in participant diversity occurred in the same year as key elements of the program design were changed (i.e. recruitment and work placements), it is reasonable to assume that there is some correlation between the two events.

While these findings demonstrate a trend of increased *ethnic* diversity in the Western Region, they do not necessarily imply that the programming changes have made it more

⁴¹ This number is cited from a 1998 Impact Study and Progress Report of CCI conducted by M. Bonner and L. Rodriguez. As regional offices were established in 1997, it can be deduced that these statistics are representative of the entire organization, not one region alone.

⁴² Statistics on minority group representation for the Western Region from previous years were not available, as application forms prior to 2001 did not include a section on 'self-identification.'

⁴³ It should be noted that several students were present in this year's group as well.

accessible or desirable to low-income, physically challenged or other groups. The next section outlines potential influences the new directions may have on future participation.

5.4 Future Participation in CCI

It is important to understand that CCI's new programming model anticipates that future recruitment will primarily be done through the Canadian partner organizations and their networks. However, if a volunteer with the skills requested by the Southern partner organization cannot be found through the Canadian partner, such as what happened this year with many of the placements, CCI will be forced to recruit participants from the general public in the Western Region. The WRO will need to negotiate with Southern partner organizations around the expectations of volunteer placements in order to resolve this dilemma of whether or not future recruitment is carried out solely through partner organizations, or in part from the general public. The end result will undoubtedly have implications for participant diversity in CCI. On the one hand, the extent to which other Canadian partner organizations are socio-culturally or otherwise diverse will ultimately determine the diversity of the pool of candidates available to participate in the Overseas Program. Also, organizational policies that are outside of CCI's control (e.g. granting leaves of absence) will influence who is able to participate from the partner organizations.

On the other hand, continuing to accept applications from the general public of the whole region will enable CCI to target specific diverse groups during recruitment campaigns. For example, when it was determined that partner organizations would not be able to fill all positions this year, a concerted effort was made to recruit members of the Latino community in Vancouver, specifically because they hoped to find Spanish-speakers and possibly individuals with a vested interest in the sustainable development of the Western Region's two Latin American countries: Bolivia and Guatemala. As recruitment efforts were still underway at the time of writing, the effects of this targeted recruitment are yet unknown.

With an understanding of CCI's new programming model and an acknowledgement of the uncertainties present in the process of implementing organizational change, the following describes some possible opportunities and barriers for inclusive participation.

5.4.1 *Ethnicity and Culture*

The above discussion established that the 2001-2002 programming changes appear to have increased ethnic diversity among participants. While it is hoped that this trend will be maintained, much is dependent on how recruitment is carried out. Specifically, it was noted that participation by individuals of First Nations backgrounds was up as a result of the partnership with the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College. As this partnership is expected to continue over the next three years, it is hoped that many more SIFC members will want, and be able to participate in CCI during that time. There remain some potential barriers to their future participation, however. For example, if the qualifications requested by the Guatemalan partner do not match SIFC's areas of expertise—as is what occurred this year between *all* partner organizations—it will be difficult to proceed with the exchange of volunteers between the two groups. Undoubtedly, this rift in the partnership model will be addressed, not only for this particular partnership, but in order to ensure successful relationships between all organizations involved in CCI as well.

The negative experience of the two volunteers from SIFC who were sent overseas this past year may also influence future participation of other members of this organization. Living and working in a foreign environment is always challenging, and is sometimes overwhelming for both Canadian and To-Canada participants alike. Every year participants recount problems of varying magnitudes, and occasionally they return home before completing their placement. Unfortunately, both participants from SIFC were two of the several participants who experienced significant difficulties during their placements this past year. As these two participants are now spokespeople for CCI in their home communities, their disappointment could potentially dissuade other SIFC members from participating. It has been hypothesized that CCI's organizational culture might have isolated these participants [Respondent E]; however, this has not been confirmed with the participants themselves. The Western Regional Office is currently

consulting with SIFC to determine whether there are structural changes that could be made to ensure the successful participation of SIFC members in the future.

5.4.2 Education

Although most OS volunteers have historically been university-educated, some volunteers who did not have any post-secondary training were also sent abroad. However, through the professionalization of job placements, it will likely be even more difficult for those with no formal training to participate than might have been possible in the past programming model. Although CCI states that an applicant's experience is valued to the same degree as education, positions such as the "physician trained in antiretroviral therapy" mentioned above, indisputably require a significant amount of formal training. As such, the nature of the future positions will continue to affect education levels required to participate.

Conversely, if it is decided that the primary purpose of the "Partnership Model" is to facilitate opportunities for mutual learning and exchange, and future positions are designed to only be filled by individuals from Canadian partner organizations, then even if they are not formally-educated, individuals' knowledge of one of the Western Region's two chosen sectors (HIV/AIDS and Indigenous Community Development) based on their work experience therein will qualify them to participate in the exchange.

In addition, a staff member pointed out that CCI could write documents at a level understood by average Canadians in order to be more inclusive.⁴⁴ This was an acknowledgement that perhaps the language used in job descriptions –and undeniably the language used in documents describing the partnership model– could not easily be understood by most Canadians, and that this might be discouraging some less educated people from applying [Focus Group Participant B].

⁴⁴ The understanding by this member of the focus group was that the average reading level in Canada is around grade six and a half.

5.4.3 Class

Chapter Three touched on the difficulty of evaluating the social class of CCI participants, and decided that class could be seen as a function of various social privileges. In terms of the simple cost of participation, however, Focus Group Participant A alluded to the possibility of transferring fundraising responsibilities from individual volunteers to “Project Committees” once they have been established. Should this happen, it could conceivably create openings for those who might otherwise not be able to raise the \$2250.00 in counterpart funds, and therefore could not participate in the program. Nevertheless, leaving the country for a six-month period still requires a certain degree of financial stability, especially upon return to Canada. Moreover, if CCI continues to provide only a small stipend to its participants, those who do not have access to extra resources may not have a successful placement. This issue has in fact been raised by one partner organization and some discussion is beginning to take place about the possibility of raising the living allowance. However, no further talk of a “completion bonus” or any extra pre- or post-placement funding provided for participants in need has been mentioned, though incentives of this kind could alleviate some of the financial burden on low-income participants.

5.4.4 Age

Chapter Two noted the overall increase in participant age that accompanied the professionalization trend in volunteer-sending organizations. Given the number of years of experience expected to carry out duties outlined in many of the job descriptions, this trend will likely carry over into CCI should Southern partner organizations continue to request highly skilled volunteers. What is more, the Western Region specifically prefaced its job descriptions by stating that while all applicants to CCI’s programs are *required* to be 19 years of age or older, the “recommended minimum age is 25; however, younger, exceptional candidates will be considered” (CCI Online). This statement will likely deter many potential candidates under the age of 25 from applying. That being said, the Netcorps and International Youth Internship programs both have a maximum age restriction of 30 years old because of funding restrictions imposed by the Canadian Government’s *Youth Employment Strategy*. So long as they continue to be administrated

through the Western Regional Office, these two programs will reserve space for young people to participate in this region.

Anecdotally, if recruitment is carried out solely through partner organizations, retirees may no longer have access to CCI's programs unless they are affiliated with the partner organization on a part-time, casual or voluntary basis.

5.4.5 Gender

If the 2001-2002 program cycle is any indication, gendered influences discussed in Chapter Three will continue to apply, and CCI will likely continue to appeal primarily to women. Two factors might contribute to increased male presence as volunteers in the organization. First, if Southern partners request volunteers in traditionally male-dominated fields, more men might be interested in participating. In fact, as the Netcorps program only recruits volunteers skilled in information technology, this trend is observable already: only three of the ten Netcorps participants this year were female⁴⁵ (CCI Western Regional Update). The other influencing factor might be the reduced participation of (female) CCI Alumni in recruitment activities. Where historically many women might have been interested in applying because they saw a high number of other women participating in CCI, potential volunteers applying directly to the Western Regional Office through their partner organizations might not be aware that CCI has historically been dominated by women.

5.4.6 Sexual Orientation

Participation trends in this area will likely stay the same if recruitment is carried out in the general public. Although measures (discussed in Chapter Three) have been taken to ensure more understanding of and support for all sexual orientations, this has not been identified as a priority area for CCI in terms of recruitment. However, even though the organization itself has not conducted specific outreach in Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered or Queer (LGBTQ) community groups, the Vancouver committee hosted

⁴⁵ See Smillie 1999 for a brief gender analysis of the Netcorps Program.

a women-only dance as a CCI fundraising event in 2001. Whether CCI enticed any of those in attendance at this dance is not known, but fundraising events such as this one could potentially be used as a venue for recruitment should CCI continue to solicit applications from the general public. Otherwise, the extent to which LGBTQ individuals are represented in the Canadian partner organizations will determine the diversity of the pool of candidates who could potentially participate in CCI.

5.4.7 Ability

Although CCI boasts that it welcomes applications from people with disabilities, it appears that the organization's hospitality has not very often been put to the test. To date, the Ontario region sent one wheelchair user overseas in 1998 (Anglin 2002),⁴⁶ one other individual required access to specific services while on placement last year,⁴⁷ and one hearing impaired participant was recruited to the Netcorps program, but then had to defer for reasons unrelated to her hearing ability.⁴⁸

Although people with "invisible" disabilities may have been involved unbeknownst to the organization at large, their participation has not been calculated in any organizational surveys or statistical reports. Whereas negotiating a wheelchair down a sandy road, along a mountain trail or over a steep sidewalk curb, for example, might be challenging, these circumstances are not universal in the places where CCI's partner organizations operate. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to expect that wheelchair users, for instance, could participate in the OS program. However, it is unlikely that some disabled applicants would in fact be accepted in CCI, as qualifications required for the job placements would systematically eliminate many people with intellectual disabilities from reaching a level of experience or education where they could apply. Some disabilities might therefore be acceptable – others might not. The general tone from the Focus Group Discussion with office staff was that they are willing to consider *differently-abled* applicants and work around challenges that may occur with their participation.

⁴⁶ This fact was confirmed by personal communication with a volunteer from the Ontario Region.

⁴⁷ This information is based on the Focus Group Discussion with office staff. It should be noted that the specific details of this individual's circumstance were not given.

However, no mention was made that any targeted outreach, new partnerships, or special programming would be done in this area.

5.4.8 Location

Although this year's recruitment challenges (described in section 5.2 above) have necessitated that candidates from the whole region (and possibly beyond) be considered, this will not likely be the case if the partnership model is successful in the next program cycle. The Western Region encompasses the majority of Canada, as mentioned in Chapter Three, and historically volunteers throughout the whole region were able to participate. However, should recruitment be carried out through partner organizations alone, volunteers will only be recruited from the areas where partnerships exist: Regina, Edmonton and Vancouver to be exact. While the WRO is in the process of consulting with volunteers in the region to determine their potential to support new partnerships in other areas, the survey used in this consultation process yielded so few responses that it seems unlikely that any will be established in the near future. This means that volunteers will no longer be recruited from or sent to other cities where there traditionally has been successful CCI activity: Whitehorse, Yellowknife, Winnipeg, Calgary and Victoria, for instance. If the first three partnerships are successful, perhaps the WRO will work with these latter local committees to establish new partnerships or projects in the future.

5.4.9 Southern Country Participation

Much of the diversity discussion in CCI –and most of this thesis– has focused on the issue of diversity amongst Canadian participants. However, the topic of diversity in international organizations, of course, can be analysed from two perspectives: as the differences that exist *within* countries, or as the differences that exist *between* countries. The former has only been considered from a Canadian perspective, but certainly questions of power and privilege affect who participates from partner countries as well. Therefore, an analysis similar to the one above could likewise be carried out with To-Canada and Interflow participants.

⁴⁸ This information is based on personal communication with the former Netcorps Program Coordinator.

The latter perspective of difference between countries is taken for granted in VSOs, and has substantiated the historic interest in the 'cross-cultural exchange' component of an overseas program. In this way, most of the learning that occurs around difference *between* countries generally takes place while participants are on placement, not usually during in-country trainings. However, with the increase of To-Canada participants, it is conceivable that there could be more opportunities for learning in Canada (or in partner countries) as group trainings or other events involving all participants could plausibly overlap. As the majority of questionnaire respondents indicated that increased opportunities for learning was a key reason to seek a more diverse group, the Western Region's programming changes could potentially provide many more opportunities of this kind.

It is important to note here that while partner-country *volunteer* participation in the To-Canada and Interflow programs is becoming more equal to Canadian volunteer participation in the Western Region, the organization as a whole still has a long way to go before all stakeholders are represented equally in other parts of CCI. To begin with, when compared on a country-to-country basis, there is still a discrepancy between the numbers of volunteers recruited from each country, with Canadians having more opportunities to volunteer in another country. Moreover, there are currently no paid positions in any of the partner countries, there is no partner country representative on the Western Regional Council, and little funding is allotted to partner country volunteer committees. Although partner countries are expected to have more control over the administration of programs through the proposed 'project committees,' at this point, all financial resources are still owned and controlled by staff and management in Canada. Finally, while a representative from Bolivia has recently been appointed to the National Board of Directors, (CCI *Sankofa* 2002) his perspective is certainly not representative of all seventeen countries around the world where the four regions of CCI work. Given these circumstances, it is evident that issues of accessible participation *beyond* the volunteer level must also be considered and acted upon.

5.5 Moving Beyond Simple Diversity

Although much of the discussion in CCI appears to frame *participant diversity* as a goal in and of itself, this goal is somewhat misguided. In diversifying, CCI is attempting to change its organizational culture, with an assumption that the participation of individuals from diverse groups would immediately make the organizational culture more inclusive. The fact that a group is *diverse*, however, does not indicate that all members of that group feel supported, comfortable, respected and included. While targeting specific groups – such as First Nations and Latino communities– might be a stated organizational goal, ensuring that these individuals do not feel discriminated against as participants within the organization is immeasurably more important. The underlying goal in the value of diversity, then, is to create accessible and inclusive policies and programming, and ensure that differences truly are respected within the organization. This, however, is the more difficult task.

In his very recent article published in Fall 2002, David Lewis⁴⁹ made the observation that NGOs today, particularly those NGOs focused on development, appear to be more ethnically diverse than ever before. While this chapter, and indeed this thesis, has addressed *why* this may be so, Lewis sheds some light on the challenges inherent in working in a diverse development NGO. He suggests that these organizations can draw upon publications from disciplines such as Anthropology, Development Studies and Management Theory, where cross-cultural issues in organizations have been thoroughly explored. In addition to his suggestions, there are vast bodies of literature in such areas as Popular Education, Identity Politics, Queer Theory, and Feminist Theory from which diverse organizations can learn.

As CCI reconciles the initial challenges of its programming changes, there is incredible potential for its programming to become more accessible to diverse participants than what was historically possible. As this happens, constant re-evaluation of its progress in terms of inclusiveness will be necessary. This will require really listening to all

participants' needs and concerns, and given differing norms of communication, it may involve picking up on subtle comments, reading between the lines, and double checking assumptions. It will involve facilitators who are trained, and experienced in dealing with cross-cultural facilitation and issues of oppression. It will involve equitable performance evaluations for staff and volunteers with policies and procedures in place to deal with, and follow-up on cases of discrimination. It will involve ensuring that minority voices are heard, not muffled out by the majority. It will involve an endless amount of patience and goodwill, and taking action on lessons learned. Most importantly, in terms of Southern participation, it will involve giving up power and resources in the North, so that more power and resources can be transferred to the South. This is the fundamental shift required in the capacity development paradigm.

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CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary of Findings

This study has explored what impacts the shift to programming based on the emerging capacity development paradigm has had on participant diversity and inclusive participation in the Western Region Canadian Crossroads International. As other VSOs implement changes to their programming to keep up with stated needs from the South and changing funding priorities, the intent of this study was to bring questions of accessibility and volunteer diversity to the forefront of this process of change.

CCI is responding to the capacity development paradigm by making two significant changes to their model to development. First, it is promoting technical cooperation based on organizational capacity-building. In so doing, CCI is asking Southern organizations to identify an activity that would strengthen their organizational capacity, and once this has been identified, it is recruiting a volunteer to help accomplish this task. Second, it is promoting a partnership model that links like-minded individuals working in NGOs and CBOs in the same sector. Through this model CCI is coordinating three-way exchanges (South-South, South-North, and the traditional North-South) to facilitate mutual learning and exchange between these organizations. Both of these changes have implications for the diversity of CCI.

6.1.1 Key Opportunities for Diversity

Although data based on one year's programming cycle cannot be interpreted as a trend, the data do suggest that programming changes seem to be increasing ethnic diversity among CCI participants. Some volunteers argue that the minimized focus on "cross-cultural" exchange is what has made the program more appealing to a broader range of individuals. Moreover, revoking the stipulation that applicants could not have had extensive international experience, or could not have "lived in a developing country for more than eight weeks after the age of 14" prior to participating in CCI has removed a significant barrier that inhibited volunteer participation by immigrants, particularly by immigrants from CCI's partner countries. Likewise, the partnership model has already

shown an increase in Aboriginal participation, which will likely continue throughout the duration of CCI's partnership with the Saskatchewan Indian Federated College. At the same time, since this model decreases the number of Canadian volunteers sent overseas, the representation of Southern volunteers is becoming more equal to that of Canadians. Therefore, with these changes, more immigrants to Canada, more First Nations individuals, and more Southern country volunteers have the potential to participate in CCI.

Aside from ethno-cultural diversity, these programming changes seem to be creating more opportunities for both older and male participants. The recruitment of more skilled volunteers and the stipulation that preference would be given to volunteers over the age of 25, makes the Overseas Individual Program more likely to attract older participants than it historically did. However, the Netcorps and Youth International Internship Programs will ensure that young people still have access to international volunteer experiences in CCI. Additionally, the fact that Information Technology is still a predominantly male field may encourage more men to participate in the Netcorps program, which will increase male presence at the volunteer level of CCI.

Finally, the possibility exists to have HIV-positive individuals participate in CCI as a result of the partnership between the *Stitching Mamio Namen Projekt* in Suriname, and the HIV Network of Edmonton Society. Health regulations for entering both Canada and Suriname, however, may prohibit the exchange of HIV-positive individuals.

6.1.2 Key Constraints for Diversity

Despite the above implications for increased diversity, and despite the access and equity statement found on all new CCI publicity, systemic barriers to participation seem to still be in place for two specific groups: low-income individuals and people with disabilities. As the time and financial commitment required to participate has not changed with the new programming model, low-income individuals are still not expected to apply. The extent to which CCI is able to remove this barrier will likely depend on whether new funding incentives can be provided during or after involvement in CCI, and whether the

responsibility of fundraising will be shifted to individuals other than the OS program volunteers themselves. Likewise, while some disabilities may not hinder an individual's access to CCI's new programming, those with developmental or intellectual disabilities will not qualify for most of the technical job placements. The lack of support services in host communities may also limit individuals who require special support in order to participate. Outreach or partnerships with target group organizations may increase the participation of people with disabilities, but this is not anticipated in the near future.

Recruitment through partner organizations alone, rather than from the general public, is also expected to pose certain constraints for future inclusive participation. Unless the partner organization has a special focus on LGBTQ or disability issues, or somehow includes retirees, the participation from members of these groups in CCI would likely not increase. Moreover, the location of partner organizations will limit recruitment to that specific city. However, recruiting from the general public might provide opportunities for outreach in particular 'diverse' communities, and will allow for interested individuals from across the region to continue to apply.

6.1.3 Implications for Other VSOs

Four key lessons for other volunteer-sending organizations can be derived from the case study of Canadian Crossroads International. First, increased diversity is the result of structural changes, not simply rhetoric encouraging diversity. Second, while participation by volunteers from Southern partner countries increases the overall ethno-cultural diversity in VSOs, participation at the volunteer level alone is not enough to shift power dynamics between North and South which is called for in the capacity development paradigm. Third, partnerships with –and recruitment from– NGOs that are organized by or work with minority communities can potentially increase the participation of members of those communities in that VSO's programs. Finally, increased diversity is not necessarily a goal in and of itself; replacing racist or otherwise oppressive attitudes with respect for difference is the underlying goal of promoting diversity.

6.2 Recommendations for Inclusive Participation

Planning and implementing new strategies for inclusive participation will undoubtedly require a time and financial commitment on behalf of the regional and national offices of Canadian Crossroads International. As an NGO with limited funds and resources, setting clear priorities as to which groups it seeks to include might enable CCI to incorporate a plan for inclusive participation into its new programming. Given the imminent increased participation of Aboriginals and Southern participants, the Western Region would be wise to continue focusing efforts on these two groups. Thorough consultation and a commitment to removing barriers to participation by these groups will be required.

As suggested in the discussion of capacity development theory, one of the most difficult challenges for NGOs and donors is necessary change in power dynamics between North and South. The Western Region is beginning to face this challenge as it moves forward with its new programming. Broadening the historically narrow question of diversity to take into account more participation by Southern partners is but one change needed to begin shifting these dynamics. A sense of local ownership and control of projects will not be possible without access to the resources needed to carry them out. As the OS Program has typically been given funding priority among CCI's programs, the increased participation of Southern volunteers through partner organizations, Country Committees, Project Committees, and both the To-Canada and Interflow Programs, will need to be given greater financial support than has historically been the case. This may involve a redistribution of funds currently allotted to Northern members of the organization (both paid and unpaid). If Southern partners are truly the primary beneficiaries of CCI's programs, addressing their voiced needs must be backed up with a solid commitment.

6.2.1 Areas for Further Research

Ongoing organizational self-assessment will require further research to determine which barriers continue to inhibit diversity and inclusive participation. Discussion throughout this study has alluded to several aspects of CCI's policies and procedures that are in need of further investigation:

1. **Recruitment:** Further research is needed to determine whether the best pool of candidates will always come from partner organizations. It may be possible to foster long-term partnerships, while at the same time continuing to recruit some volunteers with specific skills from the general public.
2. **Advertising:** Given the continued presence of the white female Canadian volunteer on the 2002 brochure and poster, a re-examination of promotional materials is in order. Future images could include pictures of To-Canada and Interflow participants on placement in their host countries, non-white Canadians, and images of an assortment of CCI members interacting during training events or general meetings. CCI may also wish to investigate whether different promotional material might be appropriate for the different regions or countries. For example, the central image of current publicity focusing on Africa no longer is reflective of the Western Region's work. Moreover, CCI should consult with its partner countries to ensure that the wording and images in the publicity materials are suitable for distribution in those countries. Finally, the possibility of translating promotional materials should also be considered.
3. **Selection:** Further consideration of both the application and interview process might prove that the current processes are indeed exclusive. Shortening application forms, permitting creative applications, and other methods of interviewing should be contemplated. Also, a standard selection processes in Canada and in partner countries may be needed. It may also be necessary to ensure that Project Committees involved in future selection of new participants promote equitable selection practices as well.
4. **Financial Commitment:** Seeking out new sources of funding might enable CCI to innovate alternative funding initiatives for participants in need. In addition to the WRO's plan to transfer fundraising responsibilities to project committees, entertaining the possibility of a higher living allowance, a completion bonus, or a

matching grant to fundraising efforts might alleviate the burden of participation on low-income volunteers.

5. ***Time Commitment:*** A calculation and evaluation of the number of hours required to meet fundraising, development education, and pre-departure training requirements might prove that this time commitment is no longer feasible or necessary for the changing demographic profile of CCI participants.
6. ***Training:*** Pre-departure training materials should be reviewed to ensure that they are not discriminatory, or that they do not assume their audience to be primarily white, middle-class Canadians. CCI will also need to ensure that its facilitators are knowledgeable and skilled in facilitating conversations on issues of oppression and racism.
7. ***Placement Length:*** The rationale for six-month, as opposed to longer or shorter placements is not known. Investigation into the time needed to complete a certain task required by the partner organization may undermine the set parameters of six months. The flexibility of different placement lengths may allow individuals to participate who otherwise might not have been able to leave their home for a six-month period.
8. ***De-Selection:*** Monitoring the reasons for de-selection, rejection during the application or interview phases, self-deferral, and early return from placements may indicate systemic barriers to successful participation. Likewise, monitoring who stays involved and why might shed some light on the issue as well.
9. ***Equity Messaging:*** Outreach in the named groups could easily be done to determine what effect the equity and access statement has on the perceived inclusiveness of CCI. It might be useful to assess whether a statement such as this one sends off warning bells that the organization is in fact *not* inclusive, or has the desired effect of increasing the perception of inclusiveness.

10. ***Diversity Among Southern Participants:*** CCI may also wish to track participant diversity in its To-Canada and Interflow programs and ensure that equitable selection processes are promoted by its partners in the South.

11. ***Partnership Model:*** While the partnership model has the potential to link participants of any background and increase the participation of Southern volunteers in VSOs, some clarification around the assumptions inherent to the capacity-building and partnership models may be required. The true purpose of North-South partnerships, for instance, is in need of explanation. Whether they are in place to create opportunities for mutual learning and the exchange of best practices, or to promote Southern organizational development, or both is somewhat ambiguous. Although the capacity-building discourse suggests that Southern partners are the primary beneficiaries of these relationships, there is no evidence to suggest that the Northern partner organizations are any less in need of 'organizational capacity development.' As such, it may be necessary to put in place systems to monitor and evaluate the 'hidden' benefits for Northern partners, e.g. organizational capacity development and volunteer skills enhancement. Clearly stated expectations around the role of volunteers from the South, and whether they differ from the role of volunteers from the North, would be useful as well. If it is recognized that all NGOs involved will benefit, and all volunteers will learn and contribute during their placement, this will ensure that the participation of Southern volunteers is valued and Northern partner are no longer painted as the only experts in the development process.

12. ***Participation Beyond Overseas Placements:*** Additionally, it may be useful for CCI to consider new forms of participation for Canadian volunteers not involved in the OS, Netcorps or IYIP Programs. Country Committees in partner countries have typically involved volunteers who had not previously participated in the To-Canada or Interflow programs. Local Canadian Committees may also wish to consider how those who had not gone overseas with CCI might participate at a

local level, for example as fundraisers, facilitators, or public education coordinators. Seeing as the number of Canadian participants has been reduced, the involvement of non-Alumni volunteers may be a strategic move to ensure the ongoing existence of Local Committees. Moreover, as the role of Local Committees is changing with the introduction of Project Committees, Canadian volunteers could engage in activities traditionally not undertaken at a local level. For example, they may wish to take a more active role in meeting CCI's goal of "addressing the root causes of inequitable development." In so doing, they could join forces with social justice groups lobbying for international human rights, child protection, world peace or solutions to the global HIV/AIDS pandemic. Engaging in such work to shape the "enabling environment" would push CCI further into the era of capacity development.

6.3 Final Reflections on the Role of VSOs in a Broader Planning Context

Although the role of VSOs as vehicles for learning was somewhat discredited with the move to professionalize volunteer placements, the opportunity for personal or professional development will likely continue to motivate individuals seeking out overseas volunteer placements. It is crucial to acknowledge that some Canadians' 'personal growth' has occurred at the expense of host countries, and taking measures to ensure that this mistake is not repeated is essential. However, denying that the 'experience' of volunteering overseas provides an opportunity for learning that is potentially life-changing undermines the advances in social justice that returned volunteers have gone on to accomplish.

While the placement abroad may not instigate immediate social transformation at an observable level, for many it is a politicizing experience that drives them to become part of anti-globalization movements, peace movements, environmental movements, human rights movements, and more. They become social entrepreneurs, designing innovative solutions to address age-old social problems. They become community mobilizers, encouraging participatory democracy and political activism. They become conscientious consumers, increasing the demand for fairly traded coffee, pesticide-free vegetables and

co-operatively made clothing. They become part of a network of global citizens, penetrating the public, private and non-profit sectors. They become parents, instilling in their children a new sense of global responsibility.

As the Western Region of CCI moves forward with its programming changes, it will be important to keep in mind its role as a catalyst for personal change for Canadians and partner country participants alike. Although the challenges faced by NGOs in the North and South may be context specific, the social problems they are trying to address are universal. The partnership model offers new opportunities to link grassroots activity in HIV/AIDS, Community Economic Development and Indigenous Rural Development across the globe. Through mutual learning and the exchange of best practices, partner organizations have the potential to work in solidarity for real social change at a global level.

While VSOs are but one manifestation of international development efforts, they are also contributing to a larger social movement promoting social justice across the globe. Therefore, planning for inclusive participation in these organizations, and ensuring that volunteer opportunities are accessible will strengthen the overall push for sustainable and equitable development at home and around the world. Who is chosen –or able– to participate in these social institutions has implications not only for international development efforts, but also for social engagement in Canada. Deliberately including *and listening to* diverse ‘voices from the borderlands’ (Sandercock 1998) may, in fact, be the key to unlocking the creativity and wisdom needed to guide development efforts throughout the 21st century. In a time when we are faced with the looming threat of war, and taught to fear people with beliefs or practices that differ from our own, the role of VSOs in linking concerned citizens from all backgrounds around the world has never been more relevant.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: List of CCI Participants in this Study

Anaya, Zoraida
Bhabara, Saranjit
Bouwsema-Raap, Wil
Clarke, Beth
Close, Elizabeth
Depauw, Lia
Evans, Josh
Glebe, Heather
Hay, Nancy
Huang, Anne
Johnston, Naomi
Kennelly, Jackie
Loo, Mike
Long, Chris
Lopez, Mario
Lutz, Pam
Massiah, Barb
MacDonald, Kara
Morris, Greg
Perchal, Paul
Pramayasti, Ammia
Richmond, Patrick
Shay, Heather
Tenisi, Melanie
Van Horne, Grace
Vermette, Jamie

One Anonymous

Appendix B: Survey, Interview and Focus Group Questions

A. SURVEY QUESTIONS

PART ONE: Participant Information

1. How long have you been involved in Canadian Crossroads International?
2. What is your current involvement in Canadian Crossroads International?
(E.g. what positions do you hold, which activities do you participate in?)
3. What was your past involvement in Canadian Crossroads International?
4. How did you originally find out about Canadian Crossroads International?

PART TWO: Recruitment

5. What are the primary means of recruitment you are familiar with?
6. Have you been involved in any recruitment initiatives? yes ☐ no ☐
 - a. If yes, which initiatives have you been involved in?
 - b. If yes, how have you been involved?
7. What do you think is the best recruitment strategy for the Overseas Program in the Western Region?
8. What changes, if any, would you recommend to the recruitment strategy?
 - a. If none, why?
9. What skills do you think are necessary for volunteers to participate in CCI's Overseas Program?
10. Can you think of any additional skills that the organization would benefit from in new recruits?

PART THREE: Diversity

11. What is your definition of human “diversity”?
12. Are you aware of Canadian Crossroads International’s policies on diversity?
yes ☐ no ☐
 - a. If yes, can you give the key points?
13. Do you think that increased diversity would improve the capacity of Canadian Crossroads International to fulfil its mission? yes ☐ no ☐
 - a. If yes, how?
 - b. If no, why not?
14. How do you think diversity might be addressed in the recruitment strategy?
15. Any other comments?

B. INTERVIEW QUESTION TEMPLATE:

1. What values are you seeking in new recruits?
2. In your mind, what is an ideal Canadian Crossroader?
3. What do you think is the best recruitment strategy?
4. What is your definition of diversity?
5. How can “diversity” be addressed in the recruitment strategy?
6. Can you speculate on why there appear to be more diverse participants this year?
7. Do you think that any part of the recruitment process inhibits diversity?

C. FOCUS GROUP QUESTION TEMPLATE:

1. To get warmed up, what are some of your perspectives on what does “diversity” mean, and why is it important to focus on within this organisation?
2. What does it mean that CCI is committed to principles and practices of diversity?
 - Is it primarily a question of access to the programs?
 - What are the concrete results of that commitment?

3. Organisations that are seeking to support diversity must look at systemic social barriers which prevent people from “diverse” backgrounds from joining their organisation.
 - Can you see any parts of CCI that systematically discriminate against people of certain backgrounds? (Eg, education levels needed – what are the standards to ensure that people from marginalized groups have access.)
 - How does CCI challenge systematic barriers to its programs?
4. In the competition to recruit the most “qualified” person, which is in the best interest of our southern partner organisations, how will the issue of diversity be addressed?
5. This year there is a statement that encourages people with disabilities to apply. Which disabilities are acceptable? What financial implications does this have for people who might need an attendant?
6. There is also a change in this year’s recruitment priorities that gives people of First Nations backgrounds priorities in the Guatemala project. Are the facilitators, staff, alumni, etc equipped with the right tools to support people of First Nations backgrounds within this organisation and ensure that they feel comfortable - particularly in terms of pre-departure group work and training? I.e. Are we aware of and sensitive to all the issues that might arise in group work, especially the larger group conversations around difference, anti-racism, anti-oppression, etc?
 - Who might we draw on as a resource to ensure that this partnership is successful?
 - What would the benefits of anti-racism training be?
 - Is there anything else that CCI might do to ensure that these people have a successful work placement?
7. The “Diversity” question was removed from the application form because it was actually illegal. Will the office or recruitment committees/partner organisations be making an extra effort to look at diversity in the application process?
 - (What will you do with the information from the second forms?)
 - What if the partner organisations don’t share the same commitment?
8. Behaviour problems that arise in the pre-departure phase (fundraising, dev ed, pd training, etc) are always difficult to deal with. However, dealing with behaviour problems could be potentially quite controversial if the person in question is one of the “diverse” volunteers. How will we ensure that:
 - Alumni volunteers feel comfortable acting or bringing forth legitimate concerns about “diverse” people without being labelled racist or otherwise prejudiced?

- How will we ensure that people are not being discriminated against based on race, ability, etc? (E.g. time commitments)
9. Power dynamics are always present in any group or organisation anywhere. However, multicultural organisations invite the challenge of dealing with racism. How will we ensure that we are not unknowingly perpetuating racist practices?
 10. CCI has historically been a comfortable place for mainstream (usually white, middle class, university educated) Canadians. This is particularly evident in the norms or communication and how workshops are designed for pre-departure training. How will we ensure that CCI is a comfortable place for everyone?

Appendix C: Survey Responses to Diversity Questions

QUESTION 11: What is your definition of human “diversity”?

1. Diversity within an organisation = bringing together people from different cultures, age groups, sexual orientations, economic status, etc, to work together
2. Because of God create many people, so I think that everybody have diversifications. It's natural and thank God because we're different. So, why do we always fight because of diversity?
3. Diversity is an attempt to include a wide range of individuals representing various cultural groups. While diversity can be vast, it may mean that within the CCI Overseas participant group only one person from each minority group is selected versus having more than one member as is common with previous participants predominantly being Caucasian.
4. People from all walks of life; people with different lifestyles and ethnic backgrounds
5. A wide spectrum in characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, geography, life experience, values/beliefs, educational background, etc.
6. Diversity has two roots. Genetics and environmental. Nature and nurture. Homo sapiens is a very variable species – probably more so than any other. Probably the most diverse nature can be seen in diverse ways of thinking
7. A mixture of people from many cultures, ages, religions, genders, and backgrounds
8. People from a broad range of backgrounds, with their own unique personalities or skills.
9. Recognizing, learning from, and appreciating whatever makes us different from each other. Acknowledging and using all the different perspectives available within our organization to make us stronger.
10. Embodied Socio-Cultural Subjectivity
11. That's a hard one. A definition of diversity depends on the context in which it is taken. Within a Crossroads context, the need for more diversity comes in a need to balance out the white, straight, able-bodied Canadian demographic with more Canadians from diverse ethnic backgrounds, more Canadians with disabilities, more queer Canadians and also more active inclusion of non-Canadian Crossroaders, such as those from Southern partner countries.

12. Human diversity is a diversity of ideas that shape the way different communities think and live.
13. Diversity allows different groups to represent themselves and their own world-view. Diversity reflects inclusion.
14. [It] is similar [to] "pluriculturalidad", because existence many people with different form[s] of life in an only place, community, country, etc., by all the peoples we can [live] life together.
15. I believe that human diversity relates to the fact that all humans are different, in all aspects of life, including but not limited to race, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, cultural practices, colour of skin, values, ethical beliefs and personality traits. I also seem to always associate Diversity, with the need for Acceptance of all Humans.
16. To me the concept of diversity is the recognition that our society is made up of a spectrum of cultures. These different cultures include people from a variety of different places in the world, different age groups, sexual identity, gender, class, level of physical ability and health.
17. All the ways people differ from one another – whether culturally, religiously, physically, mentally, etc...
18. Under diversity understand that all people have equal access to opportunities, regardless of gender, age, race, colour, education

QUESTION 13:

Do you think that increased diversity would improve the capacity of Canadian Crossroads International to fulfil its mission? If yes, how? If no, why not?

1. In the long run, having diverse groups working together I believe will foster greater understanding between groups. But it's really hard to have truly diverse groups work together on equal levels, sometimes. (Especially economic diversity). I think they're on the right path, but it will take a long time to get there.
2. More understanding about diversity
3. Definitely, although I am unfamiliar with the policy, increased diversity would enhance the participants' knowledge of their own country and our various cultures. The most important benefit would be to increase the basis of support from the participant's community, family and friends.

4. People from diverse backgrounds will very likely try to bring volunteers from their same background. This situation will push for new ideas, new policies and strategies that could fulfil CCI's mission even more
5. The young, middle-class, white, just-out-of-university model participant really was not working! The amount of hassle our volunteers were creating in our partner countries was unacceptable. It seems to me that more qualified candidates are likely to have more life experience. Hopefully this will lead to a more effective experience for the person, the host organisation and CCI.
6. No. It does not matter what race, religion, or ethnic background the participant is. What matters is the ideas that sustain them. If CCI wants to achieve their mission they must recruit people who have all the abilities that I listed previously. This can be achieved by different diverse groups but it can also be achieved by one group it all depends on the individual. We cannot assume that by simply diversify we will enable CCI to achieve its mission. We need to examine every applicant for the proper qualities needed for the program, and avoid generalising by the need for diversity.
7. The broader our base, the stronger our group would be
8. Providing differing perspectives and experiences to the crossroads gene pool. Thus broadening their abilities to perform well in different cultures and situations.
9. More perspectives can only make us stronger.
10. A group that can draw on a diversity of experiences is more sustainable than one which can only draw from a collection of homogenous experiences
11. If CCI's mission continues to be to promote greater cultural understanding, sustainable development and a better world for everyone, then the only way to reasonably reach that goal is to include as diverse a representation of people in the population as possible.
12. N/A
13. Mission relates to Sustainable Development. The West uses this definition. Sustainable Development is a commitment to a non-hierarchical, democratic, and participatory approach to development that involves the beneficiary(ies) in all stages of the planning process. It is based on the needs identified by the beneficiary(ies) and works towards creating a non-depedent relationship between the donor and the beneficiary(ies).
14. First, increase the capacity of the local committees in each country where CCI has volunteers, this with recourse from office to improve the quality of the process of recruitment

15. If the volunteers within CCI are more diverse, then they are going to promote an environment of acceptance, through informal education within CCI at a local level, here in Canada. For example, if a volunteer within CCI is of a religion that is not well understood, that person is going to informally educate the other volunteers with whom he/she works, through daily interactions, and questions etc. This certainly promotes a level of acceptance and increased awareness and sensitivity towards the inherent differences that are present between humans. This increased awareness, sensitivity and acceptance is critical for participants going overseas, as they may be placed in a completely foreign country, and culture. I believe diversity is crucial for CCI to fulfil its mission.
16. In representing only a small percentage of our society. CCI is missing out on the perspectives and experience of a broad spectrum of people.
17. New/different perspectives are always good to expand learning and richness of experience, and should be welcomed. As an organization promoting the working together of diverse peoples around the world, CCI should be committed to diversity initiatives within Canada as well.
18. Cross-cultural learning and exchanges, raising global awareness and promoting a sustainable and equitable world requires all of us. For instance first nations persons of different countries can really help to promote some of the goals of CCI and make CCI more believable to the entire world

QUESTION 14:

How do you think diversity might be addressed in the recruitment strategy?

1. They could recruit from specific organisations that have the diverse populations they want – a clause encouraging people from minority groups to apply (they probably have this already)
2. For me it's mean we can recruit new members without considering their background (i.e. religion, ethnics,...)
3. Trying to work directly or in partnerships with different cultural groups and as suggested in #7, select one group to focus upon each year. Give presentations to multicultural associations, increase diversification or board members and staff, find and build relationships with leaders from large ethnic, cultural or linguistic communities such as various First Nations bands, Cantonese population in Lower Mainland, Ukrainian in Western provinces
4. To promote CCI placements in neighbourhoods where diversity is high in numbers (based on stats of that specific neighbourhood).

5. I think CCI has been moving in a good direction in opening itself up to a wider range of people (i.e. internet postings, targeting agencies in thematic sectors, developing partnerships). CCI needs to ensure that the people who are interviewing are on board with the strategy.
6. By being open minded to the different routes of thoughts and ideas expressed by different recruits
7. Raise the profile of CCI to reach a wider range of candidates
8. To keep an open mind about all participants and not judge by outer qualities but inner qualities.
9. In the groups that we target or market to, unfortunately right now we are not well set up to meet the needs of many cultural groups, i.e. Aboriginal populations who are less likely to be comfortable with massive amounts of paper.
10. Presenting 'diversity' as an explicit goal during recruitment will expand the target population from which crossroads draws participants by eliminating exclusion and replacing it with a broader sense of inclusion
11. As mentioned above, some specific strategies might involve forming partnerships with organisations that provide services to diverse communities; it could include targeted recruitment, such as requiring that such and such a position be filled only by a person of colour or a person with a disability. In the past, a lot of the reasons for CCI's limited diversity has been because of the volunteer-driven recruitment, where the focus was on meeting a target number of volunteers rather than on attaining diversity. Although diversity has always been mentioned as desirable, concrete strategies have not been in place to ensure it (at least in Ontario, as far as I know).
12. It could be but then you run into the possibility of unfair recruitment practices depending on a persons background. Recruitment strategy should be based on a merit system, if you can meet the goals and expectations of the program then everyone should be judged equal.
13. Ensuring questions are inclusive and non-discriminatory, ensuring staff and volunteers are trained on diversity.
14. Is very important, because is possibility learn and know of all the people from deferent's country's
15. Again, if CCI were to educate and recruit through schools, CCI could target schools based in neighbourhoods that have a large population of a certain culture, religion etc. And, within those schools, CCI could talk to specific clubs and groups. Examples: CCI could approach the University of British Columbia, and

make appointments to speak with different organized groups that promote different cultures, (ex: Asian clubs or Italian clubs), or that promote awareness/acceptance of different lifestyles (ex. gays and lesbians), or that promote awareness of certain religions. Universities have a wonderful array of clubs and groups that come together to celebrate and promote diversity. CCI could work with these groups to increase diversity within its own organization.

16. I think CCI is on the right track to be partnering with local organizations to send employees overseas. A big barrier to participation in CCI is cost (quitting work, cutting into school.) If organizations partner with CCI to send their own employees overseas, guaranteeing they had work when they returned, this would do a lot to make the program more financially viable for people. I think further networking with organizations would also provide a wider general volunteer pool. CCI at the regional office level does, I think, network and communicate with other development oriented NGO's but at the local committee level it operates more in a task-oriented or social kind of way. Perhaps local committees could try and work closer with other local NGO's and community organisations.
17. In volunteer postings, indicate that all are encouraged to apply regardless of (I think this is probably already in place). Also, advertise the program via a wider variety of sources, e.g.) ethno-cultural community newspapers, campus radio stations, local social justice events, etc. to reach a more diverse audience of potential participants.
18. By encouraging all participating countries and Canada to select a cross cultural team representing all groups of people in their country

Appendix D: Tables of Participant Demographic Profiles for the Years 1999 to 2002

How to read the tables:

Most tables in this appendix contain statistics on real numbers (#) and percentages (%) of participants who have the characteristic under examination in that section. The percentage is calculated on a yearly basis. The “percentage of four year total” is calculated based on the total number of participants from 1999 to 2002 (which was 114). Any “mean” average is calculated by adding all values in a column and dividing the sum by the number of values. Any “median” average is calculated by arranging the values in ascending order and finding the middle value. Where there are two middle values, (i.e. there is an even number of values) a mean average of those two values is calculated. All numbers were rounded to two decimal points. The year indicated is the year in which volunteers travelled overseas.

Tables 9 and 10 are tables modified from Statistics Canada charts. They have been included as comparative statistics to CCI’s participant demographic profiles.

Table 1: Total Number of Participants

YEAR	Reduced from		
	TOTAL	1999 total	
		#	%
1999	40	-	-
2000	30	10	25
2001	28	12	30
2002	16	24	60
TOTAL	114		
Expected for 2003	9	31	77.5
TOTAL	123		

Table 2: Sex

	TOTAL (Participants)	Male		Female	
		#	%	#	%
1999	40	4	10	36	90
2000	30	3	10	27	90
2001	28	6	21.43	22	78.57
2002	16	2	12.5	14	87.5
TOTAL	114	15		99	
Mean per year	28.5	3.75		24.75	
% of 4 year total		13.16		86.84	

Table 3: Age

YEAR	TOTAL AGE				In their twenties	
		Mean	Median	Range	#	%
1999	40	28.66	24.5	19 - 60	24	60
2000	30	28.47	24.5	19 - 60	22	73.33
2001	28	30.54	25	18 - 73	18	64.29
2002	16	28.44	24	19 - 59	10	62.5
TOTAL	114	116.11	98	18 - 73	74	
Mean per year	28.5	29.03	24.5		18.5	
% of 4 year total					64.91	

Table 4.1: Prairie Provinces

YEAR	TOTAL Alberta			Saskatchewan		Manitoba		GRAND TOTAL	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	Prairie Provinces	
1999	40	10	25	3	7.5	3	7.5	16	40
2000	30	7	23.33	1	3.33	4	13.33	12	40
2001	28	6	21.43	3	10.71	2	7.14	11	39.29
2002	16	2	12.5	2	12.5	3	18.75	7	43.75
TOTAL	114	25		9		12		46	
Mean per year	28.5	6.25		2.25		3		11.5	
% of 4 year total		21.93		7.89		10.57		40.35	

Table 4.2: Territories

YEAR	TOTAL Yukon			NW Territory		GRAND TOTAL	
		#	%	#	%	Territories	
1999	40	1	2.5	3	7.5	4	10
2000	30	2	6.67	0	0	2	6.67
2001	28	5	17.86	1	3.57	6	21.43
2002	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	114	8		4		12	
Mean per year	28.5	2		1		3	
% of 4 year total		7.02		3.51		10.53	

Table 4.3: Ontario

	TOTAL Ontario		
		#	%
1999	40	0	0
2000	30	2	6.67
2001	28	0	0
2002	16	0	0
TOTAL	114	2	
Mean per year	28.5	0.5	
% of 4 year total		1.75	

Table 4.4: British Columbia

YEAR	TOTAL British Columbia		
		#	%
1999	40	20	50
2000	30	14	46.67
2001	28	11	39.29
2002	16	9	56.25
TOTAL	114	54	
Mean per year	28.5	13.5	
% of 4 year total		47.37	

Table 4.5: Greater Vancouver Area, British Columbia

YEAR	Greater Vancouver		
		#	%
1999	40	8	20
2000	30	8	26.67
2001	28	8	28.57
2002	16	7	43.75
TOTAL	114	31	
Mean per year	28.5	7.75	
% of 4 year total		27.19	

Table 5: Place of Birth/ Citizenship

	TOTAL	Not Born in Canada		Born in Quebec		Not Canadian Citizen	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
1999	40	5	12.5	0	0	0	0
2000	30	5	16.67	2	6.67	1	3.33
2001	28	3	10.71	3	10.71	1	3.57
2002	16	5	31.25	1	6.25	2	12.5
TOTAL	114	18		6		4	
Mean per year	28.5	4.5		1.5		1	
% of 4 year total		15.79		5.26		3.51	

Table 6.1: Languages

	TOTAL (Parti- cipants)	EN Not First Lang		English Only		Lang not EN or FR		Spanish		F. N. Language	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1999	40	0	0	16	40	14	35	9	22.5	0	0
2000	30	2	6.67	11	36.67	12	40	6	20	1	3.33
2001	28	4	14.3	8	28.57	14	50	5	17.86	0	0
2002	16	2	12.5	2	12.5	9	56.25	4	25	1	6.25
TOTAL	114	8		37		49		24		2	
Mean per year	28.5	2		9.25		12.25		6		0.5	
% of 4 year total			7.02		32.46		42.98		21.05		1.75

Table 6.2: Languages Represented

	TOTAL (Participants)	# of Languages Not English
1999	40	7
2000	30	11
2001	28	11
2002	16	10

Table 6.3: Number of Speakers

LANGUAGE LEGEND	1999	2000	2001	2002	TOTAL	LANGUAGE LEGEND	1999	2000	2001	2002	TOTAL
AR: Arabic	0	0	0	2	2	MA: Mandarin	0	1	1	0	2
CN: Cantonese	0	0	0	1	1	NW:					
CR: Cree*	0	1	0	1	2	Norwegian	0	1	0	0	1
DT: Dutch	0	0	1	0	1	OJ: Ojibway*	0	1	0	0	1
EN: English	40	30	28	16	114	PO: Polish	0	0	1	0	1
FR: French	17	9	14	10	50	PT: Portuguese	0	0	1	0	1
GJ: Gujarati	0	0	0	1	1	PU: Punjabi	0	1	0	0	1
GR: German	2	2	0	1	5	RO: Romanian	0	1	0	0	1
HE: Hebrew	1	0	0	0	1	RU: Russian	0	0	1	0	1
HN: Hindi	0	0	0	1	1	SG: Swiss- German	0	0	1	0	1
IT: Italian	0	1	1	0	2	SH: Swahili	0	0	0	1	1
JP: Japanese	1	0	2	0	3	SL: Sign Language (ASL)	1	1	0	0	2
						SP: Spanish	9	6	5	4	24
						SW: Swedish	1	0	1	0	2
						VT: Vietnamese	0	0	0	1	1
Total Languages: 26 (including English)											

Table 7: Formal Education Levels

	TOTAL (Participants)	Master's Level		Bachelor's Level		Other Post- Secondary		No Post- Secondary		Unknown	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1999	40	1	2.5	25	62.5	8	20	6	15	0	0
2000	30	2	6.67	21	70	4	13.33	2	6.67	1	3.33
2001	28	3	10.71	16	57.14	5	17.86	4	14.29	0	0
2002	16	3	18.75	10	62.5	0	0	2	12.5	1	6.25
TOTAL	114	9		72		17		14		2	
Mean per year % of 4 year total			2.25		18		4.25		3.5		0.5
			7.89		63.16		14.91		12.28		1.75

Table 8: Self Identification

(Available for the 2001-2002 Program Cycle only – 16 participants)

GROUP	#	%
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered	1	6.25
Aboriginal/ First Nations Person	2	12.5
Person of Colour	3	18.75
Recent Immigrant to Canada	0	0
Person with a disability	0	0
Other:		
Visible Minority	1	6.25
French Canadian	1	6.25
TOTAL	8	50

Table 9: Population Distribution of Provinces in CCI's Western Region

	1999	2000	2001
	(Thousands)		
Canada	30,499.2	30,769.7	31,081.9
British Columbia	4,028.1	4,058.8	4,095.9
Alberta	2,959.5	3,009.2	3,064.2
Manitoba	1,142.4	1,146.0	1,150.0
Saskatchewan	1,025.5	1,022.0	1,015.8
Northwest Territories	41.0	40.9	40.9
Yukon	31.0	30.6	29.9

Counted on July 1 of each year.

Source: Modified from Statistics Canada

Last modified: June 6, 2002.

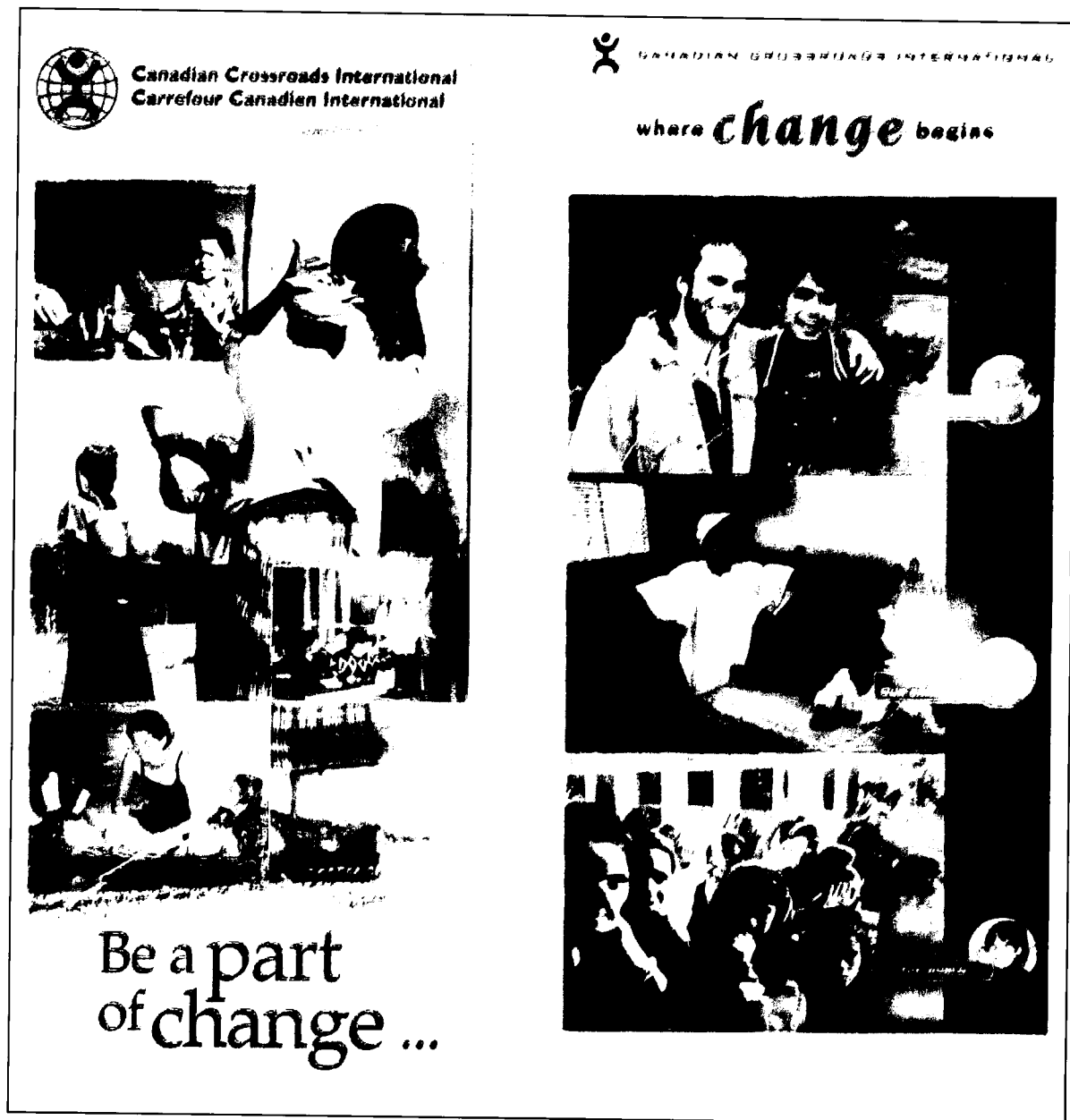
Table 10: Population of Visible Minorities in the Western Regional Provinces

	Canada	BC	AB	SK	MB	YT	NT
	Number						
Total population	28,528,125	3,689,760	2,669,195	976,615	1,100,295	30,650	39,455
Total visible minority population	3,197,480	660,545	269,280	26,945	77,355	1,000	1,510
Black	573,860	23,275	24,915	4,265	10,780	125	190
South Asian	670,590	158,435	52,565	3,795	12,110	215	230
Chinese	860,150	299,860	90,480	8,830	12,340	155	305
Korean	64,840	19,050	4,705	305	1,045	10	15
Japanese	68,135	29,815	8,280	420	1,670	50	40
Southeast Asian	172,765	25,355	20,295	2,920	4,520	200	200
Filipino	234,195	47,080	24,380	2,920	25,910	110	400
Arab/West Asian	244,665	20,090	17,830	1,185	1,890	50	110
Latin American	176,975	17,655	15,770	1,475	4,100	55	45
Other visible minority	69,745	8,070	3,580	240	1,510	10	15
Multiple visible minority	61,575	11,850	6,480	585	1,470	30	30
Percentage of Population that is a visible minority	11%	18%	10%	3%	7%	3%	4%

Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census Nation tables

<http://www.statcan.ca/start.html>

Appendix E: Canadian Crossroads International Official Program Brochures



(Left: 2002; Right: 2000)