

**Multi-Faceted Organising Strategies: Integrating
Community and Labour Struggles**

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ABSTRACT

Since the 1980s, Canadians have witnessed deterioration in working conditions and a slow erosion of social programs. Employers' desires for increased profits have led to a more fragmented and insecure workforce. Government trends of reducing or eliminating social programs have generated a greater need at a community level for social services. Needs are exacerbated among marginalized populations including women and immigrants of colour as these groups generally face greater poverty and an increased risk of exploitive employers. Groups that serve and organize marginalized workers and communities experience increasing difficulty meeting their members' and clients' needs. Community organizations continue to experience funding cuts from governments while attempting to meet an increased demand from clients and members for services. Labour unions encounter greater barriers utilizing traditional organizing techniques in a restructured economy and re-organization of production. Some community-based organizations have attempted to meet these needs by integrating community and labour organizing with service delivery.

Two such organizations are compared in this thesis: the Vancouver based, Philippine Women's Centre, which serves Philippine women, many of whom are migrant workers in the Lower Mainland of BC and the Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society (PICS) of Surrey, BC, which gives services primarily to Indo-Canadians in the organization's surrounding community including Indo-Canadian farmworkers. The thesis examines the ways in which each organization has attempted to integrate community and labour organizing and service provision, the opportunities and constraints it has faced, and the strategies it has found effective.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACS	Abbotsford Community Services
AIWA	Asian Immigrant Women Advocates
APEC	Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation
AWEP	Agricultural Workers' Employment Project
BCNU	British Columbia Nurses' Union
BCOFR	British Columbia Organization to Fight Racism
CBO	Community Based Organization
CED	Community Economic Development
CFU	Canadian Farmworkers' Union
EI	Employment Insurance
ESA	Employment Standards Act
ESB	Employment Standards Branch
ESL	English as Second Language
FARSHA	Farm and Ranch Safety and Health Association
FFCF	Farm Folk City Folk
FNSG	Filipino Nurses' Support Group
FWOC	Farmworkers' Organizing Committee
HA	Homeworkers' Association
HERE	Hotel and Restaurant Employees' Union
ILGWU	International Ladies Garment Workers' Union
ITF	International Transportation Workers' Federation
LC	Live-In Caregiver

LCP	Live-In Caregiver's Program
MFY	Mobilization for Youth
OWPP	Older Workers' Pilot Project
PCUN	Northwest Treeplanters and Farmworkers United
PICS	Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society
PWC	Philippine Women's Centre
SEIU	Service Employees International Union
SIKLAB	The Overseas Filipino Workers' Organization
UAW	United Auto Workers
UNITE	Unions of Needle Trades, Industrial and Textile Employees
WCB	Workers' Compensation Board

CHAPTER 2-THEORY AND CASES LINKING LABOUR AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZING WITHIN MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

In this chapter, literature pertaining to the integration of community and labour organizing is reviewed. This review is an effort to present the work of well-known authors in the field of community organizing and service and delivery and the better-known examples of community-labour collaborations or research that reflects a concern with the details of such alliances and their constraints and benefits. The literature has been divided into the historical and theoretical sections, and case studies sections. The literature that addresses community organizing and servicing with marginalized groups for social change and labour organizing for social change is abundant. Literature describing the issues and approaches involved in organizing or working in marginalized communities is also plentiful, tending to draw on the experience of community activists and workers involved in organizations or specific projects. Other literature intersecting community organizing, labour organizing and marginalized groups discusses the ways in which the current labour movement has been unable to adequately address the needs of the working class through the workplace. It indicates that the locus of struggle is likely to shift into the community in new social movements. A further genre of research which links these three themes, appears primarily concerned with salvaging the union movement in the United States, and offers case studies of alliances or coalitions that have utilized community support in union organizing drives or other efforts. Little research is available, however, that offers an in-depth and systematic analysis of the opportunities and challenges that face organizations *integrating* labour and community organizing to create social change for marginalized groups in the North

American context. Even less research exists specifically discussing the Canadian context, hence, most of the research reviewed in this chapter is American.

2.1 Theoretical Perspectives on Community & Labour Movements and Social Change

In her reflections on working with Settlement and Neighbourhood centres in the United States, Margeret Berry examines a few of the more significant tensions that have existed for many private welfare agencies doing community work since the 1940s. She offers a brief history of the settlement house movement, and its attempts to serve and organize immigrants and other marginalized groups living in impoverished areas. Berry discusses the tensions that existed for many of these agencies between “cause” and “service”, the tension, for example, between addressing the circumstances that give rise to poverty and trying to deal with the consequences of poverty. Through the 1960s in particular, many such agencies started receiving public funding and subsequently experienced pressure to provide services to the communities they worked with and to engage less in activities that address the causes that created a need for the services in the first place (1999, 106). Berry also describes the struggle that swept most neighbourhood centres and their boards within the civil rights movement. Communities called for greater control of the organizations and accused the centres’ staff and operators of being “exploiters” who worked “in” the neighbourhoods but were not “of” the neighbourhoods (1999, 116). Despite the history of Settlement houses’ involvement in improving the working conditions for low wage and unskilled workers (Berry 1999, 107, Addams 1970, 187) Berry does not refer to any issues specific to the organizations as a result of this work. Her essay is not intended to be a detailed nor practical guide for organizers wishing to integrate community work with labour struggles. Berry’s reflections rather,

historically trace several of the challenges that community workers confronted when working with marginalized populations to create social change.

George Brager recounts his experience with the New York City based organization “Mobilization for Youth” (MFY) in the 1960s. He details the political conflict that the organization faced around funding and competing agencies. The author then outlines the dilemmas and constraints that MFY faced during McCarthyism when the organization was targeted for allegedly hiring communists and mobilizing the New York rent strikes occurring at that time. Brager concludes the paper by offering some general advice on strategies and expectations for agencies engaged in community activism. He states that “funders call the tune, and while some organizations can develop their own leverage or even insulate themselves from sponsor directions, there are limits to their ability to respond to the requirements for social change in impoverished communities” (1999, 73). The author also theorizes that “social idealism” may grow in one time period and die in the next; therefore it is important that agencies pursuing social change on behalf of or with disadvantaged groups take advantage of opportune political climates (1999, 74). Similar to Berry, Brager’s analysis of his experience with MFY contributes a valuable first hand account of the political arena in which organizations working for social change exist within.

The Politics of Community Services, offers insight into the Canadian experience of community service. Its author, Roxanne Ng, analyzes the experience of an employment agency in Toronto in the 1980s attempting to work as both advocate and employment agency to their clients—immigrant women of colour. She also analyzes the tensions that arise when organizations provide a “service” paid for by funders who want a product, and as the agency, trying to address a “cause” as advocates for the women (1996, 14). The organization, in the

author's perspective had assisted in reproducing the labour market segmentation stratified by gender and ethnicity, despite their organization's formation to prevent just this (15). In her conclusions, she warns of the danger of channelling "the majority of organizing efforts into state funded services, to the exclusion of seeking alternative forms of resistance" (94). Ng encourages grassroots community organizers to extend community struggles to "other terrains of struggle" and make linkages with other forms of organizing including the labour movement (94).

Linda Briskin and Patricia McDermott, also Canadian authors, argue that "fierce global competition and economic restructuring" have among other trends, included the "feminization of labour" (the creations of more jobs like traditional women's work) and the "feminization of the workforce" (an increase in women workers) and the "production of a further polarization of the available work" (1993, 1). They also assert that unions need to "incorporate a feminist perspective into their ideology, practices, policies, and strategies in order to survive" in the current climate. The collection of research that they have edited examines the way that women have been excluded from unions and the labour movement, the reasons why women, in particular, need unions and case studies of women-led union struggles. While the essays are primarily concerned with union organizing, Briskin and McDermott call for an expansion in the definition of issues deemed legitimate by unions and encourage the creation of alliances with community and social movements (1993, 4). The authors consider these measures, in addition to the feminist restructuring of unions, as essential to the labour movement's survival.

Nancy Naples, the editor of Community Activism and Feminist Politics: Organizing Across Race, Class and Gender describes this collection of research as building upon the

efforts of feminist scholars and activists who helped “break down the false analytic separation between community and labour organizing” (1998, 2). This collection describes and analyzes women’s experiences as community activists in the United States. The editor emphasizes that throughout the case studies and analyses, authors have endeavoured to “contextualize race, class, and gender relations rather than privilege one dimension or produce an additive formulation” (1998, 2). Her emphasis suggests that community activism and social movements need to better integrate their identities and the issues they confront.

Saul Alinsky, first published Reveille for Radicals in 1949. In this book, which draws on Alinsky’s personal experience of community and labour organizing, he critiques both forms of organizing in their structures and approaches at the time of his writing and drafts a loose model of a community based organizing movement. He offers insights to the reader on organizing tactics, the importance of local leadership in organizing, and the need to be familiar with and respect individual communities’ cultures. In the first section of the text Alinsky asserts his view that despite the inadequacies of the labour movement, because of its mass base “the interests and objectives of the organized labour movement can embrace more of the broad interests and objectives of the people at large than most other organizations” (1969, 34). He continues, encouraging activists to democratize the labour movement and educate the rank and file of the movement “to understand that in order to improve their lot they must grasp the relationship between their work in the factory, their union and every other part of what makes up their whole life” (34). He warns that if the labour movement is unable to make this transition from their current limited activities to “collective bargaining beyond their present confines of the factory gate” then they must help build a broader movement: Alinsky’s community organizing movement, something he terms a Peoples’

Organization. Elsewhere in the text, the author addresses the tension between “cause” and “service” that Berry and Brager also raise with regard to community work. Alinsky is firm in his view, however, that the community organizer’s work is not “adjusting people to difficult situations” but rather “the unslumming of the slum”, that is changing the fundamental situation (59). He argues that this work requires combining the struggles for housing, jobs, health care, democracy and all struggles pertaining to quality of life in one movement (58).

In “Towards a Theory of Community Unionism” James O’Connor examines the shifts in the U.S. economy in the mid 1960s and formulates a theory that unionism will transcend the workplace and become rooted in the community (1964). O’Connor argues that for a variety of reasons the crisis of unemployment will become more and more long term. The author states that unskilled workers are most affected by this type of unemployment, while white collar workers and those in the expanding service industry will continue to be employed. Trade union leaders according to O’Connor “are immunized from pressures emanating from unemployed workers” and thus the unemployed rate low in the scale of union priorities (1964, 146). Unemployed workers are left to their own resources and

Worker agitation, organization, and political activity where they emerge sound a new note of militancy and take unexpected forms. The focus of political activity shifts from the work place to the neighbourhood, the community, [and] the region. Working class agitation springs from the lack of jobs and incomes but it is not immediately focused around these issues (146).

The author predicts that the base of working class organizations will increasingly move into the community and refers to several examples that may be emerging (at the time of his writing) including New York’s rent strikes and the activities of the Miners’ Committee. O’Connor does not suggest strategies for effective organizing of community unions. The focus of his paper, rather, is to establish the argument that it is necessary to form theories of

community unions, given, that workplace-based unions may no longer be the solution for a large number of workers.

Similar to the perspectives of O'Connor, Briskin and McDermott, and Alinsky, Manuel Castells sees the workplace-based union as no longer able to defend the interests of the working class in its present form. In The City and The Grassroots, Castells attempts to analyze how and why cities change (1983). In the process he looks at the determining characteristics of urban social movements—what they organize around and the themes that are common to them. The author describes the city as being historical and a direct function of class interests. He identifies three prominent themes of the new urban social movements. They are 1) cultural identity, 2) local democracy and 3) collective consumption (1983, xviii). Castells terms the movement that has formed around the third theme, “Collective Consumption Trade Unionism” (1983, 316). This movement, as Castells describes it, “is a new type of demand movement dealing with the standards, prices, and ways of living as conditioned by urban services” (1983, 316). The author offers several detailed case studies of such “unionism”. Among the examples are the Glasgow Rent Strike of 1915 and the tenant unions in public housing in Sarcelles and Val d’Yerres, France in the 1960s and 1970s (1983, pp76-96). In these case studies, residents successfully fought to oppose rent increases, obtain building standards of safety, preserve wooded areas in their communities and gain representation on the boards that administered their housing.

In the author’s perspective, “the labor movement has been, by and large, unable to address the issues of the social wage and the negotiation of living conditions outside the work place. So urban trade unionism has had to take its place outside factories and offices” (1983, 326). The social wage refers to items and services that workers have collective access

to, for example, hospitals, schools, electricity, roadways, clean air, etc. These are the infrastructures, social and physical, that assist the worker in their ability to reproduce their labour power and the infrastructures that simultaneously alleviate pressure from individual wages. Castells, however, does not appear to share Alinsky and O'Connor's enthusiasm for a community based unionism as the future movement to end social ills. Castells theorizes that the new urban movements have come into formation not because they are the appropriate form of struggle for their context but because the previous social agents who were relied upon to create change have been unsuccessful. Castells, attributes the labour movement's inability to address the social wage to the following challenges: "the internationalization of production, markets, labour and management, the attack of the informal economy and the entry of women to work that has shaken the male-dominated foundations for the labour unions" (329). He views the "collective consumption trade union movement", not as "agents of structural social change, but symptoms of resistance to the social domination" (1983, 329).

Laurie Adkin also analyzes the new social movements, although in a broader manner and does not limit her analysis to urban movements. She studies the movements in relationship to labour and social change in her 1998 work, The Politics of Sustainable Development: Citizens, Unions and the Corporations. The author examines the "stakes" of environmental politics and presents case studies of two Canadian unions. She examines the models of unionism that they have adopted and their relationship to social movements for sustainable development. In the first section of this text, Adkin surveys theories of the new social movements. She criticizes theorists who adopt an economic reductionist perspective, privileging the workers' struggle over other struggles in various spheres of people's existence (11). "The oppressive nature of capitalism is experienced through the commodification of all

spheres of life—through the opposition between profit imperatives and human needs” (11). Adkin argues that a crucial function of the labour union is to develop a political class identity among workers and demonstrate how the identity and experience of the worker is informed or shaped by racial, gender, ethnic and other subject positions, without privileging the position of worker (19). Adkin’s case studies offer a detailed analysis of two unions taking different courses in their struggles, one in “corporate unionism” and one in “social unionism”. The author’s emphasis is on building broader social movements around sustainable development.

Adkin, Alinsky, Briskin and McDermott, Castells and O’Connor’s work are similar in perspective, in that they each perceive a need for transformation of labour unions and the labour movement in its present form. Adkin, Briskin and McDermott, and O’Connor see a growing gap in workers in North American society, the unskilled, low paid and unemployed and the workers in white collar and service sectors whom are more likely to be represented by a union. O’Connor predicts a shift in base for working class organization from the workplace to the community. Briskin and McDermott call for a feminist restructuring of unions as well as the establishment of more alliances with the community. Adkins sees unions as needing to choose a model of corporate co-operation and self-protectionism or social unionism—building broad based movements with other groups also struggling against oppressions. To pursue this latter goal, the direction Adkin favours, she argues that unions must stop privileging the position of the worker in the hierarchy of oppressions. They must instead, transform the identity of the labour movement as a struggle of women, people of colour, workers, etc. and not by merely allying themselves with other struggles, treating the identities as separate. This emphasis, on transforming the identity of social movements is

also shared by Nancy Naples, although she writes in the context of women and community organizing. Castells echoes the view that unions in their present form are not up for the challenges they face. He observes shifts in the locus for organizing action from the workplace into the community, similar to what O'Connor predicts. Alinsky, similar to Adkin encourages a broadening of identities within union memberships. He also advocates an education and mobilization process to encourage workers to participate in the struggles in the other arenas of their lives in addition to work.

While Berry, Brager and Ng illuminate practical issues confronted by community organizations at a structural level, particularly in changing the social conditions of marginalized communities, none offer insight into the challenges of integrating community and labour organizing. Alinsky, O'Connor and Castells provide theoretical rationale for combining the struggles of labour and community to benefit marginalized groups but similar to the community organizing authors do not describe the barriers confronting organizations integrating their struggles as well as their strategies for overcoming them. Adkin's work does offer this type of study, but it pertains primarily to larger social movements and is limited to their relationship to sustainable development.

2.2 Case Studies Linking Labour Organizing, Community Organizing and Marginalized Populations

Numerous case studies exist, depicting the stories of coalitions and other forms of alliances between labour and community groups in the US and several in Canada. The research describes successful organizing drives for the unions including the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and community led Justice for Janitor's campaign initiated in 1988 (Waldinger et al. 1998), (Banks, 1992), (Williams 1999), and the Stamford Organizing Project which began in the late 1990s as a multi-union organizing effort by the

Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE), SEIU and the United Auto Workers (UAW) (Fine 2000). Struggles to attain higher wages for low wage non-unionized workers are documented, such as the community led Solidarity campaign in Baltimore, uniting the faith based Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) (Fine 2000), as well as the “living wage” campaigns that followed the success of Solidarity involving many US central labour councils (Luce 2001) and the U.S. wide Jobs with Justice campaign (Banks 1990). Other accounts are of unions and community organizations attempting to secure protective legislation around employment standards, and health and safety regulation, for example, the Coalition for Fair Wages and Working Conditions for Homeworkers in Toronto (Borowy et al. 1993). Finally, coalitions’ attempts to preserve unionized jobs in a community to protect the local economy or local services are also described in the research. Examples of these types of struggles include The Campaign to Keep GM Van Nuys Open forged by the UAW and the community of Van Nuys, greater Los Angeles (Mann 1990), the grassroots nationally organized group of communities in conjunction with the Canadian Union of Postal Workers’ (CUPW) Rural Dignity campaign (Tufts 1998), and the Naugatuck Valley Project in Western Connecticut composed of church groups, community groups and unions (Brecher 1990).

Similar research examines the establishment of centres, which integrate the functions of both community and labour organizations and/or facilitate long-term relationships between these groups. They differ from the previous listed examples in that the centres’ intentions from their inceptions are to perform the functions and services typically offered by both community and labour groups in their work with marginalized populations. Studies describing these centres include Manuel Pastor’s research on the turnaround in community

organizing efforts following the Los Angeles riots of 1992. The Labour Strategy Center and its L.A. Bus Riders Union (BRU) is one of three efforts focused on by Pastor. Immanuel Ness's study of the Unions of Needle Trades, Industrial and Textile Employees' (UNITE's) Garment Worker Justice Centers (GWJC) in three American cities measures the effectiveness of the centres in creating an organizing climate among garment workers (1998, 92). The story of UNITE's Canadian effort to organize homeworkers in the garment industry and the creation of the Homeworkers Association (HA) in Toronto, is presented in research by Borowy et al (1993) and Armine Yalnizyan (1993). Steven Tuft's case study also describes UNITE and the HA, demonstrating the ability of 'community unionism' to overcome "capital's re-organization of space" (1998, 227).

Many of these studies of coalitions, alliances and centres exemplify an intersection of community organizing and labour organizing with marginalized populations. The research often discusses strategies that the organizers employ. The living wage campaigns, for example, obtain municipal ordinances requiring firms that receive public money to pay their workers a higher hourly wage as a strategy to help low wage workers (Luce 2001, 141). Community and labour groups have used the campaign as an endorsement issue for candidates in civic elections (148). The Coalition for Fair Wages and Working Conditions for Homeworkers targeted the *retailers* of clothing made by homeworkers rather than the traditional target, the employer. Shoppers at Toronto's largest downtown shopping centre were given scorecards to present to retailers, which rated clothing according to the working conditions under which it was made (Tufts 1998, 243). This strategy addressed the specific hierarchical structure of the garment industry to apply pressure where it was most needed (Tufts 1998, 243).

A survey of the research indicates that while many of the studies present the strategies that the alliances or coalitions adopt, few focus on the barriers that the organizations confront, particularly those challenges specific to integrating labour and community struggles, and the manner in which these issues are resolved. In addition, little of the research describes an on-going integration of the typical functions of community and labour organizations, for example, how some labour unions offer services typically performed by community organizations to better serve its marginalized members or similarly how community organizations become more involved in its members' labour struggles over the long term.

Opportunities and Challenges Faced by Other Organizations

Research by Ruth Needleman is an exception to most of the studies found in the literature. She examines two case studies of community-labour collaborations specifically, to describe the advantages and problems in building such partnerships to organize low wage women workers. Using data from interviews, secondary research, and her own experience working for one of the organizations, the author conveys the stories of one community based organization (CBO) led effort by Asian Immigrant Women Advocates (AIWA) and one union led effort by SEIU.

The AIWA effort describes a campaign against designer Jessica McClintock to obtain back wages and improve working conditions for garment workers in Oakland, California. AIWA had been established for approximately ten years at the time of the campaign. The organization does advocacy work in a manner that "focuses on developing workers' own agency" (1995, 75). The organization offers ESL classes, social outings, leadership training and works on building community and encouraging collective activity (1995, 75). The

McClintock boycott led to a broader initiative to improve working conditions for garment workers which garnered support from CBOs, environmental groups, immigrant groups and supporters from UNITE, the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, central labour councils and an array of area local unions (77). The decision making of the campaign was handled by AIWA “to ensure that the women themselves [the garment workers] could determine the pace and shape of the struggle” (77).

The second case study Needleman analyzes is the SEIU’s efforts to organize home care workers in the health care sector, most of whom are women, and of minority groups—“African American or Chicana or non-English speaking immigrants from Mexico, Central American, the Philippines, and other Pacific Rim nations” (78). The author explains the difficulties that the negotiating committee, comprised of homecare workers, faced in what has been to date, an unsuccessful attempt at obtaining a contract with their employer. The workers who comprised the negotiating committee were frustrated with the bureaucratic process and each other, with racial tensions and language barriers playing a significant role in the frustrations. The author explains:

Without taking the time and doing the education to address racial, national, and cultural biases, the union could not keep the committee together. Even with extensive SEIU work and resources, the union would be hard-pressed trying to handle the interconnected problems home-care workers face, from poverty, childcare, and spousal abuse to housing and citizenship problems. (81)

Needleman emphasizes the importance of groups like AIWA offering the essential basic support and day-to-day services for marginalized women.

One of the outcomes of the organizing campaign was the formation of several service centres for home-care workers in partnership with the Labor Project for Working Families, a non-profit organization. At the time of the author’s writing, the centres were in their early

stages of development. The plans, however, are for the centres to be neighbourhood union centres run by home-care workers, which will sponsor social as well as work and union-oriented activities. Activities and services include bingo, dances, immigration and legal advice, a job co-op, a weekly clinic hosted by a union steward and monthly health screenings.

Throughout the paper, Needleman offers some explanations accounting for the difficulties that can arise between community groups and unions in attempting to build partnerships. The author describes, for example, the differences in the approach that AIWA adopted in their campaign compared to the approach that a union would have adopted. AIWA, the CBO, “emphasized empowerment and leadership development” among its members whereas a union would have “concentrated on building organization and gaining representation in the shops” (77). AIWA’s approach then, was to lead the campaign and handle the decision making but this tactic fails to develop “long term cooperative planning, division of labor, and effective pooling of strengths” (77). She also discusses the benefits accruing to both groups in working together. The partnership that the SEIU developed with the Labor Project, for example, was an advantage in obtaining funding for the home-care workers’ centers. “Many funding agencies prefer to award grants to partnerships”(82). Developing and implementing such proposals for funding is sometimes beyond a CBOs resources and it is difficult for unions to obtain funding without partners (82).

Needleman’s conclusions make useful and practical recommendations for CBOs and unions wishing to collaborate. She states the importance of humanizing the link between organizations, pointing out that relationships have to be cultivated among key people at various levels of the organization. The author emphasizes the need to maintain continuity

between contact people and not to make the relationship reliant on one individual, in the event of their departure. She discusses the need to recognize and respect difference and build on the strengths of each partner. Needleman refers to the error that many organizations make in assuming that “they both want the same thing and forget to negotiate and discuss objectives and needs” at the start of the relationship rather than in the midst of a campaign (83). She suggests that CBOs and unions have a tendency to approach each other for short-term help in their current campaigns but that the gains of long-term relationships are far greater. “Joint or collective work in leadership development, workers centres, research, and lobbying draw on the best of both groups” (83). Finally, the author advises that ‘more efforts should go into publicizing successful partnerships and providing critical evaluations of joint work’ to “showcase” successful partnerships, yet present the problems that arise in efforts to learn from them (83). Needleman’s work itself does just this. She outlines the strategies and approaches of the organizations she discusses, and then presents the barriers and opportunities that they confronted in working together as community organizations and unions.

2.3 Gaps Filled by my Research

Research that focuses on the practical aspects of how organizations approach a long-term integration of community and labour struggles may assist in meeting the needs of and organizing workers who face multiple barriers in their lives. This focus offers direction to groups or individuals who share the perspective that marginalized groups face struggles in many arenas of their lives, not just, for example, as women or as new immigrants or as workers. Organizations that continue to partner for short-term gains appear to also be establishing useful allies and drawing benefits from these types of collaborations. It is

important, however, that these short term or issue based alliances not be confused with or perpetuate the illusion of the type of unified struggle to which Adkin refers. Short term unities of convenience in which identity groups—in this case, labour and CBOs, join forces, do not necessarily transform the identity of their organizations in an authentic way.

My research is most similar to the work of Ruth Needleman in that it draws on two case studies to determine the opportunities and barriers confronting labour and community organizations in an on-going manner. The study will, however, depart from Needleman's work, in that it will focus on the organizations themselves and how they have continually integrated the functions and services of both CBOs and unions. This differs from most of the work cited above because it is presenting approaches to this type of integration over the long term, not the cases of particular campaigns or other short-term efforts.

My work contributes a detailed and systematic analysis of organizations and departs from previous research in this aspect as well. The framework in which I present my findings will categorize data according to the following: Organization Objectives, Strategies, Constraints, and Opportunities. Information within these categories will be of a general nature as well as data specific to the task of integrating community and labour struggles and issues.

CHAPTER 3- RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS

3.1 Selecting a Thesis Topic

My interest for this thesis topic derives from research that I conducted early in my undergraduate degree on unionization patterns and structures in the Canadian garment work industry. The International Ladies Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU0 (now UNITE) and their creation of The Homeworkers' Association were influential and taught me approaches to organizing and helping marginalized women to inform my activism. Although I am a strong supporter of the labour movement, the particular example of the home workers solidified my perspective that not all workers are in a position to unionize and exercise collective bargaining as a strategy to improve the conditions of their existence. I became inspired to look for alternative means of organizing marginalized groups that addressed their working conditions and life conditions simultaneously while emphasizing collective action and empowerment.

Among these alternatives, exist many examples of Community Economic Development (CED). These examples are broad and diverse in projects and organizations including CED corporations, housing and workers' co-operatives, savings circles and job banks. The literature is full of case studies of such initiatives but is, surprisingly, lacking a critical perspective of these projects. Projects such as, the Dearborn Homes job service (Kretzmann and McKnight 1993, 133) are extolled as a benefit to the community because they move people struggling with unemployment into the labour force. The authors assume the shift to the new job to be an improvement for the individual and for the community. They do not question what the new working conditions are like for the individuals, if they are able

to meet their basic needs on their new income, if they face harassment, discrimination or demoralization in their new job or if the company or organization that employs the individual is in fact, an asset to the community. That an individual is being moved into the workforce is assumed to be a positive shift. Consider, however, the example of a recent immigrant woman with children, who belongs to a visible minority group. Suppose she has been in Canada for two years, is unfamiliar with the culture, does not speak English and is unaware of her labour rights. Moving this woman, into a position paying minimum wage and requiring her to do shift work does not necessarily improve her living conditions or enhance her community. The nature of shift work might prevent her from spending time with her children and establishing or maintaining a community. The woman's likelihood of facing harassment and/or discrimination from co-workers, supervisors or clients is great, given that she is a woman and from a minority ethnic group. Providing housing, food and medical care for a family on minimum wage is next to impossible and provision of these needs might be more secure on social assistance. It should not be taken for granted then, that a shift such as this is a positive one.

The research referred to in the previous chapter by Roxanne Ng on the employment agency for immigrant women illustrates the same point. The author observes that such agencies are in danger of perpetuating the job ghetto experienced by new immigrants to Canada and reproducing the class, gender and ethnic relations that subordinate marginalized groups. Organizations offering this type of service and who are reliant on state funding, must be wary of offering this service or providing it, but without additional supports such as advocacy, job training, and ESL, either in house or in close partnership with other organizations. Examples such as the job bank, employment agency and similar 'good' CED

initiatives clarified for me, the need to explore ways of working with marginalized populations that addressed their life conditions in a holistic manner. Arriving at my thesis topic and research questions was a reiterative process of study, thought, reflection on personal experience with community organizing and the labour movement and preliminary research. This process brought me to the following research questions and approaches.

3.2 Research Questions

The central research questions to be addressed in this thesis are:

- 1) What are the opportunities and constraints facing Canadian community and labour organizations in their efforts to integrate the functions and services of community and labour groups to improve the social conditions of marginalized populations?
- 2) What strategies have been effective for these organizations in their work?

3.3 Research Method

The research method is a comparative case study analysis of information on two organizations, The Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society (PICS) of Surrey, BC and their relationship to the Canadian Farmworkers Union, BC and The Philippine Women's Centre (PWC) of Vancouver, BC. Gathering comparative data was desirable because it had the potential to, and did, illuminate the differences in the contexts and hence factors that contributed to the success of the organizations' approaches to working with their target populations. Data was gathered through semi-structured key informant interviews. This method was selected based on the nature of the questions being asked and the fact that the research was exploratory. Gathering this data was not intended for the purpose of evaluating the organizations. The research was conducted to learn from the participants' experience of integrating the functions and services of labour and community organizations.

Interviewing proved to be an appropriate research method because it permitted in depth responses on issues such as organizing climates, the social conditions of marginalized workers and the history of the organizations. The richness in responses from the interviewees would have been difficult to obtain by most other means. The in-person contact gave both the participants and myself an opportunity to clarify any confusion around questions and responses. Rapport was established through in-person contact, which hopefully increased the participants' trust, thus increasing the quality of responses.

Document analysis was also employed as a research method. Data gathered in interviews was supplemented with information from PICS and the PWC's pamphlets, annual reports, safety manuals, and other items given to me by the participants. I also relied on secondary sources by other researchers on the organizations or the populations with which the organizations work.

Ideally, the research would have included participant observation within each organization over the course of a year or more. Working within the organizations and experiencing the day-to-day issues that they confront would have firstly, reciprocated the contribution that the organizations and their members/clients made to my thesis and secondly, would have lent greater insight and depth to the research. Unfortunately time and monetary constraints prevented this possibility. It may be noted, however, that I have spent a period of about nine months working closely with the PWC through the No To APEC Coalition in 1997. While I have not drawn directly on that experience in this research, I acknowledge its potential to inform my presentation and conclusions about the PWC.

3.4 Methodology

I adopted a critical feminist methodology in this research. Methodology differs from method in that the latter is concerned with “a technique for (or way of proceeding in) gathering evidence.” However, “a methodology is a theory and analysis of how research does or should proceed” (Harding 1987, 2-3). Critical feminist research methodology differs from conventional research methodology in many ways. Conventional methodology originated in the ‘pure sciences’ and embraces deductive knowledge and quantitative methods. In the conventional, positivist approach, the researcher starts with a developed theory, then forms a hypothesis. The hypothesis is tested by repeated empirical observations. This reliance on empirical evidence has long been debated amongst philosophers and methodologists of science. Karl Popper disputed the “authority of experience” via our physical system of perception, renouncing its objectivity; “Rather, it [experience] consists of a web of guesses--- of conjectures, expectations, hypotheses, with which there are interwoven accepted, traditional, scientific, and unscientific, lore and prejudice. There simply is no such thing as pure experimental and observational experience—experience untainted by expectation and theory” (1963, 388).

The “objective and value-free’ illusion of conventional research also dominates the realm of social science and qualitative research methods. In Ann Oakley’s discussion of the contradictions in the process of interviewing she indicates the male distance that underlies methodological discussions of interviewing: “Thus the errors of poor interviewing comprise subjectivity, involvement, the “fiction” of equality and an undue concern with the ways in which people are not statistically comparable” (1981, 38). These “errors” characterize values and behaviours that are stereotypically associated with women and imply a great deal about

who is “fit” to conduct research. The exclusion of women from researching has resulted in little engagement with studies that would benefit women and other marginalized groups and has resulted in research questions reflecting a privileged male experience of being in the world. For example, asking the question: “Why do visible minority immigrant women continue to work at low paying jobs with poor working conditions?” approaches the issues of sexism, racism and class oppression in a radically different way than asking the question; “Why do men continue to exploit the social circumstances of visible minority immigrant women and pay them poorly?”

Feminist research methodology is distinct in several ways. Primarily, feminist researchers do not claim neutrality. They, in fact, emphasize the subjective nature of feminist research as liberatory to the lives of women, and, they incorporate praxis, a combined thought and action process derived from and contributing to the knowledge that exists on everyday levels not just from pure theory (Stanley 1990, 12). The differences of women’s experience along the lines of class, race, age, ableness, sexual orientation and other distinctions are highlighted. This contrasts with positivist attempts to establish universalities. Feminists are encouraged to use reflexivity in their research process, that is, to locate themselves in the research process and examine how their values, privilege, socialization, etc. might affect their research. Since bias will always inform the work of the researcher, feminists make their background, perspectives, and approach to the research process known to the reader in an effort to make the research more objective. The reader is then in a better position to critically consider the merits of the work.

Feminist methodology is derived from feminist theory in that it attempts to eliminate power inequities through the research process by validating the experience of marginalized

groups by giving them “voice”. Feminist researchers are encouraged to collaborate in the research process with members of oppressed groups being studied to eliminate the ‘us’ studying ‘them’ feel that permeates much conventional research and subsequently perpetuates the oppression of subordinate groups by dominant groups. The liberatory nature of feminist research methodology is, for me, the most influential reason to use it.

My research incorporates a feminist methodology in the following ways: the focus of the research is on marginalized populations; the interview questions were primarily open-ended allowing participants to place emphasis on aspects of their work that they felt were important; participants were given some degree of control over the research product as they were given final editing power of their quotes and ideas in the context of the finished thesis. Also, this research utilizes the expertise and experience of members of marginalized groups to create knowledge and strategies to overcome the oppressive conditions that exist for marginalized communities.

3.5 Study Procedure

Interviews were conducted with ten key informants from British Columbian community organizations serving marginalized populations in capacities that address their needs as workers and people requiring a community and its benefits. Five participants were selected from each organization and were interviewed between December 2002 and January 2003 with some follow up and discussions for purposes of clarification through May 2003. Six of the participants were women and four were men; all participants were from visible minority groups. Interviewees were selected on the basis of having extensive knowledge of their organizations’ history and their knowledge of their organization’s efforts to work with marginalized populations in a manner that integrates community and labour issues. They

were selected from the organizations' staff, board of directors and membership. An interview guide of close ended and open-ended questions was used to conduct personal interviews.

There was some flexibility to pursue interests and issues as they arose. In recognition that the study participants had their own concerns, the interview did not follow the question list strictly and was used more as a starting point for discussion. Respondents were allowed to construct their own responses on their own terms. Probing questions were also used to generate elaboration on initial responses. Interviews were recorded on audiocassette with the permission of the respondents. Detailed notes were also taken. Interviewees had the option to not be identified by name or title in the thesis.

The interviewees from the organizations' leadership might have been identifiable due to the small sample size, even if their title or name were not revealed. Depending on the responses to the questions, this may affect their relationship with other organizations. The interviewees were made aware of this risk. Although it only helps in part, they were offered the option to not be identified by name or title. All participants were offered an opportunity to edit a transcript of their interview and any section of the research in which their direct quotes are used.

3.6 Data Analysis

Analysis of the data involved transcribing the interviews from my notes taken during the interview or directly from the cassette tape where necessary. I then categorized the data looking for central themes and remarkable comments. This was a useful exercise as strikingly similar patterns between the two populations emerged as well as key differences. After the initial categorization, I categorized the responses according to the analytical framework of the organizations' Goals, Strategies, Constraints, Opportunities and Achievements in a table

format. Finally data was analyzed specifically in response to the following specific questions that I am interested in and compared on this basis as well.

- Does your organization integrate its functions and services to meet the needs of its members with regard to community and work? How? Was this an original strategy of the organization?
- Describe your organization's relationship to labour organizations if any exists.
- What are the functions and services the organization performs? Have these changed over time?
- How does your organization make decisions together?

And

- In what ways do you encourage your members or mobilize them to take collective action around issues? What types of actions do they take? See appendix I for the complete interview script.

Analyzing the data raised numerous quandaries about what to include and what to exclude. For example, in some sections of participants' interviews, data existed that I would categorize as Objectives yet these pieces of information were not offered in response to the interview question that asked directly about goals and objectives. I had to decide whether or not I should categorize the item where I felt it fit. My concern was that it might be assumptive on my part to move the item to a category that the participant had not intended it for. I concluded that re-categorizing it would be acceptable if it seemed to correspond to information given by other interviewees from the organization or to information in the organization's literature.

CHAPTER 4 - FINDINGS

4.1 The Philippine Women's Centre

In the early 1980s, when domestic workers just started coming to Canada, there was no support group available to them. In 1989, however, with six domestic workers, the Philippine Domestic Workers formed and was later named the Philippine Women's Centre (PWC). The members had several years of experience visiting domestic workers in their homes to hear about the workers' daily experiences and to learn their reality. Most of the stories involved exploitation against the workers and inspired the members to start the group (Diocson 2003).

The centre has since grown considerably in membership and in the number of programs and services it offers. The PWC serves and organizes Filipino women, most of whom are first generation immigrants to Canada or migrant workers forced to leave the Philippines and their families because of a lack of economic opportunities. Initially the centre was supposed to serve as a gathering place, a place to educate, organize and mobilize: a place to work for equality (Ordinario 2003). The women were homesick; so, they came to partake in Filipino folk dance and to socialize around their shared culture. They missed their cultural activities and in the beginning, socializing generally came before political issues. As one of the founding members describes, "the women were not always interested in politics at first, then they addressed the politics and education in their personal lives" (Diocson 2003). The goals of the organization at that time were to make women aware of the abuse and exploitation that was happening and of the policies that effected them, to help them

understand their situations, resist the exploitation, connect culturally and connect with the other organizations that supported them; to empower them (Diocson 2003).

The PWC's Functions and Services

The fundamental goals of the PWC have remained the same since its beginning. The organization has expanded, however, and it assists new sectors of the centre to develop as the membership has grown and the need for focus into new areas arises. For example, in 1992 changes to the Live-In Caregiver Program (LPC) were made by the federal government in which the educational requirements for incoming Live-In Caregivers (LCs) or domestic workers were increased. Domestic workers who have immigrated to Canada since this time generally hold a professional degree or diploma in the Philippines.ⁱ Many of these professionals, particularly, since the mid 90s, were practicing nurses in the Philippines. Members of the PWC and SIKLAB (in Tagalog, Sulong Itaguyod ang Karapatan ng Manggagawang Filipino sa Canada, or The Overseas Filipino Workers' Organization), another group spawned from the PWC in 1995 to focus on the issues specifically facing migrant workers, were suspicious and critical of this "accelerated trend" of more nurses in the LCP (Diana 2003). They formed the Filipino Nurses Support Group (FNSG) also in 1995 to examine the trend of de-skilling among these nurses and to analyze their increased immigration at a time when the shortage of nurses is growing in Canada and the country moves toward a privatized health care system (Diana 2003). De-skilling, "refers to the forcible loss of a person's skills and knowledge" (PWC 2001). Workers, after fulfilling their minimum 2-year contract with an employer as domestic workers, start to lose their skills in the profession they are trained in, in this case, as nurses.ⁱⁱ

The FNSG has been instrumental in organizing to counter the de-skilling of Philippine. They have hosted forums and press conferences to educate the public on this issue. The group participates in roundtable discussions with various stakeholders, lobbies government and has met with professional nursing organizations and unions to eliminate the barriers that these bodies have erected or safeguarded which prevent Filipino nurses from practicing their profession in Canada. They have undertaken and completed Participatory Action Research (PAR) on de-skilling and have hosted review classes for LCs and nurses wishing to write their nursing exams. The classes are a community-based initiative. Operating without funding, for two years now, the program has two professional teachers but also relies heavily on peer counsellors who have completed the exam and are willing to “transfer their skills and knowledge to other Filipino nurses” (Diocson 2003). The review classes have been so successful, with a steady increase of nurses taking and passing the exam, that Citizenship Canada is looking at it as a model (Diocson 2003). Over 110 women have been helped back into their nursing professions through this program since its start (Diana 2003). “This is an improvement in economic status for them and gives a professional boost and boost to their self-esteem” (Diocson 2003).

SIKLAB, as previously mentioned, was formed because its founders from PWC saw that the migrant workers had needs that were specific to their situation. The group formed in 1995; its catalyst was a conference on Structural Adjustment Programs and migrant workers. The majority of SIKLAB’s founding members were LCs. SIKLAB’s goals include educating women, fighting for the rights of migrant workers, building unity and developing an understanding of the issues for migrant workers forced to emigrate from so many Third World countries around the globe. The group’s regular services involve giving information to

the community on workers' rights and helping with various application processes. SIKLAB also undertakes campaigns against unfair and/or racist immigration policies, for example, their campaign to remove the double taxation of domestic workers. They were successful in having the Philippine government tax eliminated. They have done advocacy work, helping women to fight cases through the Employment Standards Board, trying to prevent unfair deportations of workers and have rescued women fleeing abusive employers.

The Philippine Women Centre itself supports these groups as well as other sectors of the centre that have emerged including the Philippine Canadian Youth Alliance and Grassroots Women. The PWC does a great deal of resource referral, giving information on housing, immigration and employment. Advocacy is a big part of the work, again, around employment, immigration, accreditation and some youth issues (Diocson 2003). The PWC has several Community Economic Development (CED) initiatives. The catering service was established in 1990, early in the organization's history, to develop the skills of the women, encourage them to share skills with each other and to generate income to help sustain the centre. This service provides an opportunity for the women to support each other.

For example when you do the food preparation you end up chatting—so we find we also do counselling or supporting each other while we're [working] and it's a good result because people will talk about their problems and one person will also answer or share her own problems and we find out we have our common problems—you find out the commonalities it's a good process. (Ordinario 2003)

The CED work is also an opportunity to do outreach outside of the community (Diocson 2003). The PWC began a housing co-operative in 1990, designed to meet the needs of domestic workers by housing them on weekends at affordable rents. Since its beginning, the co-op has housed at least fifty members. It is now located on the upper floor of the building that houses the PWC offices. PWC members purchased the building in 1996. The

co-op houses up to five women at any given time. A Savings Circle is also available to members; money is put together and awarded through a monthly lottery (members cannot win twice until all members have won). Most members use this money to pay immigration costs such as the costly \$975 head tax to bring each family member to Canada. A Loan Guarantee Fund has also been started for women to use for skills development to re enter school. Key aspects of the centre's work also include hosting education forums, giving workshops in the community, conducting research, organizing rallies, and awareness raising or political pressure campaigns, all of which will be elaborated on further.

PWC's Organizational Structure

The PWC has a working board of directors (BOD) with eight members. The general assembly meets yearly approved programs and elects the Board members for a term of two years. Directors must be members of the centre and commit to helping to actively implement the upcoming year's plan for the centre. The Board members chair the different committees (Research and Education, Finance, Membership, Political Campaigns and Cultural committees) to ensure their participation. Decisions are made by the BOD, which meets once or twice a month. Essentially, if the work proposed by a sector of the centre fits with the centre's mandate, the BOD accepts it (Ordinario 2003). The centre has one full time staff member and is otherwise volunteer driven. Certain sectors of the centre, for example, SIKLAB, operate as a collective. Members of these sectors do not usually hold positions or titles, but rather, rotate duties according to the time permitting in their schedules (Cagas 2003).

PWC's Goals

The PWC's general goals are educating, organizing, and mobilizing marginalized people, improving the working conditions and living conditions of marginalized workers, facilitating social connection for Filipino women and building unity with like-minded organizations. Table 1 outlines these general goals and the more specific goals or sub goals associated with them. The general goals are not intended to serve as perfectly distinct categories but are used to give a system of classification for the centre's objectives to illustrate the diversity of the PWC's work. Many, if not all of the general goals and sub goals are interdependent in achieving the centres objectives in their totality.

The PWC is an organization that has integrated labour and community group functions in an independent manner from its inception. The PWC was started, in part, to provide some services typically associated with a community organization. For example, the centre was created to provide a place for Filipino women to break out of the isolation they experienced working as nannies in a foreign society and living in their employers' homes. The PWC served as a place for the women to gather and to connect culturally through dance and other activities. It also performed functions associated with labour organizations. It educated the domestic workers about their rights, and mobilized them to take collective action to improve their working conditions. In 1991, for example, when there were changes to the LCP Cecilia Diocson explains:

Some of the women had not even experienced any rallies or marches.... We were able to mobilize the women to go out and march with other organizations of domestic workers to demand from the government to look at the oppressive and some of the regressive policies that they're going to put in place. (2003)

Current efforts at the PWC continue to integrate its services and functions to meet its members' needs with regard to community and work. While the centre continues to mobilize

workers, advocate for them, and educate them on their rights, it also addresses needs in other areas of their lives, although ultimately closely related to their working conditions. These include members' need for community and the things commonly associated with it such as housing, resource sharing, friendship and support. The PWC has, for example, generated the CED initiatives previously mentioned such as the housing co-op and savings circle. The centre also continues to provide opportunities for the women to connect socially through political work and through activities and events such as Filipino dance, children's Christmas parties and spoken word and hip hop nights. Diocson describes the holistic approach that the PWC adopts. "It's actually a different kind of centre because immediately, your work and your life in the community are very much integrated and its very much part of who you are" (Diocson 2003).

Table 1 Philippine Women's Centre Goals
<p><i>Educate</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding and analysis of migrant workers • Give information on workers' rights • Gain understanding of struggle for democracy in Philippines • Make domestic workers aware of policies effecting them • Develop an understanding of situations of domestic workers • Give recognition of skills (to boost self-confidence)
<p><i>Organize and Mobilize Marginalized Workers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fight for the rights of marginalized workers • Mobilize Philippine community at large • Further the struggle for democracy in the Philippines • Gather nurses to examine trend of de-skilling
<p><i>Improve working conditions for marginalized workers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate on behalf of the community • Resist exploitation of domestic workers
<p><i>Improve living conditions for marginalized workers</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with settlement issues • Give information on housing and other resources • Advocate around issues such as immigration
<p><i>Facilitate Social Connection for Philippine Women</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host social opportunities • Facilitate cultural connection • Provide a gathering place
<p><i>Build Unity</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect with other organizations that support the PWC

PWC's Strategies

Interviewees felt the PWC's strategies for meeting its goals had remained the same since the organization's beginning but had become more solidified over the years (Ordinario 2003). Descriptions of several of the general strategies employed by the centre will follow. For a more comprehensive list see Table 2.

The PWC adopts a collective approach. When asked what her title was within SIKLAB, one member explained that everyone shared responsibility for all of the sector's work. Everyone does different tasks as members of committees or members of the Board of Directors. Each of SIKLAB's members contributes according to the time they have available and rotates duties with other committee members (Cagas 2003). No one held particular titles. Another member considered one of the PWC's achievements to be the high degree to which volunteers were committed and shared their expertise with one another. She described her computer abilities when she began at the centre, "like for me, I didn't even know how to use computers before but now I can do layout and Pagemaker and all this" (Ordinario 2003). In the Nurses Accreditation classes, parts of the course are taught by women who have completed the accreditation and come back to offer support to their peers.

Outreach is another regular part of the PWC's work. Members give constant effort to building the organization's membership. They regularly go to the malls, parks, churches, remittance offices and other places domestic workers and Filipino women are likely to be found. The members introduce the work of the Kalayaan Centre with leaflets and discussion as well as by posting information about their organization in numerous locations including the airport and on the Immigration Canada website. This has been a successful means of attracting new members to the centre. The PWC also hosts forums and workshops regularly at the Kalayaan Centre but also in the community, both of which assist in its outreach efforts. The centre is open seven days a week, offering accessibility to the community and members. This is necessary given that domestic workers are a significant portion of the Filipino community and of the centre's members and typically have little free time from their employment.

Community Economic Development has been another means to meet the PWC's objectives, primarily to help meet the immediate needs of its members but also to sustain the work of the centre through fundraising and to promote the centre's work. The catering program, for example, as described earlier, offers participants an opportunity to share skills, personal experiences and support while generating funds for the centre and making the community aware of the PWC's work.

Campaigns to raise awareness of issues and to apply political pressure to change legislation and political decisions are another strategy adopted by the centre. The Purple Rose Campaign, for example, has been an effort to raise awareness in Canada and internationally on the issue of the sexual trafficking of women. In 1997 the PWC was one of the central organizers of the No to APEC Coalition. The coalition led a multi-faceted campaign to raise the profile of the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and contextualize it as one in many agreements and tactics used by wealthier, more powerful groups to exploit the poor and marginalized. The extensive education process carried out by the coalition and the PWC helped to put the term "imperialist globalization" and the analysis accompanying it into current discourse among local activists and academics (Diocson 2003).

The centre also hosts and participates collaboratively in rallies to draw attention to political issues. They give briefs to various levels of government and professional bodies to explain issues facing the Philippine community and make recommendations for desirable policy and action. Successes with this approach include encouraging the Registered Nurses Association of BC to hand out intern permits more freely for Philippine domestic workers who are recently accredited in nursing. When the NDP was in power in BC, policy changes were made with Canadian Citizenship and Immigration to the Provincial Nominee Program

(PNP). Under the changes, the fast track process for landed immigrant status was applied to nursing. Many of the LCs are able to do Registered Nurse (RN) work but are trapped doing domestic work because they have to finish their contract. FNSG successfully lobbied for the PNP to accept nurses already in Canada and not penalize them for breaking their 2-year contract as domestic workers.

The strategy emphasized by most interviewees of the PWC as highly effective was the education of their members. In Diocson's words, "education is very important...they have to understand the issue first once they understand the issue, they're able to join you in your political campaign." The centre's approach to educating relies on "relating [women's] personal situation, ... understanding and making it clear that they're not the only ones; it's really a collective issue" (Diana 2003). The PWC uses formal methods, for example, workshops and forums and informal methods, such as leafleting and discussion to engage members and participants. The PWC's education process encourages participants to share their personal experience to build a foundation for their collective knowledge. "It's a living kind of education, not just classroom education—in other words, it's really coming from the experiences of people—because it's coming from them, it's easier for us to be able to make them understand because it is really their reality" (Dioscon 2003). The education process develops or furthers critical analysis in participants; they learn to address the root causes of issues, for example, the root cause of migration for Filipinos is the economic crisis in their home country (Cagas, 2003). Participants would then analyze the reason for the economic crisis in the Philippines. Outside speakers are invited to speak at the centre's forums but the majority of the centre's educational activities are peer facilitated or peer led.

Table 2 Philippine Women's Centre Strategies	
<i>Work Collectively</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotate duties on committees depending on who has time • Share expertise with each other • Everyone contributes, including BOD
<i>Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share personal experiences to form analysis and knowledge of issues • Use critical analysis, get to root causes of issues • Educate members first, they must understand issues to be able to join in your struggle • Host monthly studies, workshops, conferences, awareness raising campaigns, forums, events i.e. spoken word, drama • Educate Filipinos on right to protest in Canada • Develop modules on professional accreditation to help the community
<i>Gather Support for Other Communities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with like minded organizations • Form international alliances
<i>Outreach</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit shopping malls, churches, remittance offices to leaflet, draw in new members, raise awareness • Distribute information on PWC in strategic locations e.g. airport, Canada Immigration website
<i>Policy Changes at Government Level and with Professional Bodies</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefs to government and professional bodies and participation in roundtable discussion • Petitions, awareness raising and pressure campaigns including press releases, rallies, lobbying
<i>Doing Annual Plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop annual plans and enlisting BOD and Committee members to implement
<i>Being Accessible</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open 7 days/ week
<i>Constant Reassessment of Community Needs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of PWC are encouraged to join committees, one way of ensuring needs are heard • Through public forums, usually needs and suggested actions are asserted here • Through research, including Participatory Action Research
<i>Community Economic Development to Meet Members Immediate Needs, do Outreach and Fundraising</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Co-op • Savings Circle

Table 2 Continued

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catering Co-op • Guaranteed Loan Fund • Sale of Arts and Crafts from Philippines
Cultural Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events e.g. spoken word, hip, hop, dances • Tagalog lessons

Overcoming Barriers

Barriers facing the PWC in their organizing have been categorized into three areas for the purposes of this paper. They are barriers to organizing Filipino women, in particular, to continuing the work of the centre and to integrating the labour and community functions and services of the centre.

As discussed previously the Filipino domestic workers coming to Canada are required by the LCP to live in their employers' homes for a 2-year period. This means they are often isolated in society, both culturally and physically. There are few services for Filipino women and the women are often unaware of the existing services because of the isolation they face. Domestic workers face abusive and exploitative employers regularly. In fact, part of SIKLAB's work has been to "rescue women and pick them up at the park" (Cagas 2003). They face difficulty obtaining back-wages, overtime pay, regular and limited hours and holidays. Once the women have completed their contracts, they have difficulty obtaining jobs in the professions they were trained in because of the de-skilling process and the increasing competition for jobs. They often end up working in low-paying, manual labour jobs (Diocson 2003). The domestic workers confront increasingly restrictive immigration policies and rising costs of immigration, which make it difficult to bring their family members to live with them in Canada. In the circumstance that their families do immigrate, housing presents a huge barrier as well. Despite their contributions to federal and provincial revenues through

taxation, they do not qualify for low income, subsidized housing programs until they are landed immigrants. The worsening employment situation, increasingly costly immigration process and costly housing translate into longer, harder working hours for Filipino women to meet their expenses. These factors and the isolation that the women face present stark challenges to organizing and improving their living and working conditions. These challenges are passed on in turn to the PWC in their organizing efforts within their community.

The strategies that the PWC has adopted to overcome the barriers to organizing Filipino women have been discussed in the section titled Strategies. They involved, for example, reaching women working in isolation, PWC members do outreach in locations where domestic workers might be found such as malls and churches. Strategies have also included meeting Filipino women's immediate needs by providing services such as the housing co-op, the savings circle and advocacy for immigration and employment issues.

One of the main barriers that the PWC confronts in continuing their work is the challenge of funding their activities. The PWC as well as all other women's centres in BC, had funding, which previously came through the Ministry of Women's Equality, completely cut recently by the BC Liberal Government. This was the PWC's core funding. It paid the salary of the centre's one full time staff member (Ordinario 2003). The centre is unpopular as a potential recipient for other government funding, including funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, "because of the political work that [the PWC] does—because [it] really exposes the exploitation of the workers" (Diocson 2003). The centre's response to its funding challenges from its beginning has been to remain fairly self-reliant by sustaining its own fundraising efforts. Dances, catering, sales of Filipino arts and crafts and other activities have

long helped the PWC continue it's efforts and allowed them to be explicit in their criticisms and diligent in their struggle to undermine the system that oppresses Filipino women and other marginalized groups.

The final category of challenges facing the centre (for the purposes of this thesis) is those that inhibit the PWC's efforts to integrate labour and community functions and services in a collaborative manner (with other organizations). Funding, again is an issue for the PWC and for the labour groups with whom they would potentially integrate some services. A representative from the Hotel and Restaurant Employees (HERE) union had been trying to enlist the assistance of the PWC in organizing Filipino workers in the hospitality industry. The union had their funding cut recently and the HERE representative could no longer continue the work with the PWC (Cagas 2003). From the PWC's perspective, one interviewee felt that funding was a barrier to doing more work with other groups. One member felt that the centre needed "more full time paid people to really do the systematic work ... of going to the community and connecting with different groups" (Ordinario 2003).

Differing perspectives sometimes presents a further barrier for the PWC in working with other community or labour groups. A member from SIKLAB perceived the reluctance of some of the Filipino community to work with her group due to differing perspectives and an unwillingness to be politicized (Cagas 2003). For example, the PWC has been able to work with other domestic worker organizations at a policy level on some issues. However, two of the interviewees attributed the PWC's radically different perspective to the LCP from that of certain domestic worker agencies as preventing greater collaboration between the two (Vasquez 2003 and Diocson 2003). The PWC is calling for the elimination of the LCP as an exploitative and racist means of filling Canadian labour needs. It is in the interest of the

agencies, however, to further the program as they profit from the LCP as middlemen responsible for placing the workers.

The issues that were emphasized, however, by the PWC participants as preventing more collaboration between their organization and labour groups, were the PWC interviewees' perception of racism and self-interest within unions. The history of racism within the North American labour movement is extensive, including organized labour's support for anti-Asiatic laws within Canada (White 1993, 26), labour leaders' racism toward blacks as workers within their own movement (Alinski 1969, 170), and recent autoworker campaigns against the production of cars in Japan, pitting American autoworkers against Japanese autoworkers (Mann 1998). Specific to the PWC's experience, interviewees described a recent experience in which they perceived anti-immigrant sentiments, racism and self-interest as preventing the co-operation of a specific labour union from working with them. The British Columbian Nurses Union (BCNU) supported a policy in March 2002 to not give visas to foreign trained workers. The following is an excerpt from the BCNU Policies and Procedures Manual. See Appendix 1 for the full policy:

Therefore, be it resolved that the British Columbia Nurses' Union will not support visas for foreign nurses in health authority regions where there are unemployed, laid off, or displaced nurses, and will ask that any foreign workers who have been offered jobs but not yet begun employment, have their hiring delayed.

The PWC were very disappointed in the BCNU's position. It came on the heels of what was apparently an already strained relationship between the two organizations. Diocson described the political and economic climate in which this position was adopted. "It was really, really hot when the liberals took over and the health care budget was cut drastically." The BCNU was bargaining for salary increases for its nurses. "The presence of Filipino

nurses is going to bring the wages down” (2003). The BCNU was successful in getting the increase.

At the same time, there were also benefits that were taken away from the nurses and besides; it’s easier for the government now to implement their program, especially closing the extended care [facilities] because there are so many Filipino nurses who are doing almost private duty nursing to care for the elderly people with disabilities... The impact of this is really union busting, low wages, privatization of health care. (2003)

Diocson felt that the BCNU was unwilling to listen when she and other members of the PWC tried to explain this. She and several other interviewees from the PWC felt that in general, there was an absence or lack of education on international solidarity and this also created a barrier between the PWC being able to work with many labour groups. Diocson explained “It’s a very sensitive issue that [the labour groups] don’t want to talk about—because once you understand and be in solidarity with these third world workers then your demand may be different” (2003).

One member doubted if in general, labour understood the PWC’s work and the need for it. Generally speaking, she did not feel that labour had shown enough support for community efforts and need “to show that they do support communities in ways other than money” (Vasquez 2003). The member also suggested in a similar view to Diocson’s that “unions are protectionist for their own membership, they should help the community at large” (2003). Others felt that this protectionism was a consequence of “how unions are built up” (Vasquez 2003) or perhaps it was their mandate but that “maybe they need to restructure their unions” (Ordinario 2003).

Opportunities

Each interviewee expressed opportunities that could arise from the further collaboration and integration of community and labour groups. These included developing a broader analysis for the collaborating organizations. One interviewee felt that greater integration “help groups to grasp global reality and globalization’s impacts” and would benefit groups by making them become “more aware of the scope of their issues ... working with other groups will... broaden the analysis of the attacks being targeted at labour groups, immigrants’ groups, and women’s groups” (Diana 2003). Further benefits included helping to understand the division of workers, developing a mutual understanding of how the third world are being used to benefit the first world (Diana 2003) and labour groups helping in the education process about issues facing Filipinos (Ordinario 2003). Other opportunities included unions providing material resources such as printing, and meetings space (Ordinario 2003), the potential of “having a bigger voice with government policy” (Vasquez 2003) and the chance to utilize the expertise of minority ethnic organizers in unions (Diocson 2003). Finally, it was also expressed that “unions supporting the work of the community will make it easier to organize these workers in the future” (Ordinario 2003).

The PWC had benefited to date from some financial support from unions in contributions of small donations, donations for conferences, and space for a conference. They have worked on a casual basis with the Hospital Employee’s Union (HEU) to help the union understand barriers facing the Philippine community in joining unions through discussions and the HEU president’s attendance at PWC forums. The PWC has also worked informally with the International Transportation-workers’ Federation (ITF), the union that represents among other labourers, workers on ships. The PWC refers Filipino seafarers to the union

when they come to the PWC with work related issues and recently the PWC helped the ITF conduct a survey to help assess workers conditions by offering translation services.

Integrating community and labour groups services and functions independently was thought by one member to be sustainable for the PWC “because [members] have a higher political understanding of why [they] do the work” (Diana 2003). Another member perceived the collaboration of labour and community groups to mean the survival of a larger social movement (Diocson 2003). The potential for the PWC to be used by other organizations was, however, acknowledged by one interviewee (Ordinario 2003) but they are always open to working with other groups (Diocson 2003) “as long as the work is based in mutual understanding and respect...and [the other organization] supports the work of the centre” (Ordinario 2003).

4.2 The Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society (PICS) and the Canadian Farmworkers' Union (CFU)

The catalyst for the formation of PICS was the occurrence of a large number of teen suicides in the Indo-Canadian community in 1986 related to arranged marriages. A group of people recognized the need for a service to address the issues leading to these deaths (Basran 2003). The current executive director, Charan Gill was among PICS's founding members. He had been an active member and served on the executive of several other social justice organizations including the Canadian Farmworkers' Union (CFU) and the British Columbia Organization to Fight Racism (BCOFR). As the activities of the CFU and the BCOFR began to decrease for various reasons, Gill was left with “the skeletons of these organizations” (Gill 2003). He wanted to start an umbrella organization to do similar work. At the time, the community's values were in transition. The attack on Harmunder in 1984, a sacred temple in India, had large repercussions on the Indian community in Canada and created conflict

between fundamentalists and moderates. Integration for Indo-Canadians into Canadian society became increasingly difficult because of “the pull of the fundamentalists” (Gill 2003) “PICS wanted to change the thinking and value base of the community” (Gill 2003). The initial objectives of the organization were to identify and address the needs of the community. These needs included settlement and counselling services, education, and resource referral (Basran 2003).

PICS has since expanded their services to address a wide variety of needs in the community it serves. However, the emphasis of this research will be primarily on the services and functions that address farmworkers’ needs. This decision follows from a key aspect of this thesis, which is to examine organizing strategies that improve the conditions of marginalized populations as well as from an original intent to study the Canadian Farmworkers’ Union (CFU). Preliminary research on the CFU in BC indicated that the organization no longer organizes workers for the purposes of collective bargaining and its activities have declined dramatically from its origins in the early 1980s. PICS has consciously endeavoured to ‘pick up’ where the CFU ‘left off’ in fulfilling the needs of farmworkers while still working with the CFU in many aspects, including information gathering and doing advocacy at a government level. The CFU’s decline in activities and current work will be explained further as the history and activities of their organization and PICS are described.

Origins of the CFU

In the 1970s discussions among community activists led to attempts to organize farmworkers to improve their working conditions and wages (Basran 2003, Gill 2003, McLean 1995, 28). The CFU saw its origins in the Farmworkers’ Organizing Committee

(FWOC), which formed in 1979. The FWOC evolved into the CFU in 1980. The main issues facing farmworkers were “low pay, poor housing, unsafe working conditions, exclusion from labour and safety legislation, lack of childcare and racial discrimination (CFU 1995). These same issues continue to plague farm workers today.

When the FWOC formed, its immediate tasks were to recover unpaid wages to workers and resolve Unemployment Insurance issues. The committee recognized it also had to address the day-to-day problems experienced by farm workers (Binning 1986, 90). One of the largest barriers facing organizers was the shared ethnicity of the workers, contractors and many of the farm owners. There were significant social implications for workers organizing against the contractors and farm owners. Many of the workers are related to the contractors, come from the same village in Punjab or are at least acquainted with them (Gill 2003). “The contractors and the farmers were able to use many of the religious and cultural values of their peasant background to their own advantage” (Binning 1986, 91). For example, if a contractor owed a group of workers back-wages, they might invite them to a wedding or religious ceremony and then develop the reputation of being a “pious person” in the workers eyes. This would enable the contractor to hold the wages for longer. “These religious feelings and regional ties make it very difficult for newly arrived farmworkers to go against a contractor or farmer’ (Binning 1986, 91).

The initial strategy of the committee to overcome the problem of the workers’ sense of obligation or loyalty was to make the issues high profile. This approach was intended to take away the fear felt by the farmworkers in isolation, making it easier for them to join the FWOC (Binning 1986, 91-92). The activities of the FWOC at this time involved recovering farmworkers’ unpaid wages, but also mass mobilizing to raise awareness of issues facing

farmworkers and creating pressure on policy makers to change working conditions. Public meetings were held, successful job actions, including pickets and strikes were taken; demonstrations were held and a petition demanding expanded labour legislation to cover farm workers and domestic servants was delivered to premier Bill Bennett. "A large number of meetings, marches, rallies, court actions, strike actions and many other activities constantly kept [the FWOC] in the media" (Binning 1986, 108).

Integrating Community and Labour Functions in the CFU

Within roughly a year of the FWOC's formation the organization decided to become a union. The CFU was then formed with the belief that a union's legal structure, code and constitution could offer members more clout to reinforce contracts (Binning 1986, 109). The goals were to phase out the labour contractor, establish legal protection and improve working conditions for farmworkers (Binning 1986, 110). While the CFU did perform traditional trade union functions in terms of organizing bargaining units, launching strike action, and negotiating labour disputes, its functions and services extended beyond traditional union activities. Since its inception as the FWOC the CFU focused on changing government legislation rather than negotiating contracts with individual employers. This strategy as mentioned previously involved raising the profile of farmworkers issues, which required enlisting the support of other labour unions, community organizations, and the public. Clearly trade unions have used this strategy in the past; indeed, this is how many universal social benefits came to exist in Canada. However, since that time, the majority of Canadian unions have adopted the model of business unionism and rely primarily on the strategy of collective bargaining. The collaboration level between labour and community in the CFU was high. Some of the union's strongest supporters and regular attendants at CFU events

included representatives of the Indian People's Association in North America, International Woodworkers Association (New Westminster local), Canadian Labour Congress, BC Federation of Labour, BC Organization to Fight Racism, Men Against Rape, In Struggle, the Workers' Communist Party, and a core group of students from Simon Fraser University.

The CFU extended its activities beyond those of a typical trade union through its offering of English as Second Language lessons (ESL) and combining of cultural activities with union business as well. "The CFU's ESL Crusade launched in 1983, was fashioned after third world literacy campaigns, "designed to equip farmworkers with enough English to manage day-to-day life" (CFU 1983). The program relied heavily on volunteers who were primarily Anglo. The volunteers went to the farmworkers' homes and tailored lessons to the specific needs of the students (CFU 1983). The CFU held benefit dinners and dances often. "Along with raising money, they were a place for cultural exchange for people involved in the farmworkers movement (Binning 1986, 146)." The CFU also made a point of including cultural items in its meetings such as Punjabi folk dancing, poetry and songs to attract attendants. These activities, the ESL crusade, the opportunity to connect around culture at meetings and the chance for cultural exchange at benefits and dances demonstrate the CFU's commitment to meeting its members' needs. The organization was attempting to meet needs for the farmworkers not only in their capacity as workers but also in their capacity as members of a community.

Decline of CFU Activities

1982 was the beginning of the decline in activities for the CFU. By 1981, the union did not draw as much publicity for its struggle. "The involvement of organizers in legal proceedings was such that they were unable to continue wider mobilization" (Binning 1986,

129). In 1984 Bill Bennett the Social Credit Party premier of BC introduced Bill 28 which made it harder to organize workers and easier for employers to de-certify unions (Binning 1986, 131). Employers used tactics to instill fear of strikes in the workers, including threatening them that the berries may ripen in two or three days and the farmworkers would miss the work (Gill 2003). All of this came when BC's economy was troubled and its unemployment rate was high (Binning 1986, 131). The employers' tactics, limited work options for farmworkers, and various government bills made it more difficult for farmworkers to unionize. At the same time the CFU leadership found itself turning more and more to the traditional trade union activities of servicing existing bargaining units and engaging in legal proceedings. Some individuals, active in the union in its early years, felt that in retrospect, the decision to unionize may have come too soon (Binning 1986, 129). At least one organizer felt that efforts might have been more appropriately directed into sustaining the support of community and labour to create pressure for changes in government legislation for the farmworkers (Binning 1986, 129).

The CFU's objectives have remained the same since its emergence:

to abolish the contract labour system, to introduce minimum wage and maximum hours of work for farmworkers, to end discriminatory Unemployment Insurance regulations, to introduce and enforce protection against exposure to pesticides and dangerous machinery and to get daycare for the children of farmworkers. (CFU 1995)

The union's strategies and activities have, however, appeared to have altered over the years. The CFU has ceased to organize workers into bargaining units.

Their more recent activities involve organizing for community development purposes, labour dispute resolution, research, advocacy at a government policy level, and participation on committees effecting working conditions for farmworkers (Gill

2003, Basran 2003). In the years since the 1980s, the CFU appears to have been held together by the same handful of hardworking executive members with minimal participation from the membership.

Charan Gill's perception, executive member of both the CFU and PICS, is that, ultimately, the life situations of farmworkers make it difficult for them to organize (2003). Farmworkers, in Gill's words, are a "transient population, not interested in unionizing." He explains that the turnover among farmworkers is high, most leave the industry after roughly three to four years. Many of the workers are elderly and their relationship and shared regional ties with the contractors still pose a barrier to the workers organizing against them. Most of the farmworkers are concerned with making money to cover their food, shelter and Canadian immigration fees. They do not want to be a burden on their children (Gill 2003). These factors have led Gill to believe that the best approach for helping these workers is to give them service to meet their immediate needs (2003).

The election of a New Democrat provincial government in BC in 1993 offered hope to those engaged in the struggle for farmworkers' rights that some of their demands might be realized. It meant that a more co-operative, educative approach could be adopted toward the new government versus the earlier, more adversarial approach necessitated by the Social Credit government (Basran 2003 and Gill 2003). In 1994 the CFU, in partnership with Abbotsford Community Services (ACS), PICS and DEOL (named for a deceased farmworker), an arm's length research body of the CFU, conducted research using surveys to assess farmworkers' needs. The needs assessment assisted the organizations involved to successfully lobby for changes to

government regulation and to obtain money to provide services to the farmworkers (Basran 2003). As a non-profit organization already offering services to Indo-Canadians and having demonstrated an interest in serving farmworkers, PICS was in a good position to access the funding.

Meeting Farmworkers' Needs through PICS's Programs and Services

Initially, PICS had offered services to farmworkers on an ad-hoc basis (Basran 2003). Volunteers assisted farmworkers with Employment Insurance claims, pension forms, and income taxes (Gill 2003). In 1997, however, PICS received significant funding to start offering programs and services specifically for farmworkers. In the organization's early years, it offered services to Indo-Canadians to assist with settlement for new immigrants, and with employment (Grewal 2002). As PICS established credibility and as government funding mandates shifted emphasis to multicultural services from ethnocentric services, the organization began to offer other services and to a wider community of clients. The programs that PICS runs for farmworkers are only a portion of what it offers the community. Serving primarily Indo-Canadians, Pakistanis and a small African population in Surrey, Delta and Vancouver, PICS now offers settlement services, training programs, ESL classes, resource referral, and counselling services. Interpretation, translation and cultural consultation services are available to both organizations and individuals. PICS conducts research on community issues and delivers educational programs promoting intercultural understanding. Community development services include the South Asian Seniors' Self-Help Group, a weekly food bank operating out of the Sikh Temple, and an annual women's festival (PICS, 1998). The organization operates a seniors' housing complex, is in the process of developing a second one and operates a health co-operative. Some programs are targeted to specific populations

within the community such as ESL for homebound women and cultural activities and other services for youth including dance classes and workshops on anti-racism, cultural awareness and community capacity building (PICS 2002).

Farmworkers have access to all of PICS's services as do other members of the community. However, there are also a number of programs and services targeted to meet farmworkers' specific needs. These services include a legal advocacy program offered in conjunction with Abbotsford Community Services Society (ACS), the Older Workers Pilot Project, the Farm Labour Project, and the Agricultural Workers Employment Project. The legal advocacy program informs workers of their rights and responsibilities in the workplace through workshops, advocates for farmworkers to collect back wages, appeal EI claims or seek other legal redress and addresses policy and legislation to improve working conditions of seasonal workers. The Older Workers Pilot Project serves farmworkers over 55 and offers basic training in organic farming, knowledge of greenhouse nursery practices, and information about the Canadian labour market, employment standards, worker's compensation and other work related information. The Farm Labour Project, initiated in the 2002-harvesting season, is a program in development. In the long-term the project hopes to provide workers with "work experience in sustainable agriculture that will enable them to develop literacy, employment, skills, jobs, and stronger links to their own cultural groups and the community at large" (PICS 2002). The project intends to develop new enterprises including food and workers co-ops throughout the Lower Mainland and BC. Last season the Farm Labour project ran a pilot project to establish a best practices model. Through this project, PICS acted as a labour contractor to farmworkers, demonstrating that the farm labour business can be productive and profitable without short-changing workers or engaging in

other fraudulent activities. The Agricultural Workers Employment Program (AWEP) is intended to help break the seasonal employment cycle that most farmworkers experience. AWEP prepares students for seeking employment. In the process workers learn more about their rights in the workplace from their instructors and guest speakers from WCB, ESB, EI and other agencies and organizations.

PICS Organizational Structure

PICS is a large organization with over 40 staff and in an average year, almost 80 volunteers (Gill 2003). The PICS location that offers services to farmworkers functions with eight staff. At this office, the Surrey Annex office, most programs operate with one or two staff and in some cases with a program manager. Decisions are made in both a formal and informal manner. Each department has weekly and monthly meetings. The program managers meet once a month and put forward program issues with the executive director. The executive director then poses the issues to the Board of Directors if they are policy level issues (Grewal 2002). “Things come from subordinates, they can go up” through to the top, and the whole welfare of the organization is considered (Mann 2003). The Board of Directors is comprised of ten members who are elected volunteers. Their backgrounds include a retired librarian, retired social worker, community activist, lawyer, and an accountant. Clients are able to “have a say” by becoming members of the organization and attending general meetings but only roughly 1.5% of the clients do become members (Gill 2003).

At the Surrey Annex office decisions are made in an informal manner as well as formal. The staff gathers for a “communal lunch” on a daily basis and issues are discussed during this time as well. Everyone brings a food dish and everyone helps to clean up. Within individual programs decision-making can happen in a less hierarchal manner as well. The

OWPP for example, involves participants in the program planning. Their input is obtained and used to tailor lessons to their needs (Singal 2002). Decision making in this program occurs primarily using consensus decision making and program facilitators seek student input before implementing decisions (Singal 2002).

PICS's Goals

The general goals of PICS are expansive if one chooses to look at all aspects of the organization. The following discussion, however, is limited to those objectives involved in the organization's services and functions as they directly relate to farmworkers. These general goals include education, helping with integration into Canadian society, providing services to meet farmworkers' immediate needs, collaborating with other organizations doing similar work, improving working conditions for farmworkers and increasing their access to employment. A more detailed list is provided in Table 3.

Table 3 Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society Goals
<p><i>Educate</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate farm workers about their rights • Educate farm workers about health and safety on the job • Validate already existing knowledge base in students • Teach Life skills • Offer English as second language (ESL) classes
<p><i>Integrate into Canadian Society</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with settlement issues • Offer counselling
<p><i>Improve Farmworkers' Working Conditions and Access to Employment</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect workers • Make change to legislation effecting farm workers • Improve workers' job search skills • Train workers on organic farming techniques, marketing, etc. • Increase workers' opportunities at employment • Create co-operatives • Provide advocacy to farm workers to deal with fraudulent contractors, EI claims, etc.
<p><i>Provide Services to Meet Immediate Needs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior's Housing • Resource referral • Offer counselling
<p><i>Collaborating with Similar Organizations</i></p>

PICS's Strategies

PICS integrates the services and functions of a community and labour organization primarily in a collaborative manner although to some degree, in an independent manner as well. PICS is predominantly a community organization; however, the effort that it directs towards improving conditions for farm workers bears some resemblance to a labour organization in that it performs advocacy for workers and educates them about their rights and health and safety issues. Within PICS' AWEP and OWPP programs, for example,

farmworkers are educated about their entitlements with respect to the Employment Standards Act, the Labour Code, WCB, and EI. They are encouraged to take concerns to their employers and if this fails to accomplish their objectives they are encouraged to come to PICS for advocacy or other forms of assistance. PICS also advocates for farmworkers at a policy level with government and other decision-making bodies. This advocacy is done by the organization itself but is also often done in collaboration with the CFU. PICS and CFU “worked in partnership on a lot of issues—standing together on issues (Basran 2003).” Research into farmworkers’ issues is also often a collaborative effort between PICS and the CFU.

PICS also offers farmworkers many services typically associated with a community organization. The OWPP and AWEP, while offering participants information about their rights, are primarily job training and job search programs. Farmworkers have access to the broader services of PICS including ESL classes, settlement services, a seniors’ self-help group, and occasional cultural activities including an annual women’s festival and more regularly, Punjabi dance performances. Farmworkers are also given priority in PICS’ seniors’ housing project.

The CFU is a part of PICS formally and informally, demonstrating the collaborative relationship between the organizations. On a formal basis, the CFU is a life member of PICS. The CFU offered a large contribution to the funding of PICS’ Seniors Housing Project. The CFU’s meetings are held at the PICS’s offices. More informally, many CFU members utilize PICS’s services, for example, many members of the CFU are members of PICS’s Rainbow Health Co-op (Gill 2003). “CFU is the contact point and PICS supports the CFU in a greater capacity with claims and services” (Basran 2003). As Grewal described it “the information

has been collected by one source, [the] same information is acted upon by a different source—by a different organization” (2002).

Gill, PICS’s founder and executive director, states that integrating the organization’s functions and services to meet the needs of its members with regard to community and work was a strategy from the beginning (2003). The strategies PICS currently employs to improve social conditions for farmworkers include but are not limited to, offering job search skills and job training, advocacy, education on workers’ rights, operating pilot projects, and making legislative changes. Refer to Table 4 for a more detailed list.

Table 4 Progressive Intercultural Community Services Society Strategies	
<i>Job Search and Training</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach job search skills • Teach organic farming techniques • Increase familiarity with computers
<i>Advocacy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redress wages owing to workers, appeal claims, etc • Pressure for legislative change
<i>Meeting Workers' Immediate Needs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist with settlement • Give the workers service i.e. counselling • Resource referral i.e. if isolated, refer to temples, seniors centres • ESL classes
<i>Pilot Projects</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PICS operating as farm labour contractor to demonstrate possibility of paying fair wages and remaining financially stable • Older Workers Pilot Project to teach organic farming techniques and marketing techniques
<i>Education on Rights</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing educational materials • Helping to establish Farm and Ranch Safety and Health Association (FARSHA) • Teaching rights in employment and training programs
<i>Operating in a Co-operative rather than Adversarial Manner</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating change for farmworkers from non-profit setting rather than union setting • Creating change through more information sharing, presenting research
<i>Making Legislative Change</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobbying, petitions • Establishing health and safety regulations, and regulation on minimum wages
<i>Creating Co-operatives</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquired land for workers • Eliminating middlemen (labour contractors) • Creating ability for workers to obtain fair wages
<i>Co-coordinating with Similar Organizations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enable similar organizations to help farm workers in other regions • Working with other multi cultural service providers

As discussed previously, there were many barriers to organizing farmworkers into unions, “many were elderly, workers, there are big social implications as many of the workers are related to the contractors, [and] there is a three or four year turnover in workers” (Gill 2003). In addition to these barriers to unionizing, the opportunity to work more cooperatively arose when an NDP government came into power in 1993. “The strategy for helping these workers altered from organizing them into unions into providing services such as training in organic farming techniques and establishing a co-op” (Gill 2003). In Gill’s perspective, the strategies that have been most successful have been “giving the workers service” and “meeting their immediate needs” (2003).

Among the services PICS provides to meet farmworkers immediate needs is its Legal Advocacy Program offered in collaboration with ACS. Workers use the program, primarily, to recover lost wages (Gill 2003). However, they also call upon PICS to represent them informally in other disputes with their employers. The workers often face no access to water or washrooms on the worksite, unsafe transportation to and from the worksite (provided by the contractors), and faulty scales for weighing farmworkers’ containers of produce. In one dispute, PICS alerted WCB to a contractors’ faulty scale. WCB then went to the farm and sealed the scale to disable contractor from tipping it in their favour (Mann 2003). Through PICS’s general services, recent immigrants can receive assistance with settlement issues, seniors can access PICS’s non-profit housing, clients can receive counselling, ESL classes, and resource referral to meet their immediate needs.

In efforts to break the seasonal employment cycle and encourage farmworkers to seek alternative employment opportunities, PICS offers the AWEP program to teach job search skills and operates the OWPP to train workers in organic farming. The AWEP program

teaches participants primarily about creating resumes, interview skills, networking and other such job-hunt skills. A significant portion, however, is dedicated to educating farmworkers on their rights and obligations. One day of the program is also used to introduce participants to PICS's other services such as programs to women, the computer centre, and the health co-op. Participants learn about the Worker's Compensation Board (WCB), Employment Insurance (EI), and the Employment Standards Branch. Information is given to them about the Old Age Pension Plan and the Canadian Pension Plan. A number of CFU educational tools are used to depict the history of farmwork in BC and information about pesticides (PICS 2002). From AWEF, workers feel able to speak out and question their conditions; this threatens contractors (Mann 2003).

The OWPP, which PICS operates in collaboration with a local sustainable agriculture organization Farm Folks City Folks (FFCF), was developed to give training in organic farming techniques to farmworkers between ages 55-64. The program teaches farmworkers about organic farming theory, and methods including composting, weeding, pruning, planting, perma-culture, preparing the land, pest management, greenhouses and marketing (Singal 2002). The teaching approach is androgogical in that it validates students' already existing knowledge base. Many of BC's Indo Canadian farmworkers worked in agriculture in India as well and are old enough to have knowledge of organic farming which was common before pesticides and commercialized farming became the norm in India. The OWPP's program manager describes the approach:

It's just bringing them to understand that we are talking about the same thing that they used to do before the pesticides came in the sixties and they have extensive knowledge of that so we are basically jogging their memory... reminding them of their past practices and helping them to move along today. (Singal 2002)

This program also provides information for participants on their rights in the workplace and knowledge of health and safety issues. The hope is that with this training, workers will gain more specialized knowledge and can gain employment in safer sectors of the industry.

A further strategy that PICS has adopted is to operate pilot projects. OWPP, described above, is one such project. The Labour Contractor project that the Farm Labour Project (FLP) operated last season is another. This project saw PICS acting as a contractor to farmworkers to demonstrate that it was possible to pay legal wages at regular intervals and be profitable without engaging in fraudulent activities. Employees received stable wages, they were paid every two weeks, which is not typical, and they did not face harassment from contractors (Mann 2003). The project was so successful in fact, that it caused controversy for the EI program (Grewal 2003). Farmworker claimants had an appropriate number of weeks and hours to be eligible for EI, something employees do not achieve working for most contractors. The contractors often alter the farmworkers' hours to avoid paying overtime. This prompted the EI branch to call in the program's manager to verify and question the claimant's and employer's information (Grewal 2003). The fact that the EI branch questioned the validity of claimant's information is probably indicative of how often labour contractors in the industry are fraudulent in their records.

Providing education to farmworkers on their rights and health and safety issues is another significant method employed by PICS to help the workers. As previously described, PICS offers this type of education in their job search and job training programs. Similar education is also offered by PICS in conjunction with ACS in the Legal Advocacy Program in a workshop format. This program not only educates farmworkers, it also conducts

information sessions for service providers in BC to highlight the issues affecting farm workers. PICS has also created and promoted educational materials related to health and safety issues in the agricultural industry (Basran 2003). They have done this mainly in collaboration with the CFU and other organizations through the Farm and Ranch Safety and Health Association (FARSHA), established in 1993. The organization works with commodity associations, community service organizations, labour, agribusiness and the WCB Prevention Division. FARSHA “publishes and distributes educational materials produced in-house or by other organizations that share its objectives” (FARSHA 2000). The association’s materials and products include items such as videos, booklets, safety manuals, training programs and presentation packages on issues ranging from handling animals to pesticide safety to farm machinery safety.

PICS has actively pursued making legislative change for the benefit of farmworkers as an important strategy, again, often in collaboration with other groups. They have lobbied, petitioned, attended rallies and presented research to establish health and safety regulations, minimum wages and other regulations around working conditions. In 1993/94 for example, PICS collaborated with the CFU, DEOL and ACS to conduct a needs assessment over the Lower Mainland. It was criticized by farmowners but when it was presented to the Employment Standards Commission, “about 60% of the paper was made into legislation in the ESA and by the WCB” (Basran 2003). The outcomes included the establishment of a 10-hour workday and a piece rate for farmworkers. In the mid 90s, the efforts of PICS and other diligent organizations obtained the introduction of formal enforcement through the WCB of inspection vehicles to follow up complaints and inspect contractors’ vans (Basran 2003). More recently PICS, in conjunction with ACS organized a petition with the farmworkers to

oppose the Liberal government's introduction of the "First time worker" \$6.00 an hour minimum wage campaign. The organizations and farmworkers feared that new immigrants to Canada, a large portion of farmworkers, may be exploited by this legislation on the basis that they have not performed this work in Canada, despite many of the workers prior farm work experience in India (Mann 2003). Through the Legal Advocacy Program that PICS operates with the ACS, identifying, assessing and addressing policy and legislation to improve the working conditions of seasonal workers is part of the program's ongoing mandate. PICS also participates in consultation processes with the Ministry of Labour. Recently PICS attempted to present the farmworkers situation to advocate for a return to legislation that would pay overtime rates to farmworkers working more than 120 hours every two weeks (Grewal 2003). This Ministry, under the Liberal government raised the number of hours to 160 every two weeks before an employer is obligated to pay overtime. PICS has been unsuccessful in this particular consultation process to date but had a great deal of success with this approach during the NDP's time in office. PICS also participates on an Agricultural Advisory Committee made up of WCB, workers, growers and the Ministry of Agriculture. This has been another avenue to make changes to the Employment Standards Act (Grewal 2002).

A further strategy PICS has adopted has been to form Co-operatives. Among the services PICS offers to its general clientele is a consumers' healthcare co-operative, which many farmworkers utilize. PICS also have a land-based co-op. They lease twenty acres of land. Each member has one acre of land to utilize for subsistence farming (Gill May 2003). PICS is also in the process of establishing a workers' co-operative specifically for farmworkers. The Farm Labour Project is the basis of the workers' co-op. PICS is currently operating the project, but the goal is have the workers run it themselves in the future. In the

interim, PICS continues to teach workers the skills to administrate it until the workers are prepared to direct the co-op (Gill, May 2003). In the long term, PICS “wants to set up worker co-ops... which would possibly restrict the reliance on contractors for farmworkers” (Grewal 2002). They would like to establish a network of growers and a network of workers. The rationale behind the workers’ co-operative, is in part, that “you can still increase the bargaining power if workers are in a co-op, but it’s not adversarial” relative to a union (Gill 2003). Ultimately, this co-op is part of a strategy to create the ability for workers to obtain fair wages.

PICS have found collaborating with other agencies to be another means of assisting farmworkers. PICS co-ordinates with other farmworkers’ groups in Abbotsford and Kelowna, offering them information and education to enable them to give their clients similar education and services. PICS works with anti-poverty groups, anti-racism groups and women’s organizations and is a member of the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA). These latter affiliations benefit the wider population served by PICS but also have a positive, although indirect effect on the farmworkers.

Operating in a co-operative rather than adversarial manner was a strategy emphasized by several interviewees (Basran 2003, Gill 2003 and Grewal 2002). Charan Gill’s experience of working with the farmworkers has led him to alter his strategy for helping these workers from organizing them into unions into providing services such as training in organic farming techniques and establishing a co-op (2003). The transition in strategy was, for Gill, based on the difficulty that the CFU encountered organizing farmworkers. The difficulty in his view, as was previously discussed, was rooted in the workers high turnover and need to prioritize

meeting their basic needs in life over participating in a union, which might jeopardize their employment and connection to their community (2003).

A further explanation for the change in strategy was the change in government in BC. In the 1980s “the CFU did an excellent job; they moved forward and they had a lot of people but things changed” (Basran 2003). Satvinder Basran’s perspective is that a right wing government necessitated the union adopt an adversarial approach to create change “but then you had an NDP government so you don’t need to do that, what you need to do—is you need to have another approach to getting your information, to getting your needs met” (2003). Basran felt that more co-operation is achieved in a non-profit setting than in a union setting (2003). “It was also a natural thing for PICS to take over or to take up more of the educational role...PICS was a natural sort of venue...because you have like minded people [in government] to listen” (Basran 2003). Until 1982, the CFU did more profile raising, rallying, public protests and more strikes but “with a more open government the approach became more presenting information and doing research, working with like minded agencies to promote the cause” (Basran 2003). This approach was adopted in the mid 1990s and in 1996 and 1997 the government implemented a tremendous enforcement process. “Things started changing—HRDC started working with ES, interministerial agreements with different levels of government, communication that was never before—started to change working conditions for farmworkers, you had WCB working with FARSHA” (Basran 2003).

During the NDP’s time in BC, the farmworkers had a sympathetic body of decision makers in power. Research and presenting information were a possible means for changing legislation. This change from an unsympathetic Social Credit government to an NDP government as well as a realization that the farmworkers immediate needs make unionization

difficult apparently necessitated a shift in strategy to help the workers. The effort to unionize workers and create pressure on the government and employers through rallies and strikes was minimized and more co-operative approaches such as conducting research, briefing government and offering more services to farmworkers to meet their immediate needs were adopted. PICS has offered advocacy, job search skills and training, assistance with settlement services, ESL and education to farmworkers regarding their rights and safety in the workplace to help meet their immediate needs. These services, as well as forming co-operatives, operating pilot projects, collaborating with similar organizations and working to create legislative change are part of PICS's strategy to improve the conditions in farmworkers' lives. These strategies are intended to increase the workers' ability to obtain fair wages, eliminate the middlemen in the industry, help to integrate the farmworkers into Canadian society and assist in meeting their basic needs.

While the services to farmworkers will surely continue, tactics to change protective legislation for the workers may change once again, reverting back to adversarial approaches including a court challenge, and "hitting the streets" to gain public support again. This shift follows from the current provincial Liberal government's disregard for farmworkers' rights and recent exclusion of these workers from the Employment Standards Act. This change is a devastating blow to the workers, eliminating overtime, increasing the number of hours they can legally be asked to work in a week—rescinding all the previous gains achieved by the workers and their supporters pre-1995. The exclusion of the workers from the act is designed, as both the Labour Minister and Agriculture Minister insist, to "improve job opportunities and make agriculture productions in B.C. more competitive with the Maritimes, Washington State and other western provinces" (The Province [Vancouver], 20 May 2003). The

government's measures appear to call for adversarial tactics once again. These more adversarial tactics will be conducted under the jurisdiction of the CFU, however, not PICS (Gill May 2003). The CFU, presumably faces less risk, particularly in the area of funding, than PICS does in engaging in this type of activity.

Overcoming Barriers

Barriers facing farmworkers in their organizing and PICS in integrating community and labour aspects in their services and functions have been categorized into three areas for the purposes of this paper. They are barriers to organizing farm workers, barriers to continuing the work of PICS and barriers to integrating the labour and community functions and services of the organization.

Many of the barriers to organizing farmworkers have been touched upon already and so will be briefly addressed here. Farmworkers, the majority of whom are first generation, elderly Indo-Canadian immigrants, have immediate concerns related to basic survival, for example, housing, transportation to and from work, language barriers and learning a new culture. Since many of the workers are recent immigrants sponsored by their families, they feel indebted to pay their immigration fees and don't want to be a financial burden to their children or relatives (Gill 2003). For many workers, the thoughts of asserting their rights with employers and engaging in conflict is not a possibility given that they are often related to the contractors or know them socially. Clearly, this presents a problem, especially given the prevalence of fraudulent activity among the contractors including not paying wages and submitting inaccurate statements of employees' hours to EI. In Singal's view,

the farmworkers require leadership and that is where PICS comes in ... [the farmworkers] understand the issues, they come up with creative solutions but they want somebody to take the lead. They are willing to go with you. If you went somewhere to present a paper there would be twenty, thirty people that

would go with you to make certain that if there were questions they could answer but because of their linguistic inabilities, their general lack of confidence to speak in public they might not be able to present those ideas themselves but they'll certainly back you up. (2002)

Farmworkers often have a low literacy rate and little opportunity to develop leadership skills, making it difficult to organize among themselves (Singal 2002). There is usually a 3 to 4 year turnover in the industry, which also makes the task of mobilizing farmworkers into a stable force, challenging.

Having identified these barriers, PICS offers services to address them. For example, ESL classes are offered regularly for farmworkers, advocacy is available to workers to obtain back wages and resolve other disputes with employers, and PICS has offered farmworkers priority in its housing complex for seniors. These are among a few of the services as well as those described previously to create the ability within farmworkers themselves to improve their living and working conditions.

In delivering these services PICS faces its own constraints. The major funding cuts made by BC's Liberal government have left the organization with 15% less core funding and 15% less funding to run their ESL classes. Grewal also attributed the competition for scarce funding as a barrier to PICS being able to work more closely with other organizations (2002). The agency has, however, endeavoured to maintain collaborative efforts such as its partnerships with ACSS and FFCF and continues to participate in associations of similar organizations such as AMSA and Networking, Education and Training for Workers in Employment, Rehabilitation and Career Counselling (NETWERCC).

The final category of challenges facing PICS (for the purposes of this thesis) are those that hinder the organization's efforts to integrate labour and community functions and services in an independent manner and in a collaborative manner (with other organizations).

These barriers are primarily related to constraints from their funders. When PICS's Social Programs manager was asked about the ways in which PICS mobilizes its members to take collective action, he responded by saying that "at the end of the day...the funders do not pay you to do this kind of job" (Grewal 2002). It would not be suitable for PICS to do this given their funders' mandates. For example, a significant portion of PICS funding comes from HRDC to operate employment programs. PICS could jeopardize the employment programs that it offers farmworkers if it mobilized the workers to oppose employment related legislature (Gill 2003). Similarly PICS is unable to provide many social or community building opportunities for its farmworker programs' participants because "PICS is an organization which is funded by various sources and each of those funders have a mandate—provide these services—that's all it is" (Grewal 2002). While the source of the organization's funding enables them to offer much needed programs and services to farmworkers, it also prevents them from performing some of the traditional functions associated with labour groups such as mobilizing the workers, and functions associated with community groups such as facilitating socializing. PICS's close working relationship with the CFU, does help them to overcome the issue of risking funding in mobilizing the farmworkers. This type of work can be conducted through the CFU and does not necessarily have to be closely associated with PICS.

PICS also faces constraints in collaborating with other organizations to further integrate their functions and services. These barriers include a lack of time and funding. One interviewee described the situation of working with other groups as sometimes having "no cohesiveness, each person trying to pull in their direction in some ways, no time to sit together" (Singal 2002). A second respondent also referred to time as being a factor in

preventing her from being able to work with other organizations (Mann 2003). Competition for funding was also considered a constraint in preventing more collaborative efforts between organizations.

Interviewees' speculation about what might pose barriers to greater integration of labour and community services and functions include a lack of models of this integration (Singal 2002), a lack of knowledge about the labour movement (Gill 2003), language and cultural barriers, a right wing political orientation of a board of directors (Gill 2003) leadership styles of organizations (Basran 2003), the perception of unions as being self-interested and a fear of funding cuts (Grewal 2002). Labour, it was suggested, is perceived as self-interested by the community. "Community organizations [are] totally social work...if the general welfare of people [were] the paramount issue, then they [community and labour] could work together on social issues (Grewal 2002)." Unions are not taking up social issues enough (Grewal 2002). Basran echoed a similar view saying that "the structure of unionism hasn't changed since the industrial revolution [there is] too much self interest" (2003). However, Basran also attributed leadership styles on the parts of both community and labour organizations as a constraint to more integration. "There has to be a willingness for both to sit at the table and think about their members needs instead of their own agenda" (2003). In his perspective, there is too much "you give me this, I'll give you that" and not enough "how can we best serve the members" (2003).

Opportunities

One interviewee felt that if unions could change this perception of being self-interested by working with community groups more, they could increase their numbers (Grewal 2002). It was also suggested that one potential opportunity of community and labour

groups collaborating more was that the labour movement could contract out funds for providing specific advocacy work, particularly in light of recent government policy changes, for example, advocacy on changes to the WCB or human rights funding for marginalized workers (Grewal, 2002). Other potential advantages proposed by interviewees included networking, information sharing, general support (Basran, 2003) and advantages to lobbying (Gill, 2003 and Basran, 2003).

Several opportunities were cited as already being benefits of PICS working collaboratively with other groups and in particular, with the CFU. The CFU receives material supports in the form of basic administrative support and office space from PICS. The organizations share information with each other, with ACSS and with other organizations. PICS and other organizations assist each other in their service provision and organizing efforts. The programs that PICS is running are a benefit from CFU activities, “because they [the CFU] champion those causes...for three decades, as a result, the Employment Standards brought in rules and regulations to protect the farmworkers. It was a direct effect of the work done by the Canadian Farmworkers’ Union” (Grewal 2002). The overlapping membership of PICS staff on FARSHA and in the CFU was viewed as beneficial because “the CFU are able to attend meetings at higher levels, for example, regarding the labour code” (Mann 2003). “Working in partnership has increased the credibility in the agricultural workers’ community. Farm workers turn to both groups more, use their services more” (Basran, 2003). The collaboration between PICS and the CFU is also believed to have increased the level of consciousness regarding health and safety for farm workers among the union movement in general (Basran 2003).

Integrating the services and functions of community and labour organizations was a strategy for PICS from its origins (Gill 2003). It was Gill's view that "communities can't do community development work until they're integrated" in their services and functions (2003).

ⁱ Many Filipinos immigrating to Canada as domestic workers prior to this time are also likely to have been professionals in the Philippines. Prior to 1991 however, they required a grade 12 education in the Philippines, now they require the equivalent of a Canadian grade 12 education. The Canadian government sets this standard to the equivalent of post-secondary in the Philippines.

ⁱⁱ Under the current guidelines workers coming in under the LCP must complete a 2-year contract with the employer. Thankfully, the hard efforts of the FNSG and its supporters have been able to persuade government to not penalize *nurses* for breaking their 2-year contract as LCs under the Provincial Nominee Program. Under this program they can apply for the fast track process for landed immigrant status, for which their profession of nursing qualifies them.

CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Comparison of Organizations' Goals, Strategies, Constraints and Opportunities

Each organization's broader goals, in part, reflect differences in their general orientation and purposes. Both organizations strive to meet the immediate needs of their members or clients. The PWC, however, is a centre for activism, working to also organize and mobilize marginalized workers. It is an overtly political organization ran by its members. PICS is primarily a service provider and is driven by its professional staff. PICS, comparatively, is less overtly political. Both organizations have been quite successful at utilizing diverse strategies and hence, meeting a broad range of needs in their communities. The PWC' strategies range from facilitating peer led nursing review classes to hosting cultural shows to empower its members. PICS also utilizes a wide set of strategies to address a variety of areas of farmworkers' lives. They include training in organic agriculture methods for elderly farmworkers and creating non-profit housing for seniors.

Constraints to organizing domestic workers and farmworkers are similar in that both groups of workers face extreme cultural isolation in Canadian society, both groups face issues relative to basic survival such as accessing housing and obtaining wages owed to them from abusive and exploitative employers. The domestic workers, however, also face physical isolation since most are required to live in their employers' homes at least five days a week. This makes the task of bringing these workers together more arduous. The domestic workers are often in Canada without their families, compounding their isolation. Farmworkers, comparatively, are usually sponsored by relatives already residing in Canada, to immigrate. Most farmworkers, in fact, obtain their jobs through family or social networks. This dynamic

further impedes organizers' efforts to encourage farmworkers to assert their rights with their employers.

Constraints preventing the PWC from further collaboration with labour organizations include differing perspectives and objectives, a lack of funding, perceived racism exhibited by labour organizations, the perception that unions lack an understanding for the PWC's work and education on international solidarity, and the apparent self-interest and protectionism of unions. PICS's barriers to the same type of collaborative integration include, similar to the PWC, a lack of time and lack of funding. PICS's participants speculated that one obstacle to this type of integration might stem from the perception of unions as being self-interested, corroborating the PWC interviewees' views. The PWC questioned the sincerity of interest on labour's part of connecting with the community, as did participants from PICS. The view was widely held among PWC interviewees, that labour unions are protectionist for their own membership, which is likely a consequence of their structure and mandate but the PWC feel it is time for these things to change. Constraints experienced by PICS in trying to integrate the functions and services of community and labour organizing *independently*, that is, within their own organization were primarily related to funding. The services to farmworkers that PICS is able to provide are limited according to the mandate of their funders.

Both organizations projected the potential benefits of unions working with the community to be a change in community's perception of labour, which may make it easier to organize workers and thereby increase unions' memberships. Interviewees saw potential advantages to lobbying efforts and increasing labour and community's collective influence on government policy. They suggested that information sharing, material support, and

general support between groups might be benefits as well. Members of the PWC speculated that collaboration between labour and community groups could develop a broader analysis for the organizations, and a mutual understanding of the division of workers as well as an improved understanding of first world exploitation of the third world. Other potential opportunities involved the labour movement benefiting from particular expertise of community organizations, such as their advocacy skills involving WCB or human rights issues, or utilizing the skills of organizers of specific communities as staff within unions.

To date, the PWC had benefited from small financial and other material supports from labour unions. They have worked casually with the ITF, referring Filipino seafarers to the union and helping the ITF with a survey to assess seafarer's working conditions. The CFU and PICS have received material supports from each other. Their collaboration is believed to be beneficial in terms of research efforts, lobbying, information sharing and being able to utilize the strengths and capacities of each organization to assist farmworkers, for example, PICS's capacity to service workers immediate needs and the CFU's ability to apply pressure to create legislative change.

5.2 Factors Affecting Organizations' Abilities to Integrate Functions & Services and Approaches to Integration

Funding Sources

Funding has provided both constraints and opportunities to the PWC and PICS. The PWC, for example, is able to mobilize their membership and can adopt stances of direct opposition to government policies or actions in their political and awareness raising campaigns. Margeret Berry would describe this as being able to address the "cause" of the PWC's members' situations. The organization's economic self-reliance allows them the freedom to do the political and organizing work they want to do. This self-reliance, however,

does limit their capacity to do more unity building with other organizations because they lack the staff resources to give this activity priority. It also curtails the number and type of services they can offer their members.

PICS's reliance on government funding prevents them from mobilizing their workers for advocacy purposes despite occupying an opportune position of having rapport with and access to farmworkers. The mandate of their funders does not allow PICS to perform more community building activities with the farmworkers either because the bulk of their funding is related to employment programs. However, PICS' access to this type of funding is an asset because farmworkers now have access to services to fulfill their immediate needs. These are needs that a labour organization like the CFU would have immense difficulty meeting due to their inability to secure funding as a government adversary.

Perception of Labour's Self Interest

The perception of unions' self-interest was raised often in interviews as a barrier or potential barrier to community organizations' collaboration with labour organizations. The predominant model of unionism in North America today is business unionism, which operates with an inward focus on the working conditions of its own membership (Hoxie 1920, 45).

The continuation of a 'business' style of unionism may force more community organizations to take up their members' work related struggles, encouraging an independent style of community and labour organizing integration. A self-reliance of this type has already been demonstrated in minority-ethnic communities who were historically shunned by unions. Groups working with these communities were some of the early sites of an integration of community and labour organizing in the United States in the Settlement House movement.

Minority-ethnic community organizations continue to adopt an independent style of integration of community and labour services and functions as is evident in the previously cited examples of AIWA, PCUN and the PWC.

Some examples exist, however, of unions' interest in meeting their members' needs outside of the workplace and reaching beyond the interests of their own membership to improve social conditions for residents in particular communities or for workers in 'hard-to-organize' sectors. The labour movement, in increasing the profile of this work, could promote its benefits and help alter the public perception of unions. In addition, a radical education process and shift in structure and strategies within unions could also transform the current style of unionism, which perpetuates a gap in conditions and wages between workers without working to improve the situation for those occupying the jobs with low wages and poor working conditions. A shift of this sort would not only change the public's perception of labour unions but would also provide new organizing opportunities for unions, particularly in the growing sectors of the workforce that are precarious.

Life Conditions of Marginalized Groups

People comprising marginalized populations are clearly not a homogeneous mass. Their life situations vary radically according to their, age, gender, race-ethnicity, education, class, support networks, sexual orientation, level of physical ability, etc. The women approaching the PWC and becoming its members often possess post secondary education and are within a younger age range, than the women and men approaching PICS. PWC members and clients have often been trained as professionals in the Philippines including the occupations of nursing and teaching. The clientele PICS works with are elderly and usually have little formal education. PICS clientele have often practiced agriculture in India. They

also have usually immigrated to Canada through family sponsorship whereas PWC members and clients often first come to Canada on work visas, indentured to employers. The diverse circumstances of the populations organizations work with will at least in part, determine their strategic approach to improving these circumstances. The strategies selected in turn, can influence an organizations' approach to integrating the services and functions of labour and community groups. For example, an organization choosing to focus on a constituency's immediate needs will primarily provide services, which, requires funding. The implications of which, for integrating services, were discussed earlier.

Leadership/Organizational Structure

The PWC is a member driven organization. A large portion of women whom come to the centre for services become members eventually and become active in the centre. The women are urged to participate in the planning and decision making of the PWC's work. Board elections happen every two years and board members have to be members of the organization already participating on a PWC committee. PICS, in contrast to the PWC, is run by its staff with limited involvement of the farmworkers in the organization. The same appears to be true of the CFU at the moment. The CFU continues because of the work of a small number of dedicated leaders who have maintained the union, albeit, with limited activity in the last decade or more. The population accessing PICS's services seldom become members. Their relationship to the organization is typically that of client.

The difference between member/client involvements in the organizations may be attributable, at least in part, to differences in class between the populations being served and organized. The PWC's constituency, as was discussed in the previous section, are often professionals in the Philippines. They are better equipped to do the work required by the

PWC, for example, writing letters or organizing administrative aspects of the centre. PICS's clients are at a greater disadvantage to organize themselves in this aspect. Most, for example, are illiterate. These differences in structure impact on the organization's capacity to mobilize and organize its clients and members. The PWC is able to rely on support from its members, in instances that require oppositional action toward government. The centre can also continue if its funding is cut because its foundation is the volunteer efforts of its members. PICS's position is not as strong in these respects. The organization relies on a paid staff.

The structure and leadership styles of an organization may prevent greater collaboration between labour and community groups. One interviewee for example, speculated that board members might prevent a community group's collaboration with labour, if the board were right wing in political orientation. A structure similar to that of the PWC might prevent this type of 'veto' power by a board or at least prevent the possibility of vast differences in thinking on an issue. Presumably a structure that has board members being elected from the membership of the PWC's committees implies that the board members have come through a similar education process, and would hold similar ideas as the general membership on collaboration or integration processes.

5.3 Implications for Other Organizations

While each case is unique and requires case sensitive approaches, the experiences of the PWC and PICS provide useful insight to groups or individuals working with or wishing to work with marginalized populations. The situations of both organizations demonstrate the integral role that funding plays in determining the strategies groups can use and to what degree they can integrate community and labour organizing.

External funding is always accompanied by a mandate. It is evident in PICS's circumstance that this limits the recipient organizations' activities to those agreeable to the funding body both in terms of fulfilling the funder's mandate as well as fulfilling the funder's political agenda. PICS's recent experience of the exclusion of farmworkers from the ESA illustrates how swiftly an 'unfriendly' government can eradicate the work and gains made by organizations and activists. This recent reversal of farmworkers' rights indicates the significance of political climate and emphasizes the need for community, service based organizations to maintain alliances with groups able to adopt approaches or actions that may not be wise for the CBO to engage in directly. Recent changes legislated by the Campbell government in BC have worsened the working conditions of farmworkers. PICS can continue to offer services to this population to attempt to mitigate the hardship the workers will experience but because of its funding sources, the organization is unable to directly attack the cause of the additional burdens that farmworkers will face. A reliance on outside and, in particular, government funders has pushed PICS to be creative in its collaborative integration of these functions and services, and maintain its complementary relationship to the CFU. This collaboration demonstrates the possibilities available to service oriented, 'government funding' dependent organizations to address the root causes of the social conditions of their marginalized constituents.

PICS has been highly creative in its strategies to aid farmworkers. For example, the organizations' pilot project to act as a fair farm labour contractor for workers was successful and is an excellent basis for the beginning of a workers' co-operative. This project is a self-reliant and feasible means to improve the farmworkers' conditions and is particularly

pragmatic during times when labour faces stiff opposition from the current government in power.

PICS found their integrated approach to performing their functions and delivering services to be a necessary way to do community development work. Farmworkers have experienced the advantages to PICS's collaboration with the CFU through the identification of the workers' needs by the CFU and the delivery of services by PICS to address their housing needs, health needs, settlement issues and employment related issues including improved protective legislation and recovered back-wages.

The PWC exemplifies an organization that is more self-reliant with respect to funding and therefore is at greater liberty to pursue an educative and action oriented agenda, which integrates labour, and community struggles within its own organization. The centre has endeavoured to facilitate community and cultural connection for Philippine women, many of whom are isolated as foreign workers in Canada, to do education on the systems perpetuating the women's life conditions and finally, to act to change these conditions for the benefit of the PWC's members and other marginalized groups. The organization is able to pursue these efforts due the centre's independence. They are also able to approach these efforts in a manner that integrates community and labour organizing without the threat of elimination of external funding. Performing a great deal of their own fundraising, the PWC has been able to skilfully integrate the functions and services of labour and community organizations independently and be vocal about their political convictions.

Members interviewed from the PWC assert that integrating work and community in their centre's programs, education and services is an approach that has increased the longevity of their organization's work. The organization has been active for fourteen years.

Benefits of the PWC's independent integrated approach to members and clients of the organization have included a place to develop community, successful payment of wages from employers, the development of a critical analysis among its members, co-operative housing, and re-entrance for some members into the nursing profession.

The PWC's efforts to work collaboratively with certain labour unions as well as comments from both PICS and the PWC's members and staff make it apparent that unions have not yet persuaded either of these ethnic-minority community organizations, that the labour movement is interested in unifying their struggles. With little exception, interviewees generally sounded sceptical of labour unions' willingness and ability to take action on issues outside of those directly affecting their own members' working conditions. This perception of unions needs to be changed if more long term collaborative community and labour integration is going to occur.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

The experiences of the PWC and PICS illuminate the issues encountered in integrating the services and organizing activities of community and labour organizations. Valuable information was derived from the research, indicating both difficulties and the potential for community and labour groups to work collaboratively over the long term, the possibility of integrating community and labour functions and services within the same organization, and the ways in which marginalized communities can benefit from the adoption of an integrated approach to their struggles. Further studies of organizations utilizing an integrated approach to their work are necessary, however. While such examples are limited in number, several in existence in the United States appear to warrant study. Beneficial research would include case studies detailing the long-term collaboration between

community and labour organizations, and the ways in which apprehensions or difficulties in working together are overcome. Learning what, if any, patterns or conditions exist within unions engaging in these alliances might provide some guidance or 'pre-requisites' of successful collaborations. Questions here include, do unions working in long-term collaboration with community groups tend to organize in similar industries or in industries undergoing similar trends? Similarly, for community organizations involved in these alliances, do leadership style and organizational structure impact how and to what extent CBOs integrate their functions and services? Do kinship and social networks have any impact on a CBO's ability to integrate its functions and services? What are the structures of these types of unions? What type of education process, if any, do the union organizers and membership undergo? To what degree can community organizations forming these collaborations integrate their organizing efforts with labour groups and preserve their funding? In the case of organizations that integrate their services and functions independently (within the same organization), questions that could be explored include what are these organizations' experiences around fundraising? And which types of funding sources permit them to do servicing and organizing of their memberships simultaneously?

A further topic for exploration is that of unions failing to demonstrate interest in these collaborations when increasing sectors of the workforce face precarious employment. Questions here include Why have unions failed to look at more diverse strategies, Why have unions failed to endeavour to look to community groups for lessons in organizing? and Why unions failed to orientate their organizing approaches toward the growing areas of precarious work?

5.5 Reflections on the Research Process

I want to conclude this research by reflecting on my role as the researcher in this thesis project. I bring to this role the experience and values of a university-educated woman of European descent and a working class background. I am a strong supporter of labour unions and a political activist. As the researcher, my duties included gathering information from participants, presenting this data and drawing conclusions from it. I am an outsider to both organizations, although less so to the PWC, and an outsider to each of the minority-ethnic groups with whom they work. This position had the potential to and presumably, did, influence the information that participants contributed as well as other aspects of the research. My perspectives and judgments informed each step of the process, consciously or otherwise. The point of the research, however, was not to evaluate either of the organizations in their approaches to working with marginalized communities. The research was, rather, an opportunity to learn why the PWC and PICS utilize the methods they do to organize and serve their communities, and what facilitates and prevents them from integrating the services and functions of community and labour organizations in the perspectives of the participants themselves. In an attempt to insure that the participants' views are being represented accurately, they have each had an opportunity to edit their comments before the final printing and presentation of the thesis.

Despite my history of activism and intentions for the uses of this research, the greatest discomfort I felt through the research process was in asking people from the organizations for their time. Ultimately, I, a white academic, was asking hard working, marginalized activists and social workers to give me their time for my personal gain in the form of a Master's degree. I have justified this request to myself knowing that at a minimum,

if the research is never utilized for any other purpose, it is useful in that it will certainly inform *my* activism, which holds positive repercussions for marginalized groups. I am very grateful to my research participants for their contribution to my knowledge and to my understanding of the research topic.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge a significant bias that I brought to my research and the way in which my views were altered during the research process. I began my research wanting to study organizations that integrate community and labour struggles in a manner, which mobilizes marginalized communities for collective action. I was hesitant to study an organization that primarily delivered services. I thought that this type of organization would be relatively ineffective at creating significant or long term change for the community it served and ideally I wanted to examine organizations that were effective at creating changes for marginalized groups.

While I held this perspective, I still attempted to be non-judgemental in doing the research. The outcome, for me, was to understand the possibilities of what can be achieved through service organizations. It is my firm belief that organizing for collective action is a preferable action for creating long-term change in marginalized communities. This type of organizing, however, is not possible in each circumstance, at least, not at each point in time. It was always clear to me that service providing community based organizations could help meet necessary needs and provide short-term assistance. I have been persuaded that they can also build the foundation for collective action through strategies such as teaching clients or members their rights, and helping to fill their basic needs. At the end of my research, I now see greater potential for change through these organizations than I did initially, particularly as collaborative partners of organizations that organize for the purpose of collective action.

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APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW SCRIPT

A/General Info/ Intro to Organization

1. How long have you been or were you active with name of organization? What do you do/ have you done with the org.? (role, position, title)
2. Why did you first become involved with the organization?
3. How did the organization form?
4. What were its initial goals or its mandate when it formed? Have these changed over time?
5. What population does the organization serve? Has this changed over time?

B/Community/Work Needs

6. Are many of your members integrated into communities? What do you think their needs are in this area?
7. What types of needs do your members have as workers? I.e. More secure jobs, training, advocacy?
8. What are the functions and services the organization performs? Have these changed over time?
9. Does your organization integrate its functions and services to meet the needs of its members with regard to community and work? How? Was this an original strategy of the organization?

C/ Overview of Organization

10. What types of strategies has the org. used to fulfill its goals? Have these changed over time?
11. What have some of the organizations high points or successes been? and low points or bad times?
12. How does your organization make decisions together?
13. What are the concrete improvements that have been achieved through your organization's efforts?

C/ Mobilisation/Politicisation

14. In what ways do you encourage your members or mobilize them to take collective action around issues? What types of actions do they take?
15. Does your organization try to facilitate a politicization process for its members, that is does it encourage members to locate their own life situation within the larger systems of racism, sexism and class oppression? If no, what prevents you from doing this? If yes, how do you facilitate it?
16. Describe your organization's relationship to other community organizations if any exists.
17. Describe your organization's relationship to labour organizations if any exists.
18. What interactions has your organization had with community and labour organizations?
19. Did your organization have any trepidation about working with these organizations? What were they? Did they pose a problem? If no, why do you think they didn't present a problem? If yes, how did you overcome it?
20. Was your membership supportive of the alliance? What was the nature of their support?
21. Does or did your organization facilitate any education or politicization (formally or informally) for your members about the need to form alliances with community or labour organizations (whichever is applicable) or to integrate their struggles?
22. How did you determine your mutual agenda when you worked with these other organizations?

D/ Opportunities and Constraints to integrating community/labour struggles

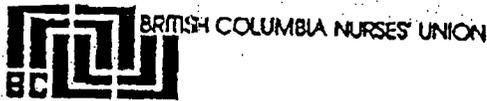
23. What barriers exist for your organization that may prevent or pose difficulty for in you trying to work with other community or labour organizations?
24. What opportunities have arose from working with community or labour organizations?
25. What barriers do you think exist in general for these labour and community groups wishing to integrate their functions and services?

26. What opportunities do you think exist in general for community and labour organizations wishing to integrate their functions and services?

27. Is there anything else you wish to add before closing?

APPENDIX 2

BCNU DOCUMENT



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Section 2.4(11)	Subject BCNU MEMBERSHIP POSITION STATEMENT FOREIGN WORKER RECRUITMENT PROGRAM	Effective Date May 7, 1999	
Revision Date March 5, 2002		Page # 1	of 1
		Date Approved March 5, 2002	

Whereas the underlying principle of Human Resource Development Canada's Foreign Worker Program is to grant Canadian work visas to workers from other countries to fill jobs which cannot be filled by Canadians.

And, whereas for the last two years the British Columbia Nurses' Union has co-operated with HRDC in supporting visas for foreign general duty nurses, and for foreign specialty trained nurses in those worksites where health care employers are providing specialty training for Canadian nurses, and is the only nurses' union in Canada which has co-operated with this program.

And, whereas it is inconsistent with the principle of the Foreign Worker Program to grant visas to nurses from other countries where there are Canadian nurses unemployed, laid off or displaced.

Therefore, be it resolved that the British Columbia Nurses' Union will not support visas for foreign nurses in health authority regions where there are unemployed, laid off, or displaced nurses, and will ask that any foreign workers who have been offered jobs but not yet begun employment, have their hiring delayed.

And, be it further resolved, that the British Columbia Nurses' Union will insist that unemployed, laid off, or displaced nurses be matched to vacant positions without any loss of hours or regular employment, before resuming support for the foreign worker program in that health region.