



# Envisioning the Future, One Neighborhood at a time:

PICO UNION ASSET MAPPING REPORT

**Dr. Alfredo Carlos**  
**Emelyne Camacho, M.A.**

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**The Foundation for  
Economic Democracy  
2024**

**&**

**United Way of  
Greater Los Angeles**

## Researcher Biographies



### Dr. Alfredo Carlos

Dr. Alfredo Carlos is an Assistant Professor in the department of Labor Studies at California State University, Dominguez Hills. He is also the Co-President and Membership and Organizing Chair of the California Faculty Association, Dominguez Hills chapter. Before starting at CSUDH he served as the interim Director of Chicano Studies at Eastern Washington University and was a former faculty member in Political Science at California State University, Long Beach. He is also the Founder & Director of the Foundation for Economic Democracy an organization that promotes democratic worker ownership of businesses and community ownership of land and housing. He grew up in the Los Angeles Harbor area in an immigrant working class family and

community, which has informed his education and research and given him purpose, to struggle for economic and racial justice in solidarity with working people trying to live with dignity. He holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of California, Irvine where he specialized in the fields of Political Economy, and American Racial and Urban Politics. He earned his M.A. in Political Science from California State University, Long Beach with a focus in Comparative Politics and International Relations and has a B.A. in History and Chicano Studies from the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he studied working class history, wealth and poverty and social movements. He is the co-author of *The Latino Question* (Pluto, 2018), which was named “Best Book in Latino Politics” in 2019 by the American Political Science Association.



### Emelyne Camacho, M.A.

Emelyne Camacho is a Research Consultant with the Foundation for Economic Democracy. She also serves as a Diversity Coordinator in the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI) at Rancho Santiago Community College District (RSCCD). Emelyne has played a pivotal role in the inception and administration of the Rancho Academy for approximately three years. Her efforts through this program have significantly contributed to the diversification of the employee population at RSCCD. Emelyne's passion for advancing diversity and equity has deep roots, stemming from her personal experiences growing up in a working-class community in Northeast Los Angeles and while visiting her family in Mexico. These experiences ignited her commitment to

addressing injustices and fostering an inclusive environment within her professional sphere. In addition to her role in ODEI, Emelyne has also been an adjunct Political Science instructor at Santiago Canyon College. Her purpose in this academic capacity is to provide students with information that encourages them to make the connection politics impact their surroundings and personal experiences. Emelyne Camacho is an alumna of California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), where she earned her Master's degree in Political Science. She also holds a Bachelor's degree in Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies and International Studies from the same institution. Her academic background and practical experience make her a valuable asset to both the academic and classified areas, where she strives to make a lasting impact in the pursuit of equity and justice.

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## Executive Summary

United Way of Greater Los Angeles (UWGLA) started as the central organizing body for 37 Community Chests, supporting the efforts of neighborhoods across Los Angeles to create better futures. In 2024, we are returning to our roots with a renewed neighborhood approach that will create hyperlocal networks of neighborhood organizations and community members aimed at incubating and scaling projects focused on collective economies, mutual aid and sense of belonging. We decided to begin this reorientation with our neighbors in Pico-Union.

The neighborhood of Pico-Union, situated to the west of downtown Los Angeles, embodies a rich tapestry of history marked by formidable challenges, yet it thrives on resilient working class narratives of endurance and perseverance. Comprised of 38% immigrants, primarily from Central America and Mexico, the Foundation for Economic Democracy recognizes the importance of documenting the transnational journeys and centering the perspectives and voices of Pico-Union's residents in understanding their own experiences as well as the strengths, assets and visions they have for their community. This entails comprehending their contributions to the U.S. labor force, their migration journeys, alongside recognizing the skills cultivated both in their countries of origin and as integral members of the Los Angeles labor force, and especially in their own community. The lack of substantial support and resources from local government agencies in Los Angeles has led



Pico-Union residents to rely heavily on community organizations, mutual aid and self-help to fulfill their essential needs through cooperative efforts. While they come from under-resourced communities both in the U.S. and the countries they came from, these experiences have led them to be experts in resourcefulness and collaboration. The people we talked with and interviewed have a wealth of knowledge and skills, actively know how to look for resources and jobs and showed interest in social and collective forms of entrepreneurship that requires more institutional and financial support navigating formal processes. There is strong interest in the ideas of collective ownership, mutual aid and civic pride among Pico-Union residents.

## Key Findings Summary

The research led by Dr. Alfredo Carlos, Emelyne Camacho of the Foundation for Economic Democracy and United Way of Greater Los Angeles, involving community conversations coupled with comprehensive interviews, has yielded important insights into the assets, talents, and knowledges<sup>1</sup> that the working people of the Pico-Union neighborhood have and actively use to support their community and themselves. These same skills and talents are central to any attempts to initiate collective or cooperative solidarity economy projects in the neighborhood.

Through in-depth conversations, several key findings have emerged, shedding light on critical aspects of life in Pico-Union. These findings offer valuable perspectives for understanding its broader implications. The next step for United Way of Greater Los Angeles will be to start working groups in the three main areas of focus for United Way's neighborhood networks: collective economies, mutual aid and sense of belonging.

**Extensive Knowledge-** Reviewing the conversations has revealed the extensive knowledge that members of the Pico-Union community have acquired in their countries of origin prior to arriving in the United States. Immigrants who settle in Pico-Union bring with them a wealth of [craftsmanship](#), [entrepreneurial skills](#), [agricultural expertise](#), [academic education](#), and [a profound understanding of collective organization](#). Contrary to the misconception that immigrants possess only "unskilled" job skills, or none at all, these discussions have shed light on their remarkable ability to adapt to their circumstances by relying on their own capabilities and the support of their community.

*"You need to organize." I would say to myself, what things do we need here in the school? Well, we need to clean. What resources do people need for Christmas? So yes, we organized for resources, we organized. And from there we started to talk with other people, because one person can't do everything right? We organized with 8 other women. Planning with the others the things we needed to do in our community and we did it."*

**Creativity-** Arriving in the United States as an immigrant not only requires skills acquired in the country of origin but also demands a sense of creativity to navigate the systems in place in order to secure employment and sustain oneself and their families. In our discussions with community members, it is clear that this [creativity](#) and [adaptability](#) play a crucial role in their survival. This is evident in the innovative products and services made and sold by our participants, including but not limited to [food](#), [bread dough flowers \(migajon\)](#), [hand-knitted stuffed animals and bags](#), as well as the [sale of hats, bags, sunglasses](#), and [shoes](#), through street vending.

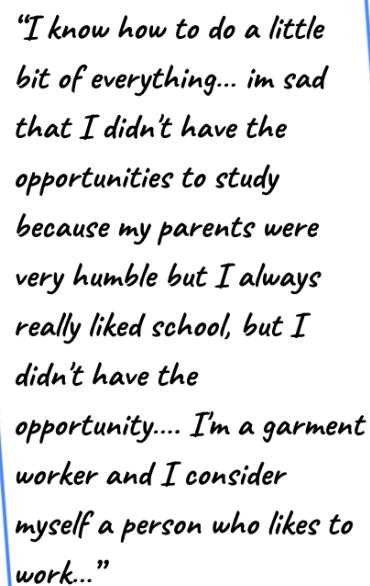
**Organizing and Sense of Belonging-** Interviewees expressed that their migration was primarily driven by the need for employment, with some also fleeing from war. Upon arriving in the U.S., many encountered exploitation in the workplace. Regardless of the country they are in, poverty and

<sup>1</sup> We use the plural because in our conversations we found that they have many sets of knowledge about many different topics and themes and we want to highlight the versatility of those sets of knowledge they possess.

oppression seem to follow them. This group of people have become accustomed to oppression and neglect from government agencies, which has led them to rely on their community and their own skills. There was a shared belief in the power of unity, or "[poder en la union](#)." There is a strong perception and cultural connection to [the value of collaboration and cooperation](#). That by joining forces with others facing similar issues, projects become more serious and achievable.

## Asset Mapping: A Strength Based Approach

Asset mapping is a powerful approach grounded in community strengths that UWGLA is intentionally using to guide the mapping and development phase of their neighborhood network work. Most community studies take the form of “community needs assessments” that come from a “deficit” model of understanding working class communities and communities of color. These studies usually ask what is lacking in communities?, what do communities need?, and then offer a prescriptive assessment based on preconceived notions or ideas that result in false generosity<sup>2</sup>. These ideas assume that immigrants and working class poor communities don't have resources, skills or knowledges that they can or already do contribute to their communities. Furthermore, most prescriptions are of a narrow range, top down, and focus largely on offering more services through community based organizations. This research study is different in its goals. We set out to understand how residents in Pico-Union understand, view and experience their community from their own perspective and more importantly, not what they need but what the residents and community can and are contributing, and how they envision the future of their community and to what degree they are interested in working collaboratively as active members in their community. The findings from this initial assessment will be used to inform and center the initial set of projects and areas of focus that the Pico Union community will work on, within the pillars of Collective ownership, mutual aid and sense of belonging- all critical for the shared prosperity of communities.



*"I know how to do a little bit of everything... im sad that I didn't have the opportunities to study because my parents were very humble but I always really liked school, but I didn't have the opportunity.... I'm a garment worker and I consider myself a person who likes to work..."*

To delve deeper into these themes, the research team conducted community conversations that were part political economy education, where they were able to discuss their experiences as workers within a capitalist economy allowing them to situate themselves and their experiences, and part grounding and alignment on the themes of alternative and solidarity economies, mutual aid and sense of belonging. We provided them with examples of potential projects and to gauge their interest in being active participants and members of alternative economy projects (as opposed to just receiving “services”). This allowed the community conversations to be grounded in learning but also discussing their vision for their communities rooted in alternatives to current

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<sup>2</sup> False Generosity as described by Paulo Freire in his landmark work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, refers to a paternalism that makes the oppressed the objects of its humanitarianism rather than give them agency. This false generosity itself maintains and embodies oppression. p. 54

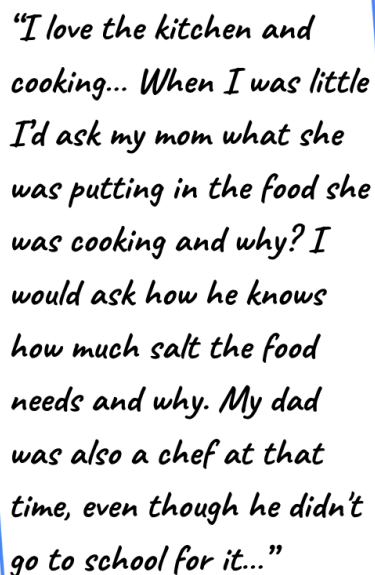
contexts in their economy. Taking this asset based approach allowed us to have rich and meaningful conversations that led to one-on-one interviews oriented around not just what Pico-Union needs, but more importantly what Pico-Union can be. This process of Community Based Action Research allowed the researchers and the community respondents to engage in a conversation that allowed visioning outside the parameters that “needs assessment” studies largely confine communities to.

What this study and related conversations hoped to contribute to is to help community members envision viable alternatives and understand the obstacles, possibilities, and dilemmas of transformation<sup>3</sup> in seeking to create alternative economies in their communities that can help improve the quality of life in those very communities. In this process we made sure to center not just their thoughts and input but their participation as members, leaders of and in the proposed projects. Additionally participants were asked to identify where they go to receive services and mutual aid that are already working in the community in order to strengthen mutual aid supports.

## Community Based Participatory Action Research

Participatory Action Research (PAR) or community based action research is a research methodology that forges research alliances with relevant stakeholders in the community to explore

and develop solutions to local problems, with the intention of being mutually beneficial<sup>4</sup>. Reason and Bradbury define it as, “a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes”<sup>5</sup>. Fals-Borda and Rahman define it simply as “a systemic approach that seeks knowledge for social action”<sup>6</sup>. This research paradigm is based upon the goal of working with and helping people, also employing methodologies that are different from traditional research<sup>7</sup>. Instead of viewing the “research subjects” as independent of the research, in PAR their knowledges and expertise are put at the center of study and are therefore seen as collaborators. Reason and Bradbury argue that, “participants are collaborators in the research project because action researchers assume that people who participate and are committed to the process will generate more thorough social accounts and will be more invested in the successful application of the findings”. This is the main goal of the United Way of Greater Los Angeles efforts in its Neighborhood Networks project, to build out neighborhoods and communities that are invested in the successful application



*“I love the kitchen and cooking... When I was little I’d ask my mom what she was putting in the food she was cooking and why? I would ask how he knows how much salt the food needs and why. My dad was also a chef at that time, even though he didn’t go to school for it...”*

<sup>3</sup> Wright, Erik Olin (2010). *Envisioning Real Utopias*. Verso.

<sup>4</sup> Ozanne, J. L., & Anderson, L. (2010). Community Action Research. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 29 (1), 123-137.

<sup>5</sup> Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (2001). Introduction: Inquiry and Participation in Search of a World Worthy of Human Aspiration. In P. Reason, & H. Bradbury (Eds.), *Handbook of Action Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

<sup>6</sup> Fals-Borda, O., & Rahman, M. A. (1991). *Action and Knowledge: Breaking the Monopoly with Participatory Action Research*. London, UK: Intermediate Technology.

<sup>7</sup> Ozanne, J. L., & Saatcioglu, B. (2008). Participatory Action Research. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 35, 423-439.



of the findings. The research becomes a partnership between the researcher and what are often called the 'practitioner' or 'stakeholders' to develop each other's capacities and find solutions.

This research process is a dialogical process that has its origins in what Paulo Freire calls the pedagogy of the oppressed<sup>8</sup>. Its roots lie in liberation and creating a situation in which groups

strive *with* each other for liberation. In the specific researcher-subject relationship there must be a striving for liberation together. In the process of research there must be mutually beneficial exchanges of knowledge and skills between both parties. The researcher learns and is taught the processes they wish to study, but the researcher must also share their expertise so as to leave the research collaborators with information and skills that they did not have before and can use to empower themselves once the researcher is gone. This research practice is one not of "doing for" but of "building-with," and the goal is for the community to be the possessors of skills and knowledge. It is based on the creation and empowering concept of self-help. Therefore, an

important goal for Action Research is for both the researcher and the practitioners in the process to understand a complex problem better and provide workable solutions to immediate political problems, while also building human capacities for self-empowerment<sup>9</sup>. Participatory action research assumes that the act of doing research helps stakeholders develop new capacities and is itself empowering<sup>10</sup>. Ultimately the goal and result is what Yanow and Schwartz-Shea call the "co-generation" of data, data gathered together and solutions worked on together<sup>11</sup>.

In practice, PAR begins with the researcher understanding that those with the expertise of what is to be studied lies in those who are involved daily in the processes being studied. This involves having and developing a sense of humility and is in line with what Steve Maynard-Moody and Michael Musheno suggest when they argue that, "we are not the experts in their worlds; they are"<sup>12</sup>.

*"I love to cook... in my country, the state gave me a scholarship to go study cooking healthy meals for schools, which is nationwide... from there I loved cooking... that helped me expand my mind, to be able to do more things."*

*"In my home country the army gave nursing trainings...they were very good. Because I learned to inject, I learned to give serums and I learned to do healings. This has a little introduction of diseases...I have my diploma from that too. I did it a year after I arrived here. I did a CNA training and finished it..."*

<sup>8</sup> Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum International Publishing.

<sup>9</sup> Ozanne, J. L., & Saatcioglu, B. (2008)

<sup>10</sup> Ozanne, J. L., & Saatcioglu, B. (2008)

<sup>11</sup> Yanow, D., & Schwartz-Shea, P. (2006). Accessing and Generating Data. In D. Yanow, & P. Schwartz-Shea (Eds.), *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn* (pp. 115-126). Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

<sup>12</sup> Maynard-Moody, Steve and Musheno, Michael. (2006). Stories for Research. In D. Yanow, & P. Schwartz-Shea (Eds.), *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn* (pp. 316-330). New York: M.E. Sharpe.

## Pico-Union Research Summary

The research focused on drawing out three main topics/themes/areas of discussion. We wanted to learn about where respondents came from, the lived experiences they have gone through, and their skills and strengths. Often people think of immigrant communities as being unskilled or as *tabula rasa* (blank slate) arrivals without history or knowledge. All immigrants have a wealth of experiences, knowledges, and talents that they have gained on their journey. Often their journey is only possible because of those assets, talents, and knowledges they possess.

Understanding the process of migration helps us understand who they are. Part of that also includes learning about what community members know, and can or already do contribute to their communities. This again is an attempt at seeing a working community as possessing skills, talents and knowledge, rather than seeing them as deficient. Lastly, based on these conversations the research is trying to orient community members toward thinking about what communities can be. Not just how they should be improved but how they can be changed, what they can look like, what projects are possible through collaboration, cooperation, mutual aid, and collective action. To draw out these three themes we kept conversations focused on these three topics.

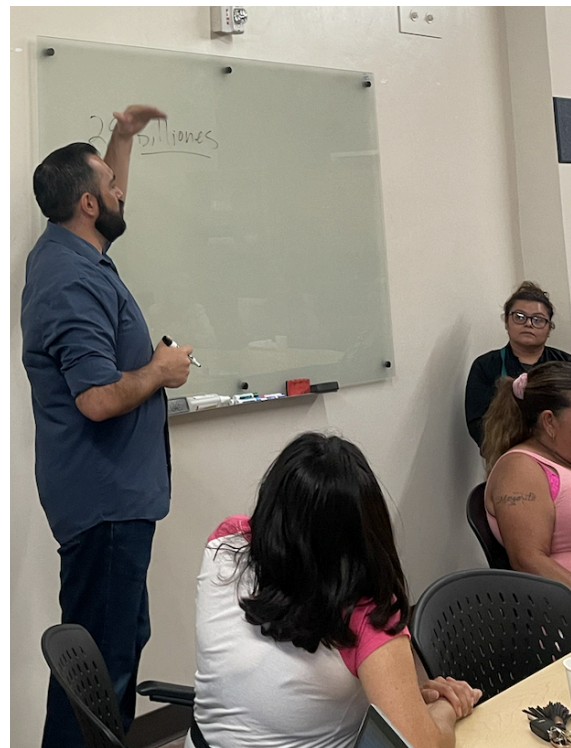
1. **Origins-** Where were they born and how did they arrive to Pico Union. Connecting with residents and learning their origins is an integral part of understanding where folks come from, what their journeys have taught them, what they can teach us, and what they can and do or are already doing to contribute to their communities.
2. **Assets/Talents-** What skills and talents do they have and what do they enjoy doing? Communities are always asked about the deficits in their communities, what they lack, and what they need. The focus of our conversations and interviews is about what they can contribute to their communities, what they can teach, what they can show others how to do, what they enjoy doing themselves and more importantly what they can and are willing to contribute as participants in alternative economic projects.
3. **Visions for the Community-** As a part of the research and conversations it was important for us to center their own aspirations and visions for what they wish their community could be. Even asking this question breaks with the tradition of seeing immigrant working class communities as deficient and only problem ridden. Asking them the questions of their vision of their community after providing examples of cooperative and solidarity economy projects from elsewhere helped them align their thoughts to forward thinking ideas. It provides them an opportunity to think outside the bounds of deficit needs assessment conversations and to begin to seriously think through what their communities can be, apart from just minor improvements. It resulted in rich and fruitful conversations around cooperative efforts.

The one-on-one interviews were conducted with 17 participants from the Pico-Union Community, who were active members of either Instituto de Educación Popular del Sur de California (IDEPSCA), Los Angeles Red Shield (Pico-Union), or the Pico-Union Project (PUP). After the four community conversations concluded and the 17 participants finished their one-on-one interviews, the research team transcribed the community conversations and developed thematic codes and

coded the discussion and interviewees for themes. (See table 2) These findings helped shape the broader community survey that was administered to 496 residents of Pico Union by UWGLA.

## Methodology

Using Participatory Action Research (PAR) we initiated grounding and alignment community conversations (focus groups) with 4 groups each recruited by the partner organizations. Dr. Carlos led the conversations by teaching the group about exploitation in the economy and engaging participants in discussion and conversation on the topic. This was followed by teaching and discussing alternative democratic business models with the participants. The discussions and conversations were recorded to tease out themes and issues and ideas that participants had when presented with a conversation on exploitation and inequality as well as one that presented equitable and democratic business alternative projects currently being practiced in other cities. We followed up with one-on-one interviews with participants recruited from these four conversations. This method allowed the research team to center the lived experiences and ideas of the Pico-Union residents as possible solutions to the inequity they face. Part of approaching this research through PAR, is allowing the participants to be leaders and have agency in their community. In this extensive research, the residents were able to display their leadership and develop their thoughts during the community conversations and individual interviews.



United Way through their neighborhood partner organizations (IDEPSCA, Red Shield, The Pico-Union Project and Homies Unidos) identified the participants for the community conversations. Each organization's leadership extended invitations to their respective memberships, resulting in four distinct community dialogues. Dr. Alfredo Carlos led the community conversations and individual interviews, with Emelyne Camacho assisting and also conducting interviews. The community conversations were the first point of contact in the asset mapping process where community residents were able to explore their thoughts. The conversations provided a point of grounding and alignment for participants to see and approximate the topics and themes we were looking to cover. This was especially key because participants having been part of community conversations in the past initially resisted conversations about future possibilities and struggled to get out of a deficit mindset.

During the dialogues Dr. Carlos covered the following ideas:

1. The project and its objectives
2. Wealth distribution and inequality
3. Workplace exploitation in capitalism
4. Immigration barriers in labor
5. Alternative economy business models and cooperatives

Name	Age	Nationality	Organization
Participant 1	57	El Salvador	IDEPSCA
Participant 2	42	Nicaragua	Pico Union Project
Participant 3	45	Nicaragua	Pico Union Project
Participant 4	68	Mexico	Pico Union Project
Participant 5	63	Mexico	Pico Union Project
Participant 6	39	Guatemala	Red Shield
Participant 7	50	Guatemala	Red Shield
Participant 8	56	Guatemala	Red Shield
Participant 9	67	Mexico	Red Shield
Participant 10	61	El Salvador	Red Shield
Participant 11	43	Mexico	Red Shield
Participant 12	40	Guatemala	IDEPSCA
Participant 13	69	Mexico	Red Shield
Participant 14	68	Guatemala	Red Shield
Participant 15	61	Mexico	Red Shield
Participant 16	36	Guatemala	IDEPSCA
Participant 17	36	Mexico	Red Shield

*Table 1*

Three conversations were held in Spanish and one in English. They were each two-hours in length, and held in a seminar style. The community conversation can be seen as a foundational piece to assist the Pico-Union residents with compartmentalizing their ideas and needs. By allowing the participants to discuss issues that involved their neighborhood with other community members, it allowed them to strengthen their ideas during the individual interviews. At the conclusion of the community conversation, participants were encouraged to schedule a one-on-one session. To incentivize participation and potentially increase the sample size, a 25 dollar incentive was mentioned to the groups.

The one-on-one interviews were conducted by Dr. Alfredo Carlos and Emelyne Camacho. All one-on-one interviews were held in Spanish for approximately 45 minutes to 60 minutes. Understanding the demographics of people we would be serving it was important to

conduct the interviews and conversations in Spanish. This granted trust in the research team to have vulnerable conversations with the interviewees. The interviews were held in the neighborhood of Pico-Union to make it accessible for participants.

## Interview questions:

1. What is your name?
2. Where did you grow up and how/when did you arrive in the United States?
3. Why did you immigrate to the United States?
4. Did you go to school in your country of origin?
5. What was your employment history in your country of origin?
6. Where do you work now and what other jobs have you had in the U.S?
7. What do you like about your neighborhood?
8. What do you NOT like about your neighborhood?
9. Have you seen any changes in your neighborhood?
10. What are your hobbies, talents, things you enjoy doing?

**Average Age: 51**

**Nationality Count:**

El Salvador: 3

Nicaragua: 2

Mexico: 8

Guatemala: 6



The methodology encourages the research team to regard the community members as the experts on Pico-Union, fostering a perspective that prioritizes the voices and experiences of those within the community. This approach intentionally distances itself from the traditional reliance on established systems, organizations, politicians, and other conventional experts. By doing so, it amplifies the voices of community members in the process of creating solutions. This decentralization of reliance on institutions effectively challenges the narrative that immigrants lack knowledge and skills.

The one-on-one interviews provided an invaluable opportunity to establish personal connections with the residents of Pico-Union and to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges they face. These conversations revealed common struggles, the impact of transnational systemic oppression, as well as the diverse skills, talents, and sources of joy within the community.

## Coding

Once we conducted the interviews we transcribed them and analyzed them and pulled out common themes. We made those themes into codes and went through all of the discussions from the community conversations and the interviews and coded all the conversations for those themes. You can see in table 2 the most commonly occurring themes and how often they occurred. Table 3 further down shows code application, everytime that code was applied in each of the conversations. Table 4 shows code co-occurrence, how often each code occurred with another code. Table 5 shows the top code co-occurrences. Discussion of common themes is below.

Code	Occurrence
Autonomy/ Decision Making	6
COVID Context	13
Child Care/ Youth Related Topics	15
Citizenship Status	18
Collaboration	27
Community Cleaning and Beautification	18
Community Efforts	24
Community Engagement	23
Community Gardening and Agriculture	35
Community Need	110
Cooking And Culinary Knowledge	48
Cooperatives	30
Cost of Living	19
Entrepreneurship Experience and Knowledge	46
Fashion and Textiles	23
Formal Education	23
Exploitation	25
Gentrification/Housing Affordability	28
Health Care	1
Informal Economies/Side Hustles	30
Interest/Hobbies/Things they are good at	29
Joy	58
Migration	56
Non-U.S State Funded Services	9
Organizing	28
Poverty and Inequality	75
Safe Gathering Spaces	8
Solidarity and Mutual Aid	13
Time Flexibility and Control	17
Wage	53
Workshops and Trainings	28

Table 2

## Research Constraints

While the present study has provided valuable insights into the knowledges, skills, and solutions to alternative economies, it is important to acknowledge the limitations that may have influenced the results and interpretations. When considering the limitations of the research, it is crucial to acknowledge the characteristics of our small sample pool, age, racial representation and period of time advertised to the community.

### **Constraint #1- Need for more varied and representative sample - Age**

The average age of 50.9 years suggests that our findings may be more representative of older individuals, potentially overlooking the perspectives and experiences of younger members of the community. Although people with older age have much more experiences, there is a need to know of younger family households and the youth participating in the labor force. Due to generational differences, increased generational opportunities, and exposure to particular resources at a young age, the conversations could have yielded different perspectives and ideas.

### **Constraint #2- Homogenous Racial Ethnicity**

Moreover, the homogenous nature of our sample, consisting primarily of Latinx individuals, may limit the generalizability of our findings to other communities within Pico-Union. In the community, the next largest racial group are Asian, including their input will also provide more representative insight.

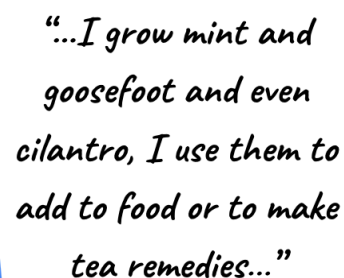
### **Looking Ahead**

In the future community partner organizations in collaboration with researchers should make efforts to increase the diversity of the sample pool, including a wider range of ages and ethnicities. This can be achieved by collaborating with a larger number of organizations and community groups, as well as by increasing advertisement time of the intentions of the study. There should be an effort to have flexibility in the times and days that the conversations and interviews are being held.

## **Findings**

### **Origins**

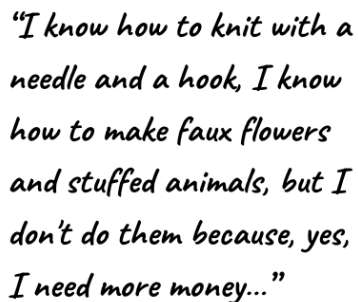
By and Large our research participants from Pico-Union were from Central American countries and Mexico. They came from El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Mexico. They all were around 50 years of age. A vast majority had been living in the U.S. for over 10 years and all came from poor or working class backgrounds, many from poor but dignified farming communities. Most verbalized anger and frustration at the inability to attain formal and stable jobs because of the barriers that exist because of their documentation status. This along with work flexibility was the key factor in the fact that many made their income by vending all manner of items on the street or through social networks in the informal economy.



*“...I grow mint and  
goosefoot and even  
cilantro, I use them to  
add to food or to make  
tea remedies...”*

## Assets and Talents

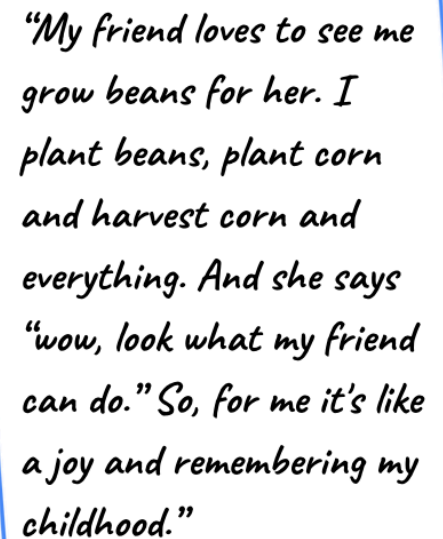
The participants we talked with had a wealth of knowledges. While one of the constraints of the sampling was that all of our participants were 50 years or older and in one respect this isn't a broad sample, from a different perspective this also means that we were talking with participants that combined, had lifetimes of experience, and knowledge. This showed through in our conversations with them. All of the women we spoke to had many years of experience in traditional [domestic work, like home cleaning, and child care](#). When presented with an example of a cooperative home cleaning business many showed interest and said they had done that work and would, if it could be organized.



*"I know how to knit with a needle and a hook, I know how to make faux flowers and stuffed animals, but I don't do them because, yes, I need more money..."*

They all expressed deep knowledge of [gardening, agricultural work including planting, harvesting and seeding, crocheting and sewing, cooking, and making a vast variety of crafts](#). They talked about making [stuffed animals, faux flower arrangements, various decorative arrangements for parties](#), like [centerpieces](#). During these conversations they talked excitedly to the point of turning our conversations into teaching lessons, where they [joyously](#) explained the processes of making their crafts. It was clear they enjoyed sharing their knowledge as well as making the crafts.

They also expressed a [deep culinary knowledge](#) in various food cultures. The knowledge in different food ways and food cultures wasn't expressed in just knowing recipes. It was clear they use [food as a way to bring people together](#) and that feeding people brings [joy](#) to them in a way that gives them meaning and purpose. A process that Seymour Melman describes as [disalienation](#) or workers' actions to restore power to affect their work and their places in occupations and communities in ways that challenge the alienating culture of economic exploitation<sup>13</sup>. Disalienation is a form of working communities' efforts to bring meaning, joy, and purpose back into the monotony of hustle culture and life in our current economy. They engage in the sale of food and crafts to make an income but we could tell it wasn't just about that. They enjoyed their contributions they were making to the lives of



*"My friend loves to see me grow beans for her. I plant beans, plant corn and harvest corn and everything. And she says 'wow, look what my friend can do.' So, for me it's like a joy and remembering my childhood."*

<sup>13</sup> Melman, S. (2001). *After Capitalism: From Managerialism to Workplace Democracy*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf.

others. They also communicated to us that they enjoyed the **flexibility** that their vending allowed them to have. They could take their children to school and pick them up and attend community groups (Red Shield wellness and fitness) as well as participate in events while still earning an income and contributing financially to household needs. Many expressed having faced difficult decisions to get a more steady job with steady pay but with inflexible hours. There was a preference for generating income with flexibility and piecing together vending, and providing services (child care, after school care, home cleaning, domestic work) to maintain their **time autonomy**.

*"I like being an organizer...I organized. I liked talking with the community about what women and mothers needed."*

was organizing to have access to wellness and health classes through dance. In a few instances the organizing was to make sure that people including houseless folks were fed during the pandemic and that people in the community had access to

Participants also expressed not only knowledge of **organizing** others and **finding resources**, **resource sharing**, and **office skills**, but lots of **joy** in doing so. Many of the participants used these skills to build a sense of community with others while trying to improve and create safer, collaborative spaces for each other through organizing. The organizing took different shapes, sometimes it was for their children's education, sometimes it was organizing to have access to wellness and health classes through dance. In a few instances the organizing was to make sure that people including houseless folks were fed during the pandemic and that people in the community had access to protective equipment like masks, that women were making on their own much before cities or community based organizations were able to act or provide more structured services.

*"We started to see how dirty it is on the street. We started cleaning and that is a project that we invited people to clean..."*

*"We invited people... We made this flyer, and we were going to handout that we were going to clean the streets on Alvarado and it is a very dirty street. And I liked doing that because there is a need here to clean the streets."*

The organizing conversations also showed the analytical abilities of participants as they were able to understand and articulate the issues in their community, including thoughtful, personal but systemic understandings and assessments of a collective identity of immigrants and comprehension of shared experiences of exploitation and oppression as working people in the U.S. In addition to their understanding of global as well as local processes they also confidently suggested and often explored solutions on their own. What was evident is that this was mostly done through **teamwork**. All the women we interviewed had **small networks of collaborators** that they regularly teamed with and organized mutual aid efforts with.



## Formal Employment and Job Skills

With regards to the formal employment and job skills they expressed having worked in a variety of industries with a very diverse set of job skills. Some worked in different manufacturing sectors, including [aviation and vehicle manufacturing](#) as well as [packaging in warehouses](#) before those jobs were outsourced to other countries. As mentioned above most if not all expressed long histories of having done [domestic work](#) including [home cleaning, cooking and meal preparation and child care](#) in addition to [facilities janitorial work](#). The participants also reported having [culinary](#) experience having worked as [chefs or cooks](#) in restaurants or being [entrepreneurs](#) having had their own small restaurants in the past, or [catering](#) businesses in addition to [vending](#) both food and decorative items. A few had had some formal higher education in their home countries and had been teachers or had developed skills to teach. Many showed interest in passing on skills and [teaching](#) the different skills and talents they had acquired, whether it was crafts, or dance or food, to younger people. Lastly, many of the participants shared that they grew up on working class [farms](#) and had extensive knowledge in growing food and lit up at the idea of re-engaging that work, especially in a [collaborative way](#). Considering that Pico Union lacks green spaces and landlords often don't allow gardening autonomy to their renters, many participants showed enthusiasm when presented examples of cooperative farms or gardens.

## Community Aspirations

In addition to sharing their talents with us, participants also expressed deep concern over the needs that they have in their community. They expressed the need for a much more expansive Child Care infrastructure. They reported a need for autonomy in their employment with flexibility. Many expressed anxiety or stress when working and being unable to attend to family emergencies. They also expressed the need for neighborhood safety and cleanliness and most often they expressed deep deep anger, frustration and dissatisfaction at the increased cost of living especially as it related to increased housing costs coupled with decreased housing standards and disrepair. All of them expressed a need for massive investment in affordable, not for profit, or cooperative housing. They also had many ideas about how to improve community collaborations and climate. They suggested finding space for a [community night](#)



market where people can safely sell their goods, they also suggested a [community kitchen](#) that could be made available to community members to use to make food to sell. They wanted increased [workshops and training on politics, business, city processes](#). They inquired about access to [capital](#) such as a [revolving loan fund](#) to get their business projects up and running and even showed interest in contributing to a [cooperative revolving loan](#) fund similar to their revolving savings funds or [tanda](#) also known as a [rotating savings and credit association](#) (ROSCA) but instead of savings it can provide access to small loans.

## Common Themes

After analyzing our data and themes that we coded for we found some of the themes (codes) came up more regularly in our interviews and conversations. As seen in Table 2 (pg. 13) the topics/themes that came up the most were concerns participants had regarding their community. These were [Community Need](#), [Poverty and Inequality](#), [Migration or Immigration](#), and [Wages and Income](#) issues.

Autonomy/Decision-Making	COVID context	Child Care/Youth Related Topics	Collaboration	Community Cleaning and Beautification	Community Efforts	Community Engagement	Community Gardening and Agriculture	Community Need	Cooking and Culinary knowledge	Cooperatives	Cost of Living	Entrepreneurship Experience & Knowledge	Fashion and Textiles	Formal Education	Gentrification & Housing Affordability	Health Care	Informal Economies / Side Hustle	Interest/Hobbies/Things they are good at	Joy	Migration	Citizenship Status	Non - U.S. State Funded Services	Organizing	Poverty & Inequality	Exploitation	Safe Gathering Spaces	Solidarity & Mutual Aid	Time Flexibility and Control	Wages & Income	Workshops & Trainings	Totals
2	0	0	2	0	3	0	3	11	2	3	4	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	4	5	0	1	3	6	6	61
0	0	1	1	0	1	0	2	4	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	19
1	0	3	3	0	2	3	5	20	2	12	0	5	1	2	0	0	0	1	8	1	8	0	3	4	10	0	1	2	8	7	112
0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	18
0	0	0	2	0	2	0	2	6	4	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	5	3	3	1	2	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	47
0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	7	0	0	2	2	4	2	3	0	0	0	2	2	3	0	0	4	0	0	2	0	7	0	45
0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	3	0	1	2	0	4	0	1	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	1	0	24
0	5	0	7	0	6	6	9	9	12	2	2	5	4	3	1	1	7	0	15	4	0	8	9	19	0	2	6	0	3	0	145
0	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	5	2	2	1	3	0	3	1	0	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	1	1	34
0	0	1	1	3	0	2	2	3	7	3	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	3	6	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	47
2	2	1	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	4	1	0	2	2	4	4	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	2	0	1	43
0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	15
0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	0	1	1	2	7	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	30
0	0	1	1	1	0	0	2	3	3	1	0	1	5	3	2	0	1	3	4	3	3	1	0	3	3	0	0	1	4	2	51
0	1	4	1	3	3	2	1	8	1	1	2	3	1	0	4	0	2	4	3	3	0	0	5	8	0	1	1	0	2	0	64
1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	0	0	1	3	0	2	3	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	1	4	1	30
0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	3	4	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	2	3	2	1	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	2	0	28
0	0	0	1	1	0	4	0	11	3	2	2	0	0	1	4	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	3	39
0	2	1	4	3	1	0	4	6	4	0	1	5	2	0	0	0	1	4	1	3	0	0	0	8	1	1	0	0	1	1	54
0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	12
6	13	15	27	18	24	23	35	110	48	30	19	46	23	23	28	1	30	29	58	38	18	9	28	75	25	8	13	17	53	28	0

Table 3. Code Application

However because the focus of the research was on identifying assets and talents the other codes that occurred most frequently were the expression of Joy, Entrepreneurship Experience and Knowledge, Cooperatives, and Organizing. You can see in table 3 the application of each of the codes in each interview as well as how frequently they occurred overall. (the interviews are titled by date, location, time, and interviewer initials).

In addition to the frequency of what participants focused on and which themes re-occurred in the interviews, There were common themes that co-occurred. This means that the 2 themes occurred together frequently. As you can see in table 4 the highest co-occurring themes were community need and workshops and trainings (17 times).

*"We had everything, pallet factory, clothing factory for many years... I like to sell clothes, I used to sell clothes in downtown... We worked in the swapmeets there. We call them tianguis..."*

	Autonomy/Decision-Making	COVID context	Child Care/Youth Related Topics	Collaboration	Community Cleaning and Beautification	Community Efforts	Community Engagement	Community Gardening and Agriculture	Community Need	Cooking and Culinary knowledge	Cooperatives	Cost of Living	Entrepreneurship Experience & Knowledge	Fashion and Textiles	Formal Education	Gentrification & Housing Affordability	Health Care	Informal Economies / Side Hustle	Interest/Hobbies/Things they are good at	Joy	Migration	Citizenship Status	Non - U.S. State Funded Services	Organizing	Poverty & Inequality	Exploitation	Safe Gathering Spaces	Solidarity & Mutual Aid	Time Flexibility and Control	Wages & Income	Workshops & Trainings	Totals	
Making	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	4		
COVID context	0	0	0	1	0	5	1	0	0	4	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	8	0	0	1	0	1	0	29
Child Care/Youth Related Topics	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	3	15	
Collaboration	0	1	0	0	2	8	0	1	6	3	5	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	41
Community Cleaning and Beautification	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
Community Efforts	0	5	0	8	1	0	1	2	4	4	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	6	5	0	0	2	0	0	0	48
Community Engagement	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	0	0	2	6	3	0	0	3	0	0	1	29	
Community Gardening and Agriculture	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	14	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	8	0	0	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	38
Community Need	1	0	9	6	13	4	2	14	0	3	12	3	8	3	0	12	0	2	2	4	0	1	0	5	6	1	7	1	4	4	17	144	
Cooking and Culinary knowledge	0	4	0	3	0	4	1	0	3	0	4	0	9	0	1	0	0	7	5	12	0	0	1	3	5	0	1	1	0	1	2	67	
Cooperatives	0	0	0	5	0	2	1	2	12	4	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	3	1	1	45	
Cost of Living	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	
Entrepreneurship Experience & Knowledge	0	1	0	4	0	1	0	2	8	9	3	0	0	3	0	0	0	11	2	2	1	0	0	2	7	1	1	0	1	7	2	68	
Fashion and Textiles	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	3	0	3	0	0	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	3	1	27	
Formal Education	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	2	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	
Gentrification & Housing Affordability	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	12	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	13	0	0	0	0	1	1	36	
Health Care	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
Informal Economies / Side Hustle	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	7	0	1	11	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	1	6	1	45	
Interest/Hobbies/Things they are good at	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	2	5	1	0	2	3	2	0	0	1	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	35
Joy	0	0	0	2	0	5	5	8	4	12	5	0	2	3	3	0	0	1	13	0	0	0	1	4	1	0	0	2	0	0	4	75	
Migration	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	2	0	0	0	1	0	16	
Citizenship Status	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	5	0	0	1	7	0	20	
Non - U.S. State Funded Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	10	
Organizing	0	3	1	2	1	6	6	1	5	3	3	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	2	0	6	0	1	3	0	0	0	50	
Poverty & Inequality	0	8	0	1	0	5	3	2	6	5	0	7	7	3	0	13	0	8	0	1	10	4	1	6	0	0	0	2	2	12	1	107	
Exploitation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	2	11	2	25		
Safe Gathering Spaces	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	7	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	
Solidarity & Mutual Aid	0	1	0	1	0	2	3	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	3	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	22	
Control	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	2	0	20	
Wages & Income	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	4	1	1	0	7	3	0	1	0	6	0	0	1	7	0	0	12	11	0	2	2	0	1	63	
Workshops & Trainings	0	0	3	1	0	0	1	0	17	2	1	0	2	1	0	1	0	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	39	
Totals	4	29	15	41	19	48	29	38	144	67	45	18	68	27	13	36	2	45	35	75	16	20	10	50	107	25	12	22	20	63	39	0	

Table 4. Code Co-Occurrence

The next highest co-occurrence was [community need](#) and [community gardening and agriculture](#) (14 times). As mentioned before and somewhat unsurprising, when participants talked about their [interests and hobbies and things they are good at](#) they lit up and exhibited or expressed [joy](#). Joy was expressed especially when participants discussed [cooking or culinary knowledge](#).

Also unsurprising was their discussing [gentrification & housing affordability](#) and that co-occurring with [poverty and inequality](#). This last one also unsurprisingly co-occurred often with [wages and income](#). On a positive note, despite cooperatives not being prevalent in Los Angeles and most participants being vaguely familiar with them from other countries, participants expressed that there is [community need](#) for [cooperatives](#) of different kinds. These two co-occurred 12 times. (See table 5 below for summary)

Top Code Occurances	Amount
Community Need X Workshops & Trainings	17
Community Need X Community Gardening and Agriculture	14
Community Need X Community Cleaning and Beautification	13
Poverty & Inequality X Gentrification & Housing Affordability	13
Joy X Interest/Hobbies	13
Cooperatives X Community Need	12
Gentrification & Housing Affordability X Community Need	12
Joy X Cooking and Culinary Knowledge	12
Wages & Income X Poverty & Inequality	12
Informal Economies / Side Hustle X Entrepreneurship Experience & Knowledge	11
Wages and Income X Exploitation	11
Poverty and Inequality X Migration	10
Community Need X Child Care/Youth Related Topics	9
Entrepreneurship Experience & Knowledge X Cooking and Culinary knowledge	9

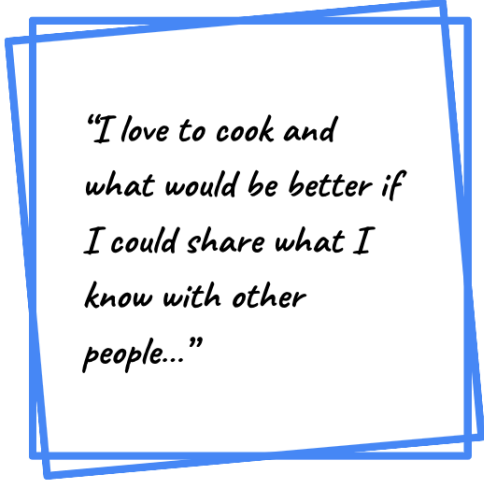
*Table 5 Top Code Co-Occurrences*



# Recommendations

## Initial Project Recommendations

After talking with all of the participants in the community conversations as well as with the participants of the one-on-one interviews we have some emerging recommendations in order to center and harness the assets and opportunities that the community members lifted up. A core tenet of the recommendations below is that community members themselves have ownership over these emerging projects, engaging them in visioning opportunities and providing resourcing, trainings and supports to make their visions come to life. They should be the leader participants as well as the primary beneficiaries of the varied collective and cooperative projects.

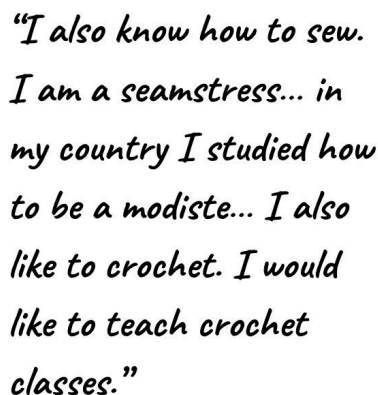


*"I love to cook and what would be better if I could share what I know with other people..."*

## Maker Spaces and Community Led Workshops

It is clear that participants have extensive knowledge and creativity in making things whether it's crafts, clothing or food.

Having access to a [Community Maker Space](#), a central location with resources that community members can access would greatly help them in their endeavors of making things for sale. Many women knew how to sew or cook but due to lack of space and rent affordability they could not keep sewing machines or catering supplies in their homes. A maker space is a collaborative work space inside a school, library or public/private facility for making, learning, exploring, and sharing. This includes but is not limited to having access to sewing machines, kitchen, kitchen tools, catering materials that could be loaned out, maker tools of various kinds and even being able to purchase low cost supplies for their crafts. This could also be a place where community members including many of the research participants could [lead workshops](#) and show others how to make a



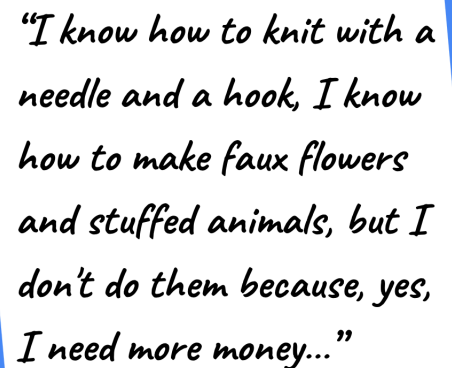
*"I also know how to sew. I am a seamstress... in my country I studied how to be a modiste... I also like to crochet. I would like to teach crochet classes."*

variety of goods for either skill building, vending or just people interested in developing their hobbies. The workshops could also be [monetized](#) on a sliding scale to generate income for the community members leading the workshops. United Way of Greater Los Angeles is structurally positioned financially but also networkwise to assist in [amplifying through outreach and social media](#) this type of maker space and knowledge sharing space. Potentially helping community members have access to tools and resources to help their entrepreneurship endeavors but also potentially helping community members interested in leading workshops access an

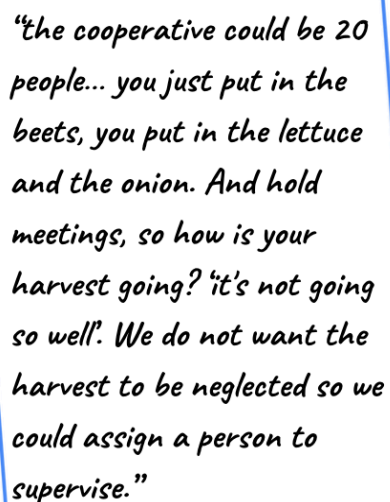
additional income stream. A project such as this could also help train community members in technology, social media and video editing to launch social media and youtube channels where they could teach a wider audience. This type of space could also help participants learn how to sell their crafts on Etsy, Ebay, Instagram or CoopArtisans. A maker space could also be a great place to teach cooperative practices, values and business models that could be incubated and grown out of the maker space.

## Monthly Night Market

One of the recurring suggestions from the research participants was to find a location and have access to a monthly night market where folks could sell food or their crafts. This could take place in the parking lot of a community partner organization or as a city approved block party. Either of these options allows the market to take place inside of the community itself and would be walking distance for nearby residents. It allows vendors to sell their food and crafts in a safe environment and generate income but it also has the benefit of being a community gathering space for residents of Pico-Union to show pride in their neighborhood, building community and solidarity at the same time. Place



*"I know how to knit with a needle and a hook, I know how to make faux flowers and stuffed animals, but I don't do them because, yes, I need more money..."*



*"the cooperative could be 20 people... you just put in the beets, you put in the lettuce and the onion. And hold meetings, so how is your harvest going? 'it's not going so well'. We do not want the harvest to be neglected so we could assign a person to supervise."*

making is a critical component to sense of belonging in communities and using the night market can be a jumping off place to bring other visions and activations from the community to life. Additionally, you could also incorporate a community education piece or town hall component to discuss issues of importance to local residents. United Way of Greater Los Angeles can, through its city wide connections and networks, help amplify the ongoing event to increase traffic and sales. The event could have music, and even a friendly community craft competition (different categories and levels of skill - tamal competition, craft competition), with community partner organization staff and community members themselves serving as judges. Winners can receive prizes donated by sponsoring businesses and organizations. (everyone loves games). You can make the competitions thematic, sometimes hosting a tamal competition, or a champurrado, or a cookie or baked good one. To keep it simple the type of competition can alternate and also not be every month depending on capacity.

## Community Cooperative Garden or Farm

One of the skills and talents that continued to come up as well as brought joy to people discussing it, was the potential to participate in a cooperative garden or farm to be able to grow food as well as share knowledge around growing, harvesting, and seeding food. While this one may be more capital intensive and difficult to accomplish because of a lack of available space, there was a lot of interest in growing food and or plants. The interest was especially focused on doing it cooperatively in collaboration with others. Most community gardens still operate on an individual plot per person model. The participants expressed strong interest in learning more about how cooperative gardens/farms function and wanting to cooperate in a collective project.

Our recommendation is to begin by [funding a visit](#) for interested research participants and partner org staff to [visit CRECE Urban Farm Coop](#) and S.A.L.S.A. - Santa Ana Locally Supported Agriculture in Santa Ana to learn about how they run a garden/farm cooperative and the types of projects and activities they engage in and how they bring the community together to fight food apartheid. As a second step, can that type of effort be replicated in Pico-Union? Are there already areas or organizations that run urban farms or gardens who would be open to transitioning to a cooperative model that engages more members collectively.

## Cooperative Plant Business

Similarly, but also on a smaller and a more manageable scale, a few participants suggested and showed interest in growing plants and succulents cooperative to sell. They've seen how some plant businesses have opened up in spaces being gentrified and expressed interest in participating in a [cooperative plant and succulent selling business](#). Because many know how to seed and grow plants of various kinds as well as the fact that succulents and small plants do not take up much space they suggested this could be a good place to start a cooperative plant selling business. Again UWOGLA could support in providing seeding funding and potentially working with a community partner organization to initially set aside a small amount of space along with amplifying the project and teaching technical as well as social media skills to support.

## Home Care and Child Care Cooperatives

Because of the immense amount of domestic work experience especially as it pertains to caring for children and elderly, there is an opportunity to build [Home Care](#) as well as [Child Care](#) cooperatives. This makes sense for various reasons. Home Care and Child Care are both two of the most exploitative industries for largely immigrant and poor women. Those industries typically subject their workers to long hours, poor pay, wage-theft and lack of safety. Creating businesses owned and operated by the workers themselves helps them work with dignity and keep the profits among themselves. It also helps provide essential services to communities that need them. Access to both home and child care were one of the themes that came up during the interviews. It

also makes sense considering the majority of the residents we spoke with had many years of experience doing domestic care work. The Pilipino Workers Center in Glendale has already built a home care cooperative where they provide ongoing training to the care takers in addition to livable salaries and safe working standards. More importantly the women who do the work are the ones who benefit from their labor. The same can be done with the people of Pico Union considering they have the skills, knowledge and background.

## Policy

Because of the networks and policy experts that UWGLA has access to and is connected to, we believe that UWGLA can leverage its relationships to advance policy suggestions to advocate for more diverse food accessibility options. One such recommendation is to help local vendors be able to accept EBT. This helps [keep more money in the community](#) and circulating within it. This leverages [local buying power](#) that invests in community economics. Another policy recommendation is to work with city and county officials to begin a [cooperative development fund](#) that helps to support the establishment of worker and community owned cooperative businesses and food markets or facilitate the transition of current privately owned businesses to cooperatives. Similar policies and funds exist in Berkeley, CA and New York, NY.

## Workshops and Trainings for Community Members

It was clear that participants wanted more education through workshops and training of various sorts. They especially expressed interest in engaged and active learning workshops on entrepreneurship, establishing coops, skills development, writing, using technology and platforms both (social media and sale/transaction) to help promote their projects and or vending.

## Democratic Financing

During the course of the community conversations and community partner meetings the researchers learned about the various projects that United Way of Greater Los Angeles is building and has launched. Taking these into account we have some recommendations for both, United Way of Greater Los Angeles as well as other philanthropic or non-profit community based organizations. One of the UWOGLA projects that seems very promising is the Women's Investment Network. This project is helping people who are traditionally left out of the investment world build wealth. UWOGLA being strategically placed and having already brought together the necessary parties to build such an investment network could be a potential opportunity to expand this model further out.

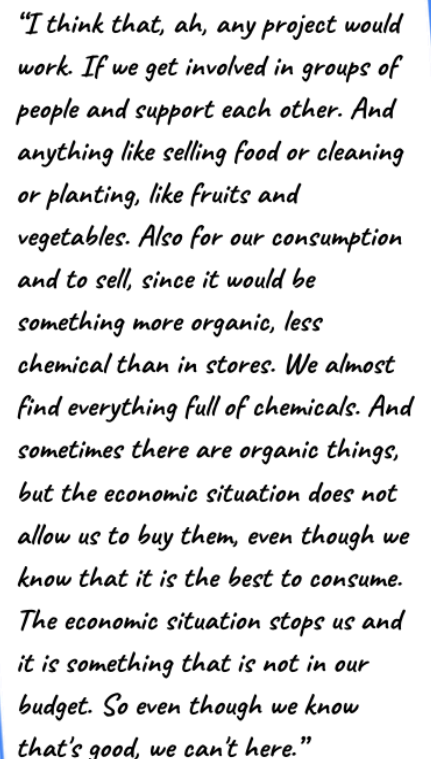
One of the main impediments for building solidarity economies, and worker and community ownership is the lack of access to capital. At the same time there are people who care about social and economic justice and have good jobs and disposable income and want to do good with



both their giving as well as investments, but there is a lack of options for them to do so. UWGLA could help build both [giving circles](#) with young and established professionals with disposable income, as well as a [Solidarity and Cooperative Investment Network](#) to fill the void. UWGLA has to potential to lead the way and innovate social and economic justice investment options for people who want to invest in community based economic projects and at the same time creating an investment seeding fund modeled after the SEED Commons or the Boston Ujima Project which have multiple bottom lines, modest returns on investments while also helping to fund and seed community economic projects that keep profits and revenues locally. The investment network can provide some of the funding and UWGLA could also bring together big dollar donors who can create a matching funds project, while we all collectively also pursue city policy to create a Cooperative development fund, like the ones that exist in New York City and Berkeley.

## Solidarity and Collective Economies Regional Capacity Building

To be successful, as this work moves forward for UWGLA, we recommend that the proper resources be invested in supporting the work necessary to build out solidarity and collective economies in the Southern California region. Because this work is path breaking in Los Angeles and for UWGLA, and it begins with reorienting people's perceptions of what is possible, including community partners', it will take time to get alignment to a shared vision. This work requires relationship building and building trust with folks about projects that are fundamentally different from providing services or what others in the community based organization space are used to. The work then needs to be intentional in order to build strong foundations where partners fully understand and commit to the shared vision. This takes time, especially when there aren't many projects already in the area to draw inspiration from. In order to make sure this campaign is successful long term, including building out a funding strategy that engages more people in collective ways, we recommend UWGLA continue to support the training of staff not just by bringing in experts and convening community partners, but by also [supporting staff](#) to participate in [conferences, trainings and workshops](#) in other parts of the country where solidarity economies education opportunities are taking place. These opportunities, both training in Los Angeles and elsewhere are key to building out Los Angeles' capacity to support the burgeoning solidarity and collective economies projects in Los Angeles. Coupled with the recommendations and efforts already underway, all of these will help make United Way of Greater Los Angeles not only the path breaker in this work but also the anchor and leader in these efforts in all of Southern California.



*"I think that, ah, any project would work. If we get involved in groups of people and support each other. And anything like selling food or cleaning or planting, like fruits and vegetables. Also for our consumption and to sell, since it would be something more organic, less chemical than in stores. We almost find everything full of chemicals. And sometimes there are organic things, but the economic situation does not allow us to buy them, even though we know that it is the best to consume. The economic situation stops us and it is something that is not in our budget. So even though we know that's good, we can't here."*

# Appendix

## Codes

Below is a list of the codes and their descriptions (29 Main Codes and 2 subcodes):

1. Autonomy/ Decision Making
  - a. Used when there was mention of a desire of autonomy or had autonomy
2. COVID Context
  - a. Used when participants spoke about an occurrence during the pandemic (when Los Angeles was shut down) or mentioned an occurrence that was related to repercussions of the pandemic
3. Child Care/ Youth Related Topics
  - a. Used when mentioning anything related to children K-12 needs or concerns
4. Collaboration
  - a. Used when participants had shown partnership with other community members
5. Community Cleaning and Beautification
  - a. Used when participants mentioned uncleanliness and homelessness
6. Community Efforts
  - a. Used when community worked as whole provided support to one another
7. Community Engagement
  - a. Used when participants would engage in organization-related work/actions in the United States or their country of origin
8. Community Gardening and Agriculture
  - a. Used when participants mentioned anything that involved gardening or agriculture.
9. Community Need
  - a. Used when participants showed concerns over a need in their neighborhood
10. Cooking And Culinary Knowledge
  - a. Used when participants spoke about knowledge of cooking
11. Cooperatives
  - a. Used when participants mentioned cooperatives as a solution to an issue or if they had previously participated in one
12. Cost of Living
  - a. Used when participants mentioned increase cost of living or issues with meeting necessities
13. Entrepreneurship Experience and Knowledge

- a. Used when participants explained a work knowledge attainment in selling
- 14. Fashion and Textiles
  - a. Used when participants spoke about extensive knowledge about textiles and machinery to create textiles
- 15. Formal Education
  - a. Used when participants spoke about going to school in the United States or in their country of origin
- 16. Gentrification/Housing Affordability
  - a. Used when participants mentioned housing affordability or displacement
- 17. Health Care
  - a. Used when health related issues were mentioned
- 18. Informal Economies/Side Hustles
  - a. Used when participants spoke about employment opportunities that were not formally part of the economy such as selling goods on their own behalf
- 19. Interest/Hobbies/Things they are good at
  - a. Used when participants mentioned hobbies or talents
- 20. Joy
  - a. Used when participants showed joy or mentioned joy about particular topics
- 21. Migration- Used when participants talked about their journey to the United States and country of origin
  - a. Citizenship Status- Used when participants speak about their citizenship status (undocumented, permanent residency, or citizen) and any barriers/perks connected to their citizenship status
- 22. Non-U.S State Funded Services
  - a. Used when participants mentioned participation in programs in their countries of origin
- 23. Organizing
  - a. Used when participants mention the need to organizing as a community or have experience organizing
- 24. Poverty and Inequality- Used when participants mentioned poverty stolen moments and acknowledgement of class struggle, compared to upper class
  - a. Exploitation- Used when participants mentioned exploitation at work
- 25. Safe Gathering Spaces
  - a. Used when participants spoke about the need of a safe gathering space or if there were spaces that used to exist that was utilized by the community
- 26. Solidarity and Mutual Aid
  - a. Used when participants spoke about depending on their community to support themselves in times of need
- 27. Time Flexibility and Control

- a. Used when there is a need for participants to have control over their time
- 28. Wages and Income
  - a. Used any time participants spoke about their income and pay
- 29. Workshops and Trainings
  - a. Used any time participants spoke about workshops they would lead or if they believed there was a need for them to have more access to particular trainings

## Interview Highlights

1. "I would like to knit, I know how to knit with a needle and a hook, I know how to make crumb flowers and stuffed animals, but I don't do them because, yes, I need more money..." (Full quotes in Appendix) (quote 4)
2. "I like to sell clothes. Yes. I used to sell clothes in downtown...but I couldn't because no one could take care of my children." (quote 5)
3. "I think that maybe the rent, the rent, the rent, for example, the buildings, if you went and paid \$1,200, rent should be based on me and my jobs ... you're going to see my salary and income... If I earn \$100, I can't pay \$100 in rent. They should make more government apartments to collect the right amount of rent, it doesn't have to be section eight, perhaps. But pay a fair price if you understand what I mean, moderate price. Because if I own this building and I rent it, I'm not going to rip someone's guts out [price gouge them]. But if the government owns it, there's going to be a limit (quote 54)
4. Community Member 1: Sorry. Yes, that's what I believe, that these cooperatives should depend on a different administration than a large businesses... It is another kind of education in terms of administration. Yes....They should make decisions together.  
Community Member 2: They should empower women, they empower people to grow in their work and also grow in their mentality (quote 22)
5. Well, I love to cook and what would be better if I could share what I know with other people and also feed myself what I do know in the kitchen. And prepare (teach) myself more and prepare other people. (quote 27)
6. Yes, only tamales, tamales. We have gotten together, about three of us. We have come together, for example, one that makes Central American tamales that are made with banana leaves. I am the one that makes Mexican tamales. (quote, 33)
7. And another small group that we voluntarily formed here is with Action Westlake, but it is also a group of women. We invited people... We made this flyer, and we handed them out to inform people that we were going to clean the streets on Alvarado...it is a very dirty street...there is also a need here to clean the streets. (quote 34)
8. They would tell me "you need to organize." I would say to myself, what things do we need here in the school? Well, we need to clean. What resources do people need for Christmas? So yes, we organized for resources, we organized. And from there we started to talk with other people, because one person can't do everything right? We organized with 8 other women. Planning with the others the things we needed to do in our community and we did it. (quote 36)



9. Oh, for food. And well, the truth is that it was so difficult because there was not even any vegetables, there was nothing. So for us, we had to depend on canned food, you see that vegetables come in cans too and I had to cook from there to be able to bring a meal. So, I don't know how to explain to you, it was something that always comes from within me. That's always in me. (quote 37)
10. I like being an organizer...I organized. I liked talking to the community about what women and mothers needed. Yes. What did they need? (quote 38)
11. Emelyne: So, how would you see the harvesting work? What do you think it would be like in community? Or would it be one person in charge?  
Community Member: A single person? No! In other words, the cooperative would be 20 people. You, take two loads of carrots. You, just put in the beets. You, put in the lettuce and the onion. And everyone holds meetings together and ask how is your harvest going. No, it's not going so well. No, we do not want the harvest to be neglected and we will put a person to supervise. (quote 55)

## Interview Full Quotes

1. Sí. Como inmigrante, como persona inmigrante, nos impide los documentos legal. Estar ilegales (indocumentado) es un grave problema en la mayoría del por ciento de lugares. Se está siendo discriminado en ese sentido. Es que no se puede. ¿Tu tienes identificación de California? No. Ah, lo siento mucho, pero no te dan trabajo. Entonces la gente por eso se dedica a ser propio y más todavía. Afortunadamente, yo ya estoy tramitando todos mis permisos legales para como de vender comida, porque ese es, y siempre fue mi sueño. Gracias a Dios. Las personas que se prestan conmigo para ayudarme. Estoy viendo eso, pero mis compañeros, o mis amigas, o mis vecinos no tienen esa dicha, ¿Verdad? Porque les hace falta más cosas. Yo desde que empecé a prepararme, como le decía llegué (de su país) entonces empecé a prepararme para poder estar mejor. Pero si es eso lo que afecta ahorita no el poder tener un documento legal, el poder estar como decirle, ah, tener un hacer impuestos. Ajá. Mucha gente no, no los hace por miedo porque no dice van a saber quién soy y me van a deportar.
  - a. Yes. As an immigrant, as an immigrant person, it prevents us from obtaining legal documents. Being illegal (undocumented) is a serious problem in the majority of places. You are being discriminated against in that sense. You don't have a California ID? No. Oh, I'm very sorry, but you cannot have a job. So that's why people dedicate themselves to being their own (self employed) and depend on themselves. Fortunately, I am already processing all my legal permits to sell food, because that has always been my dream. Thank God. The people who lend themselves to me to help me. But I see that my colleagues, or my friends, or my neighbors don't have that opportunity, right, because they need more things. I started preparing myself, because as I said when I arrived (from their country) then I started preparing to be better. But that is what affects us right now, not being able to have any legal documents and not doing our taxes. Many people don't do them out of fear because they think they're going to figure out who they are and they're going to get deported.
2. En ese tiempo era más fácil para trabajar, ahorita ya no. Ahorita ya cobran hasta \$10,000 por una pasada. Y ahora piden documentos para poder trabajar. ¿Y un seguro social? Yo, a pesar de que ya tengo 30 años en este país, no los he podido obtener. A pesar de que tengo dos hijos discapacitados, no lo pude obtener. ¿Por qué? Yo no sé por qué la gente o la sociedad, verdad? Más que nada, la sociedad.

- a. Before it was even easier to work. Now, not anymore. Right now, they charge up to \$10,000 for one pass. And now they are asking for documents to be able to work. And social security? I, even though I have been in this country for 30 years, have not been able to obtain it. Even though I have two disabled children. Why couldn't I get it? I don't know why, I think its people or society, right? More so anything it is society.
3. Yo soy de Nicaragua. Vine hace 25 años. Vine bien joven...soy viuda. Me vine por mi situación económica. Dejé una hija en Nicaragua y después la traje aquí en Estados Unidos. Soy indocumentada. No tengo documentos. A pesar de eso, gracias a Dios, me ayudó mucho unas personas que me conocieron aquí en la iglesia. En la iglesia Cristiana me ayudaron mucho a conseguir trabajo donde yo soy parte de la iglesia. Y me ayudaron mucho y conseguir (trabajo) a pesar, no tener documento que es bien duro...
  - a. I am from Nicaragua. I came 25 years ago. I came very young... I'm a widow. I came because of my economic situation. I left a daughter in Nicaragua and later brought her here to the United States. I am undocumented. I don't have any documents (citizenship). Despite that, thanks to God, he helped me a lot. I met some people in church. In the Christian church they helped me a lot to get a job where. I am part of the congregation. And they helped me a lot to get (a job) despite not having documents, which is very hard to do...
4. Me gusta, me gustaría tejer, yo se tejer aguja y a gancho. Se hacer flores de migajón. Yo se hacer muñequitos de peluche pero no los hago porque ahí sí, me hace falta más dinero...O y se hacer flores. Sí, las flores de migajón. Las flores de migajón pues este es con el pan del bolillo. Pero yo no lo hago tanto con eso. Yo lo hago con el resistol blanco de vaquita. Pongo eso, lo pongo a cocer. Lo pongo a cocer con crema y con aceite de bebé. Y así empiezan a hacer este la masa y ya de la masa se le mete en un hule al refrigerador para que esté suave. Cuando usted lo masaje, no se hace duro, se hace suave...y se empieza a hacer, por ejemplo un rosario. Le metes un aguja y ya se va añadiendo otra y otra cosa, como si fuera plastilina. Pero con el tiempo se pone duro. Ah, con el tiempo se pone duro. Porque es migajon es como las flores normales, pero son duras porque viene siendo del resistol blanco y como va a hirviendo entonces son las flores que yo hago. A veces hago los zapatitos para los baby showers ya tengo el molde nada más desde que pongo el molde, pongo la masa...y el zapato y arriba ya cualquier cosita le pongo.
  - a. I like it, I would like to knit, I know how to knit with a needle and a hook, I know how to make crumb flowers and stuffed animals. I don't do them because I need more money... Or, for flowers...crumb flowers. The crumb flowers are the bread with the bolillo (small french bread). But I don't do that as much. I make it with white glue...I boil it with cream with baby oil and so it begins to make this kind of dough. I put the dough in an oil cloth in the refrigerator so that it stays soft. When you massage it is not hard...so you can mold it in the form of the rosary if you keep it warm. You can put the needle in and then add another and another thing, as if it were playdough. Over time it gets hard because it is crumbly. I can make like normal flowers, but they are hard because they are made of glue...Sometimes I make the shoes for the baby showers. I already have the mold...I put the dough then I put the mold. I do it and then I press it so that when they are ready they look like baby shoes and then I add small decorations on top.
5. Community Member : A mí me gusta vender ropa, ropa. Sí. Antes vendía ropa en el centro. Sí, pero no pude porque por mis hijos. Nadie me los podía cuidar.  
 Alfredo: ¿Y ropa, ropa que usted lo hace o compra por mayoreo?  
 Community Member: No, yo compraba por mayoreo y lo vendía en el centro. Y eso sí, me gustaba. A mí también me encanta hacer eso. Pero no tuve tiempo por lo mismo. Lo dejé...Me gusta vender y vender productos
  - a. Community Member: I like to sell clothes. Yes. I used to sell clothes in downtown. Yes, but I couldn't because no one could take care of my children.
  - b. Alfredo: And the clothes did you make or buy in bulk?
  - c. Community Member: No, I bought in bulk and sold it. And yes, I liked doing that too. But I didn't have time for the same reason. I left it...I really like to sell and sell products

6. Community Member: También soy vendedora ambulante. Después empecé a vender cositas y después vendí ropa en la San Pedro. Porque allí en la San Pedro va uno a las tres de la mañana agarrar puestos los sábados y después dejé eso. Pues he vendido en la calle sábado y domingo.  
 Alfredo: ¿Qué vende?  
 Community Member: Lo que he vendido es cargadores de celular.  
 Alfredo: ¿Y dónde los compra?  
 Community Member: Por mayoreo en la calle en Los Ángeles.  
 Alfredo: Entonces va a agarrar mayoría.  
 Community Member: Sí así.  
 Alfredo: Y eso es lo que hace ahorita.  
 Community Member: Ah, no, ahora trabajo en una tiendita  
 Alfredo: Tiendita de que es  
 Community Member: Lo mismo vender lo mismo, juguetes.
  - a. Community Member: I am also a street vendor. I started selling things and then I sold clothes in San Pedro, where I started at three in the morning and I would have to reserve my booth on Saturdays and then I stopped. I left that. Well, I have sold on the street on Saturday and Sunday
  - b. Alfredo: What did you sell?
  - c. Community Member: I would sell cell phone chargers.
  - d. Alfredo: And where do you buy them?
  - e. Community Member: I would buy them wholesale in downtown Los Angeles.
  - f. Alfredo: Then you buy in bulk.
  - g. Community Member: Yes, like that.
  - h. Alfredo: And that's what I am doing right now.
  - i. Community Member: Oh, no, right now I work in a small store.
  - j. Alfredo: What kind of store?
  - k. Community Member: Same as before, we sell toys.
7. Sí. Yo tengo hierbabuena y epazote, hasta cilantro... Pues, para usarlos yo los uso porque cómo usa para echar la comida. Y la yerba buena..la uso para hacer té de remedio.
  - a. Yes. I have mint and epazote, even cilantro... well, to use them I use them because yerba buena I use it to add to food... I also use them to make remedy teas.
8. En primer lugar, a mí me encanta la cocina. Me encanta la cocina. Cuando mi mamá cocinaba yo siempre de chiquilla le preguntaba ¿qué le está poniendo y por qué? ¿Y por cómo sabe qué cantidad de sal necesita la comida? Siempre medida. Y mi papá en aquel tiempo fue chef, no estudió eso.
  - a. First of all, I love cooking. I love cooking. When my mom cooked I was always little and I would ask what are you putting in it and why. And I would ask how she knows how much salt to put in the food and why. And my dad was also a chef at that time but he didn't go to school for it.
9. Pues yo pienso que, ah, cualquier proyecto funcionará. Si nos involucramos en grupos de personas y nos apoyamos unos a otros. Y a cualquier cosa como vender comida o de trabajos de limpieza o sembrar, como frutas y verduras. También para nuestro consumo y para vender. Pues ya sería algo más orgánico, menos químico que pues en las tiendas casi encontramos todo lleno de químico. Y a veces hay cosas orgánicas, pero por la situación económica no nos permite comprarlas, aunque sabemos que es lo mejor para consumir. Nos detiene la situación económica y es algo que no está en nuestro presupuesto. Entonces, aunque sabemos que eso es bueno, no podemos aquí.
  - a. Well, I think that, ah, any project would work. If we get involved in groups of people and support each other. And anything like selling food, cleaning, planting, like fruits and vegetables. Also for our consumption and to sell, since it would be something more organic with less chemicals than in stores. We almost find everything full of chemicals. And sometimes there are organic things, but our economic situation does not allow us to buy them, even though we know that it is the best choice to consume. The economic situation stops us and it is something that is not in our budget. So even though we know that's good, we can't do that here.

10. Ahora que ya no estoy en la gasolinera como quien dice porque yo estaba en cuerpo y alma en la gasolinera yo ocupaba todo mi tiempo para allá. Me preparaba siempre para estar en mi trabajo. Ahora ya no estoy en la gasolinera como quien dice laborando.
  - a. Now that I'm no longer working at the gas station, I was working body and soul at the gas station. I spent all my time there. I always prepared myself to be at work. Now, I am not at the gas station laboring.
11. No..Casi la mayoría de personas pues no están estables en situaciones laborales. Y si es bastante difícil. Algunas personas contamos con eso (trabajo). Yo le digo que es una bendición poder encontrar un trabajito que sea flexible. Sí, pero hay muchas personas que lastimosamente no encuentran y batallan. Y este y también el desempleo es un tema muy, muy delicado en nuestra comunidad.
  - a. No...Almost most people are not stable in work situations. And, yes, it is quite difficult. Some of us count on it ( their job). I think it is a blessing to be able to find a little job that is flexible. But, yes, there are many people who unfortunately cannot find it and struggle. And, also, unemployment is a very, very delicate issue in our community.
12. Ahorita, solo limpio casas. Fue como una alternativa de agarrar dinero cuando no tenía ingresos porque también mi pareja, pues dejó de trabajar y pues hay que pagar biles (facturas) y muchas cosas. Entonces, fue una manera como un apoyo que se me hizo bien. Y gracias a Dios me funcionó. Sí. Y sí, me la verdad me ayudó mucho económicamente
  - a. Right now, I only clean houses. It was like an alternative to make money when I had no income because my partner also stopped working and you have to pay bills and many other things. So, it was a good way to find this kind of help. And thank God it worked for me. Yes, the truth is that it helped me a lot financially.
13. Por ejemplo, deberían de ser también más justo con nosotros los inmigrantes. Paganos...como se debe, no es justo...Porque a veces en los trabajos no le quieren pagar a uno. Lo que es, digamos, ahorita está...\$16.80 el mínimo. Pero las compañías no le quieren pagar eso a uno, hay empleadores que le pagan uno menos...\$12 la hora y no es justo.
  - a. For example, they should also be more fair to us immigrants, so paying us immigrants as they should, they are not fair... Because sometimes at work they don't want to pay you. What is it, let's say, right now... I think the minimum wage is \$16.80, but companies don't want to pay you that, there are employers who pay you less...\$12 an hour and it is not fair.
14. Me fui a los callejones a vender ropa, pero si vendía, me pagaban. Y si no vendía no había sueldo más que el mínimo...la gente abusaba o sigue abusando todavía de la gente. Que vida aquí trabajar.
  - a. I went to the alleys to sell clothes, but if I sold, they paid me. And if I didn't sell there was no salary, only the minimum wage... people abused or are still abusing people, what a life working here.
15. Hacer ropa de maquila (dar clases)...Porque tienen (máquinas) en el downtown y es fácil para manejar eso. Y sale muy rápido la ropa. Es cosa que se va a pagar porque tenemos el downtown el número uno en moda, o sea, se vende. Si me entiendes, eso hace falta mucho a este lugar. Tener una fábrica de textiles. También el zapato para los hombres porque el zapato es indispensable aquí. Sí me entiende. Pues son cosas que no son temporales, sino que eso va durar, una zapatería...Sí, mucha gente que hay, todos los hispanos, toda esta gente viene con mucha sabiduría. No es porque soy hispana.
  - a. Making maquila clothes (they would like to give classes)..Because they have them downtown and they're easy to work (the machines). And the clothes come out very quickly, it is something that you can get profit for because we have downtown that is number one in fashion. We can sell it... Having a textile factory. Also making shoes for men because shoes are essential here. Yes,you understand me. Well, they are not jobs that are not temporary and what will last is a shoe store...Yes, there are many people, who are all Hispanic, all of these people come with a lot of wisdom (how to use the machinery). And I am not saying this because I'm Hispanic.
16. Pues al igual que en mi caso personal, pienso que muchas personas lo que nos impide es la situación económica. Porque ya cómo hablar de un negocio formal implica, pues, invertir dinero es sea lo que



no todos tenemos porque prácticamente nuestros trabajos solo nos cubren como para lo principal lo esencial que es nuestra casa, nuestra vivienda, la comida, y las cosas que necesitamos personales. A veces muchas personas, al igual que yo pienso y me imagino que también tienen esa idea o de avanzar. Pero pues el factor económico es el que siempre te detiene. Y aunque tengamos grandes ideas, grandes sueños, pues nos quedamos ahí y espantados.

- a. Well, just like in my personal case, I think that for many people what prevents us is the economic situation because talking about making a formal business implies, well, investing money and that is something that not all of us have because practically our jobs only cover us. We only have enough for the main things, the essential thing is our house, food, and the things we need personally. Sometimes many people just think and imagine, and have the desire of moving forward but the economic factor is what always stops you. Now, even though we have great ideas and big dreams, we stay there and are too scared.

17. Community Resident #1: Tienen [que tener un] voto. Y estar aplicando y es trabajar en unión. Es parte de la comunicación. Es un proceso grande en el que creo que dar es emotivo, no? Y diseñarse súper interesante. Muy, muy interesante,

Community Resident #2: Muy interesante, que sea uno su propio patrón. Maneja uno su tiempo. Porque en realidad, como mujer, nunca he trabajado en la limpieza de casa pero he trabajado en la limpieza con hoteles. Es terrible, te hacen trabajar y te quitan lo que es los chips el manager. Te lo quitan. Es un trabajo muy pero muy difícil. Entonces, hacer tu propio jefe es más, como más flexible. Es más por cómo te tratan en el trabajo. Ya no tienes ese como [sentimiento] regresando a la casa, ya no quieres nada. Es como pierdes a tu familia, pierdes a ti misma. Entonces es algo que me gusta muchísimo. De hecho, cómo se puede entrar ahí?

- a. Community Resident #1: They (have to have a) vote. And it involves working together. It is part of communication. It's a big process that I think is emotional, right? And it would be very interesting to design,
- b. Community Resident #2: Very interesting. Being your own boss you can manage your time. Because in reality, as a woman, I have never worked in cleaning homes but I have worked in cleaning hotels. It's terrible, they make you work and they take away your chips. The manager takes it away from you. It is a very, very difficult job. So becoming your own boss is more flexible. It's more how they treat you at work. You then develop this feeling once you return home, you no longer want anything. It's like, I mean, you lose your family, you lose yourself. So that's something I really like. In fact, how can we start one?

18. Hay igualdad. Exactamente. Y eso que no hay igualdad porque que, por ejemplo, para nuestra gente inmigrante, mucha de las personas pues no tienen sus documentos y todo eso. Entonces es donde la gente se aprovecha y es donde nos pagan lo que quieren. Y como saben que uno necesita el trabajo, ahí están, ahí estamos trabajando por lo que ellos digan...A veces tenemos ese miedo de no hablar y de no pedir nuestros derechos de no pedir un salario más arriba porque pues nos van a correr.

- a. There is equality. Exactly. And there is no equality because, for example, for our immigrant people, many of the people are, well, they don't have their documents and all that. That's where people take advantage and we get paid what they want. And since they know that we need the work, then we work at their rate...Sometimes we have that fear of not speaking up and of not demanding our rights, of not asking for a higher salary because they are going to fire us.

19. Pues es la economía. No es uno, es la economía, la escasez de recursos o de poder tener como un jardín...O un lugar donde haya cultivos. Un lugar donde se encuentren precios más bajos o un lugar para poder hacer un negocio. Cómo decir, nosotros tenemos un propio lugar, verdad? O alguien que nos proporcione cómo decirle cómo...podemos progresar?...Porque cuando yo trabajo para esto, soy voluntaria. Digo, trabajo de voluntaria, es muy diferente porque ellos ponen sus reglas( las organizaciones)...

- a. Well, it's the economy...it's the scarcity of resources and the lack of power to have a garden...Or a place where there are crops, a place where we can find lower prices or a place to do business. If we have our own place or if someone can provide us with a way to ask

how...we can create this...Because when I work for this, I am a volunteer. I mean, volunteer work, it's very different because they set their rules (the organizations)...

20. Para las personas que tienen tierra, que tienen espacio, pero para las personas que vivimos en apartamentos, no tenemos nada de eso. Pero porque uno vive en apartamento, no se puede cosechar de igual, como usted dijo...[cosechar] unas lechugas no llevamos cuando queremos, porque se compran esas cositas...si se puede cosechar afuera de la de la ventana
- a. For people who have land they have space, but for people who live in apartments, we don't have any of that. But because you live in an apartment, we can't harvest it, as you said...We can take some lettuce when we want, because we buy those little things already... yes, it can be harvested outside the window.
21. Una vivienda, vivienda. Sí, porque la vivienda se necesita. Se ocupa aquí. Sí, se ocupa demasiado. Y mire donde vive mi hermano también, donde yo me doy cuenta que sí. Y toda la gente donde he hablado sí, ocupan vivienda. Sí. Dignidad. Sí, respeto, respeto y que no anden molestando, como dice jodiendo. Como dicen sí que no andan discutiendo y que nos traten con respeto, por lo menos. Eso a mí me gustaría. Así uno, y yo si he pensado, un día y digo, por qué no compramos tierras que, como dicen ahí "for sale" de venta. Y digo, por qué no comprar...digo porque no comprar un edificio...
- a. Housing, Housing. Yes, because housing is needed. It's needed here. Yes, it's definitely needed here. And you see, where my brother lives is where I realize that it is needed. And all the people I have spoken to do need housing. Yes, dignity. Yes, respect, respect. And what we want is to not be bothered, as they say, screwing us over. That they do not argue with us and that they treat us with respect, at least. I would like one day, i thought to myself, why don't we buy land that...why not buy a building...
22. Community Member 1: Perdón. Sí, ahí creo yo, que estos cooperativas dependen de una administración diferente a los negocios grandes...Es otra clase de educación en cuestión de administración. Sí....Toman decisiones en conjunto,
- Community Member 2: Poder a la mujer, apoderan a las personas para que crezcan en su trabajo y también crezcan en su en mentalidad
- a. Community Member 1: Sorry. Yes, that's what I believe, that these cooperatives should depend on a different administration than large businesses... It is another kind of education in terms of administration. Yes....They should make decisions together,
  - b. Community Member 2: They should empower women, they should empower people to grow in their work and also grow in their mentality
23. Digo que la mayoría de nosotros los Latinos, no sabemos que hay organizaciones ahí que pueden ayudar a uno. Entonces necesitamos una información más para que uno aprenda que hay organizaciones y ojalá que hay aquí en Pico-Union para que la gente busque esas organizaciones y no sea tan abusada con el sueldo porque muchas veces van a limpiar una casa y les pagan \$50 y quieren que le hagan lavado y todo...Y entonces, necesitamos información y una cooperación. Así que le ayude a uno a sostener su trabajo y un sueldo digno o el mínimo para poder decirte tengo tanto...Esa es la información que yo creo que necesitamos aquí en la área.
- a. I say that most of us Latinos don't know that there are organizations out there that can help you. So we need more information so that one can learn that there are organizations and I hope that there are some here in Pico-Union so that people look for those organizations and are not so abused with their salaries at work, because many times they go clean a house and they pay them \$50 and they want everything cleaned...And then, we need information and a cooperative. So it helps everyone sustain their job and have a decent salary or receive minimum wage...That is the information that I think we need here in the area.
24. Si hubiera un lugar de un préstamo sin altos intereses, yo pienso que estaría bueno, ¿por qué? Porque hay un lugar que es para puras mujeres. no es para hombres. Es un lugar que se llama este Grant of América. Y ese lugar da el préstamo desde muy poquito dólares. Pero cada semana usted tiene que estar presente en persona. Ahorita ya no, porque pasó lo de la pandemia...Y cada seis

meses, usted va pagando cada semana...pero ahí va también esté integrado los intereses. Sí. Y está bien, está bien, sé más que son como 7% o 5% que se cobran de intereses.

a. If there was a place that gave loans without high interest, I think it would be good, why?

Because there is a place that is for only women. It's not for men, it's a place called Grant of America. And that place gives the loan from small amounts of dollars. But every week you have to be present in person. Not anymore, because of the pandemic... And every six months, eh, you pay every week...but the interest is also integrated. Yes. And it's great, it's great, I know that it's like 7% or 5% the interest that is charged.

25. Alfredo: Question that we have is, you know, which kind of projects can be created in, in our community...in your community?

Homies Unidos Participant: The last one that you ensure that that's for me, that's, that would be like my, my dream to do the farming.

26. Sí, ya hace como un año conocí a una señora, creo que es del Este de Los Ángeles. Ella estaba batallando también sobre poner su negocio porque la renta del local está bien cara. Entonces ellos se juntaron. Creo que ahorita están como 30 o 50 personas en un lugar que compraron y solo tienes que pagar \$10 para que tú puedas llevar tu negocio en esa cooperativa. Y se me hizo muy, pero muy interesante. Pero a veces no tomamos la iniciativa de decir, oh, déjame ir a ver y a ver que voy a ir a vender. Pero esa señora nos dio una clase también de un taller para eso. Y decía son bienvenidos, solo tienen que pagar \$10 y pueden vender lo que ustedes quieran porque eso es para la comunidad, no enriquece a nadie. Y se me hizo muy, muy bueno. Y eso sería muy bueno en un lugar así en Pico-Union. Porque pues hay muchas habilidades, tenemos muchas habilidades. Puede hacer paletas, puede ser ahí, como dicen, como ejemplo que tienen casa, pueden cultivar algo y vender en ese mérito, pero que sea en nosotros.

a. Yes, a year ago I met a lady, I think she is from East Los Angeles. She was also struggling about starting her business because the rent for the space is very expensive. So she got together with other people. I think that right now the group has about 30 or 50 people in a place that they bought and you only have to pay \$10 so that you can run your business in that cooperative. And it seemed very, very interesting to me. But sometimes we don't take the initiative to say, oh, let me go see and see what I could sell. But that lady also gave us a class and a workshop for that. And let us know that we are welcomed and that you only have to pay \$10 and sell whatever you want because it is for the community, it does not enrich anyone. And it seemed very, very good to me. And that would be very good in a place like this. People in Pico-Union have many abilities, we have so many abilities. We can make ice cream paletas... as an example if people have a house, they can grow something and sell on that merit, but let it be for us...

27. Bueno, a mí me encanta cocinar y que mejor si yo pudiera compartir lo que sé con otras personas y asimismo retro alimentarme de lo que yo sé en la cocina y prepararme más y preparar a otras personas.

a. Well, I love to cook and what would be better if I could share what I know with other people and also feed myself what I do know in the kitchen. And prepare (teach) myself more and prepare other people.

28. Por parte del ejército, dieron una capacitación...Sí, muy buena la capacitación. Porque yo aprendí a inyectar, aprendí a poner sueros, y aprendí a hacer curaciones. Este tiene unos principios de poquito introducción de poquito de las enfermedades. Muy buena la instrucción. Yo tengo mi diploma también de eso. Pero aquí, cuando recién vine, al año yo hice un estudio de CNA y lo terminé. Me dieron el papel. Pero cuando mandamos nuestros papeles a Sacramento, no servían, ¿por qué? Porque la institución no estaba legal.

a. On behalf of the army( in the country of origin), they gave trainings...Yes, the training was very good. Because I learned to inject, I learned to give serums and I learned to bandage/heal wounds. This was a little introduction to diseases. Very good instruction. I have my diploma from that too. But here, I did it a year after I arrived here, I did a CNA course and finished it. They

gave me the diploma. But when we sent our papers to Sacramento, they were of no use, why? Because the institution was not legal.

29. También sé coser. Soy costurera...en mi país estudié modistería...también me gusta tejer crochet. Me gustaría dar clases de crochet.
- a. I also know how to sew. I am a seamstress...in my country I studied how to be a modiste...I also like to crochet. I would like to teach crochet classes.
30. Pues como le digo, yo me acoplo, yo me acoplo a todo. Soy muy buena aprendiendo a diferentes puestos...¿cómo pueden ustedes también darnos opciones?...Pero si se va a hacer algo así, comunitario, me imagino que va a ser dependiendo de la gente y lo que les dijimos, no?
- a. Well, as I say, I adapt, I adapt to everything. I am very good at learning different jobs...how can you also give us options...But if something like this is going to be done and it is going to be community-based, I imagine it will depend on the people and they will do what we told them, right?
31. Okey, perfecto. Me encanta cocinar para empezar en mi país, el estado me mandó una beca para ir a estudiar cocina para escuelas saludables que es a nivel todo el país, verdad? Eso fue en mi país. Entonces, de allí a mí me encantaba desde chiquita cocinar, pero eso me ayudó a extender mi cabeza, mi cerebro, para poder hacer más cosas. Entonces, para mí es muy importante. Fui también y aprendí en un club de ama de casa, también en donde se le enseñaba a las personas más pobrecitas. No tenían ni la mínima idea de lo que las personas sufrían de hambre. Y yo empecé a ir a, lo que nosotros llamamos, agroservicios en mi país en donde tienen semillas para sembrar y venden abono. Venden de todo...No sé como se llama aquí, pero son agroservicios...
- a. Okay, perfect. I love to cook. To start, in my country, the state sent me a scholarship to go study health cooking in some schools which are found nationwide, right? That was in my country. So, from there, I loved cooking since I was little, but that helped me expand my head, my brain, to be able to do more things. So, for me it is very important. I also went to learn in a housewife club where the poorest people were taught. You didn't have the slightest idea of what people suffered, especially from hunger. And I started going to what we call agroservices in my country where they have seeds to plant and they sell fertilizer.
32. A mí me gusta mucho hacer la comida. Me fascina hacer la comida, pero yo miro en mí un potencial que es en la rapidez de las manos y de la de la mirada. Yo soy muy rápida. No sé si sea porque trabajé en el campo, verdad? Pero yo soy muy rápida para las manos. Eso pienso yo que ese es mi don. I really like making food.
- a. I love making food, but I see a potential in myself that lies in the speed of my hands and my intuition. I'm very fast. I don't know if it's because I worked in the field, right? But I'm very quick with my hands. That, I think that that is my gift.
33. Sí, solamente tamales, tamales. Nos hemos juntado entre tres personas. Hemos juntado, por ejemplo, una hace los tamales centroamericanos que son con hojas de plátano. Yo hago los tamales mexicanos
- a. Yes, only tamales, tamales. We have gotten together, about three of us. We have gotten together, for example, one that makes Central American tamales that are made with banana leaves. I make Mexican tamales.
34. Y otro grupo pequeño que formamos voluntariamente aquí es el de Action Westlake, pero también es un grupo de mujeres. Invitamos a la gente... Hicimos este volante y los repartimos para informar a la gente que íbamos a limpiar las calles en la Alvarado... es una calle muy sucia... aquí también hay necesidad de limpiar las calles.
- a. And another small group that we voluntarily formed here is with Action Westlake, but it is also a group of women. We invited people... We made this flyer, and we handed them out to inform people that we were going to clean the streets on Alvarado...it is a very dirty street...there is also a need here to clean the streets.



35. Yo seguía trabajando en la limpieza, limpieza del hotel... Y sé que durante la pandemia había mucha gente en la comunidad necesitada de comida de diferentes cosas...Es que éramos como cuatro mujeres que organizamos...No solo nosotros. Pero ya no pude porque mis hijos agarraban clase en casa y como nosotros no recibimos un sueldo de nadie. Mi tiempo era regalando comida a mi comunidad. Ya empezamos seis meses después que la pandemia había empezado.
- I continued working in cleaning, cleaning hotels... And I know that during the pandemic there were many people in the community in need of food and of different things... It's just that we were like four women who organized... but I knew of others. But I could not continue because my children took classes at home and we didn't have a salary. My time was spent giving away food to my community. We started six months after the pandemic had started.
36. Y me decían “te tienes que organizar.” Yo me decía ¿qué cosas necesitamos aquí en la escuela? Bueno, tenemos que limpiar. ¿Qué recursos necesita la gente para Navidad? Entonces sí, nos organizamos para obtener recursos, nos organizamos. Y a partir de ahí empezamos a hablar con otras personas, porque una sola persona no puede hacer todo ¿bien? Nos organizamos con otras 8 mujeres. Planeamos con los demás las cosas que necesitábamos hacer en nuestra comunidad y lo logramos.
- They would tell me “you need to organize.” I would say to myself, what things do we need here in the school? Well, we need to clean. What resources do people need for Christmas? So yes, we organized for resources, we organized. And from there we started to talk with other people, because one person can't do everything right? We organized with 8 other women. Planning with the others the things we needed to do in our community and we did it
37. Ah, para comida. Y pues, la verdad que era tan difícil porque no había ni donde, no había verdura, no había nada. Entonces para nosotros era agarramos los relatados, ve que vienen verduras y yo tenía que cocinar de ahí para poder llevar una comida. Entonces, no sé cómo explicarles que fue algo que nace siempre en mí. Eso siempre está en mí.
- Oh, for food. And well, the truth is that it was so difficult because there was not even any vegetables, there was nothing. So for us, we had to depend on canned food, you see that vegetables come in cans too and I had to cook from there to be able to bring a meal. So, I don't know how to explain to you, it was something that always comes from within me. That's always in me.
38. Me gusta ser organizadora...Yo organizaba. Me gustaba estar hablando con la comunidad que necesitaban las mujeres y las mamás. Sí. Qué es lo que necesitaban
- I like being an organizer...I organized. I liked talking to the community that women and mothers needed. Yes. What did they need?
39. Sí. A ella le encanta verme que le hago el cultivo de frijoles, siembro frijoles, siembro maíz para la cosecha de elotes y todo. Y dice wow, la comadre dice “lo que hace.” Entonces, para mí es eso como una alegría y recordar mi niñez y aparte es muy beneficioso porque también trabajó de voluntaria. Estoy en el espacio de voluntaria con Cultiva LA, Cultiva LA...Sí, soy voluntaria con ellos. Y vamos hasta la ciudad de El Monte. Hay como cinco acres de terreno. Y hacemos hacer pues colaboramos en todo eso. Y aquí por la rampa por la estación de policía hay otro, hay otro en donde se hacen muchos cultivos también.
- Yes. She loves to see me grow beans for her. I plant beans, plant corn and harvest corn and everything. And she says “wow, look what my friend can do.” So, for me it's like a joy and remembering my childhood and it's also very beneficial because I also work as a volunteer. I am a volunteer with Cultiva LA, Cultiva LA...Yes, I volunteer with them. And we go to the city of El Monte. There are about five acres of land. And we do things because we collaborate together. And here on the ramp by the police station there is another, there is another where many crops are also grown.

40. A mí me encanta venir. Sí, a mí me encanta venir. Yo vengo porque yo vengo a divertirme. Vengo a hacer ejercicio, ejercicio, ejercicio, ejercicio...Y después de que la clase va a medias ya la instructora dice "bueno, ahora una de la que quiera que la música que le gusta que pase y que la baile como dando la clase." Y yo voy también.
- a. I love coming. Yes, I love coming. I come because I come to have fun. I come to exercise, exercise, exercise...And after the class is half over, the instructor says well, "anyone who wants to play their favorite music has to come up and dance and teach the class." And of course I go up too.
41. Nosotros? Sí. Primero empezamos a ver lo sucio que está en la calle. Empezamos a limpiar y ese es un proyecto que invitamos a gente a limpiar, verdad...Ya no, ya no, ya no, antes de la pandemia fue eso. Ya cuando la pandemia estuvo ahí, ya no me involucré más.
- a. Us? Yes. First we started to see how dirty the streets were. We started cleaning and made it a project where we invited people to clean...But we do not do that anymore, not anymore. This was before the pandemic. Once the pandemic started, I did not volunteer anymore.
42. Yo aprendí mucho allá con los niños que a veces me ponían al brinco. Los niños eran niños drogadictos y pobres. Sí, pero yo platicaba con ellos, me agarraban confianza. Y lo peor, tocaban niños grandes que ya iban ya para la secundaria. Sí, mis trabajos si los he disfrutado.
- a. I learned a lot there with the children who sometimes had me alert. I worked with children that were drug addicted and poor. Yes, but I talked to them, they trusted me. And the worst thing was I was working with big kids who were already in high school. Yes, I have enjoyed my job.
43. Ah, sí, en donde nosotros vivimos, hay control de renta. Y ese es un gran beneficio porque solo suben del tres (por ciento) que creo que es lo máximo. A nosotros no nos han subido, gracias a Dios. Tres por ciento por cada año, pero de la pandemia para acá hasta febrero 24 (2024) van a empezar a subir la renta, ahorita está detenido. No han cobrado el 3%. Pero sí, he visto casos de amigos que le han subido la renta, por decirlo así, locamente haz de cuenta que le suben \$300, \$200 de un solo porque no tienen control de renta. Esa es la única desventaja de los donde no hay control de renta. Sí, que el dueño te puede subir lo que quiera.
- a. Oh yes, where we live, there is rent control. And that is a great benefit because they only go from three (percent), which I think is the maximum. They haven't increased ours, thank God. They are supposed to increase it three percent each year, but since the pandemic until February 24 (2024) they are going to start raising the rent, right now it is stopped. They have not charged 3%. But yes, I have seen cases of friends who have had their rent raised. Crazy enough to think that they raise their rent by \$300, \$200 at a time because they do not have rent control. That is the only disadvantage of those who live in areas with no rent control. Yes, the owner can raise it to whatever he wants.
44. Community Member: Sí, yo siempre motivo a mis amigas cercanas y le digo, no, mira estudia esto porque nunca sabes cuándo lo vas a necesitar. En la pandemia, gracias a Dios, porque no me quedé sin trabajo, pero lo tomé positivamente. Sí. Y de comida para vender. Y las pocas horas que tenía libre, estudié por zoom.
- Emelyne: ¿En serio? ¿De qué?
- Community Member: Ah, saque un curso para cuidar ancianos.
- Emelyne: Wow.
- Community Member: Unas clases de mecánica.
- Emelyne: Estaba bien y terminé el de mecánica?
- Community Member: Agarre mi diploma de los dos.
- Emelyne: Y de dónde lo sacó eso?
- Community Member: El colegio comunitario de este de Los Ángeles
- a. Community Member: Yes, I always motivate my close friends and tell them, no, look for something to study in because you never know when you are going to need it. During the pandemic, thank God, I didn't lose my job, and I took it positively. I sold food and the few hours I had free, I studied via Zoom.

- b. Emelyne: Seriously? What did you study?
  - c. Community Member: Oh, take a course to care for the elderly.
  - d. Emelyne: Wow.
  - e. Community Member: And some mechanic classes.
  - f. Emelyne: Which classes did you finish?
  - g. Community Member: I got my certificate for both
  - h. Emelyne: And where did you get that from?
  - i. Community Member: East Los Angeles Community College
45. Sí. También me gusta lo de la costura...en Guatemala tomé unas a clases de costura.
- a. Yes. I also like sewing...in Guatemala I took some sewing classes.
46. Community Resident: Tuvimos de todo, fábrica de paletas, fábrica de ropa. Este trabajamos en los swapmeet allá. Les decimos *tianguis*. Sí, muchos años. Y mi esposo era muy atento...le gustaba administrarnos...
- Alfredo: Así como los patrones
- Community Resident: Sí, exactamente. Nomás nos administraba.
- a. Community Resident: We had everything, pallet factory, clothing factory. We worked in the swap meets there. We call them *tianguis*. Yes, many years. And my husband was very attentive...he liked managing us, but he didn't like working physically,
  - b. Alfredo: Just like the patterns
  - c. Community Resident: Yes, exactly. He just managed us
47. Alfredo: El primer trabajo fue limpiando casas?
- Community Resident: Sí, no fue mucho tiempo porque tuve malas experiencias. No me gustó limpiar casas, hay mujeres muy exigentes. Y como uno no sabe ni cuánto cobrar ni nada pues le dan a uno lo que quieren y pues uno dice no, \$35. Pues ya sale para comprar leche y pan. Cosas así, pero ya después va agarrando una la onda y dice no porque abusan
- a. Alfredo: Was your first job cleaning houses?
  - b. Community Resident: Yes, it wasn't a long time because I had bad experiences. I didn't like cleaning houses, there are very demanding women. And since you don't know how much to charge or anything, well, they give you what they want and you agree to \$35. That's enough to buy milk and bread. After a while you get the hang of things and you begin to say no because they are abusing me.
48. Sí...En Guadalajara sí, llegue a dar clases de aeróbicos, okay? Pero los daba escondidas porque mi esposo era muy celoso.
- a. Yes...In Guadalajara yes, I got to teach aerobics classes, okay? But I kept them hidden because my husband was very jealous.
49. Alfredo: Otra pregunta que tengo es ¿qué tipo de cosas le gusta hacer?
- Community Resident: O a mí me gusta mucho cocinar
- Alfredo: Cocinar, que?
- Community Resident: De todo se hacer un poco. No, te digo que tengo veces que siento tristeza porque no estudié, no tuve la oportunidad. Mis padres fueron muy humildes y aunque sí me gustaba mucho la escuela, pero no tuve la oportunidad. Entonces, me arrepiento de no haber tenido un oficio. Porque no puedo decir de mí que soy costurera, o soy esto, pero sí, soy una persona. Sí, me considero una persona que me gusta trabajar. Sí, me gusta trabajar.
- a. Alfredo: Another question I have is what kind of things do you like to do?
  - b. Community Resident: I really like to cook
  - c. Alfredo: Cook, what?
  - d. Community Resident: I know how to do a little bit of everything. I'm telling you that I feel sad because I didn't study and I didn't have that opportunity. Yes, my parents were very humble and although I really liked school, I didn't have the opportunity. So, I regret not having a job because I cannot say that I'm a seamstress or I'm this, but yes, I'm a person. Yes, I consider myself a person who likes to work. Yes, I like to work.

50. Speaker 3: Economía solidaria porque también ganaríamos igual...Yo manejo, soy driver, pero no puedo trabajar manejando porque no tengo social. Entonces, si tuviera social...pero imagínese eso fuera una economía solidaria. Y también nosotros pudiéramos como inmigrantes, trabajar así en escuelas.
- Alfredo: ¿ Entonces, acceso a los mismos trabajos?
- Speaker 3: Exacto, igualdad de oportunidades por igual, igualdad de oportunidades entonces. Y eso que la economía sería mejor porque nosotros somos trabajadores...Necesitamos, libertad de expresión.
- Speaker 7: Y de exigir también sobre nuestros derechos y conocer nuestros derechos, porque es bien importante que para exigir, hay que saber los derechos que uno tiene. Entonces tratar ese tema con el patrón o con los compañeros o hacer una solidaridad en grupo para poder protestar para poder exigir
- Speaker 9: Yo pienso que si se podría hacer todo eso... y estar en la misma página que hubiera un sindicato para, bueno no digo exclusivamente para las personas que no tenemos documentos, sino o sea, igualdad que todo estuviéramos unidos.
- Speaker 3: Solidarity economy because we would also earn just as much as we do. I drive, I'm a driver, but I can't work as a driver because I don't have social. So if I had a social...but can you imagine that. With a solidarity economy, we could also, as immigrants, work like this in school.
  - Alfredo: So, access to the exact same jobs?
  - Speaker 3: Equal opportunities, equal opportunities then, and the economy would be better because we are workers...We need freedom of expression.
  - Speaker 7: And also to demand about our rights and know our rights, because it is very important that in order to demand you have to know the rights that one has. You then discuss that issue with the boss or with colleagues or form a solidarity group to be able to protest to be able to demand.
  - Speaker 9: I think that if all of this could be done, as long as we were all on the same page to be able to create a union, I'm not saying exclusively for people who don't have documents, but in other words, equality that we were all united.
51. Pues que ya lo tengo (donde cosechar). Y pues es un problema, no lo dejan desarrollarse. No, no nos dejan. Yo siempre he querido un pedacito de tierra. Me gustaría
- Well, I already have it (where to harvest). And it's a problem, they don't let me fertilize the land. No, they won't let us. I have always wanted a little piece of land. I would like that.
52. Para mí es difícil porque a lo mejor antes no lo tomaba en cuenta...No pensaba igual que ahora. Pero el venir aquí es sacrificado, es perder el contacto, el calor de hogar que tuvo uno desde su niñez. Aquí nada más viene uno a enfrentarse al ahora, sí que a trabajar. Eso es lo que viene a hacer uno, a trabajar.
- For me it's difficult because maybe I didn't take it into account before...I didn't think the same as I do now. But coming here is sacrificial, it is losing contact, the warmth of home that one had since childhood. Here you only come to face the now, rather than to work. That's what you come to do, to work.
53. Speaker 4: A veces sí, a veces es eso. Pero los todos los agricultores aquí son compañías grandes que no suben los salarios,
- Speaker 2: Pero incluso a veces en los países de uno, también ellos los explotan porque una persona va compra y el precio este a tal y ellos lo suben y les ganan demás.
- Sometimes yes, sometimes it is that, but all the farmers here are big companies, they don't want to raise salaries.
  - Speaker 2: But even sometimes in one's country they exploit us because a person buys products at a certain price and then they sell it at a higher rate and they make a lot of profit.
54. Yo pienso que tal vez es la renta, la renta, la renta, por ejemplo, los edificios, si fueras y pagaras \$1,200, de renta debería basarse en mí y en mis trabajos... vas a ver mi salario e ingresos...Si gano \$100, no puedo pagar \$100 de renta. Deberían construir más apartamentos gubernamentales para

cobrar la cantidad adecuada de renta; tal vez no tenga que ser la sección ocho. Pero paga un precio justo si entiendes lo que quiero decir, un precio moderado. Porque si soy dueño de este edificio y lo alquiló, no voy a arrancarle las tripas a nadie [aumentarle el precio]. Pero si el gobierno es el propietario, habrá un límite.

- a. I think that maybe the rent, the rent, the rent, for example, the buildings, if you went and paid \$1,200, rent should be based on me and my jobs ... you're going to see my salary and income... If I earn \$100, I can't pay \$100 in rent. They should make more government apartments to collect the right amount of rent, it doesn't have to be section eight, perhaps. But pay a fair price if you understand what I mean, moderate price. Because if I own this building and I rent it, I'm not going to rip someone's guts out [price gouge them]. But if the government owns it, there's going to be a limit

55. Emelyne: Entonces, y cómo cómo miraría que funcionara eso de cosechar así cosas? Cómo cree que sería en comunidad? ¿O sería una persona al cargo?

Community Member: Una sola persona? No? O sea, la cooperativa serían 20 personas. Tú te vas dos cargas de la zanahoria, tú acabas de poner el betabel, tú de la lechuga de la cebolla. Y hacer reuniones para saber cómo va tu cosecha? No, que va bien. No, no, que se esté descuidando y poner una persona supervisar, también sí que supervise.

- a. Emelyne: So, how would you see the harvesting work? Do you think it would work executing in community? Or would it be one person in charge?
- b. Community Member: A single person? No! In other words, the cooperative would be 20 people. You, take two loads of carrots. You, just put in the beets. You, put in the lettuce and the onion. And everyone holds meetings together and ask how is your harvest going. No, it's not going so well. No, we do not want the harvest to be neglected and we will put a person to supervise.

56. Pero es como, le comentó es la misma situación que yo paso, la pasa miles de personas que tal vez ya llevan 30 o 40 años en este país y sin poder viajar a nuestros países de origen y dejamos familia e hijos. Y a más en algunos casos, personas de nuestra familia que ya fallecieron y nosotros no podemos irnos y nos quedamos con eso. Es bien duro. Es así de difícil.

- a. But it's like I mentioned, the same situation that I go through happens to thousands of people who perhaps have already been in this country for 30 to 40 years and without being able to travel to our countries of origin and we leave families and children. In some cases, people in our family die and we cannot leave and we are left with that guilt. It's very hard. It's so difficult.