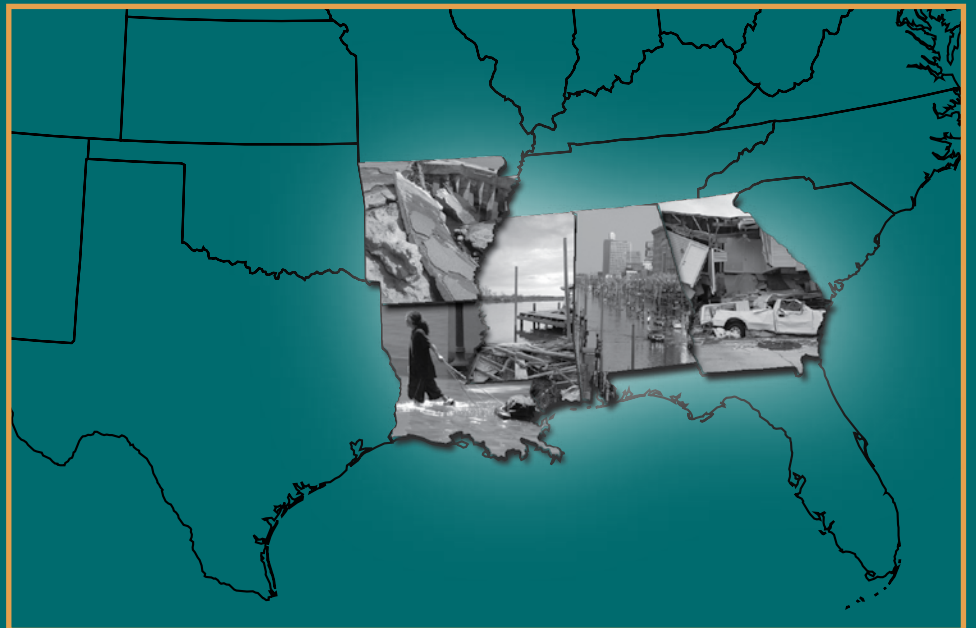


# TRIUMPH OVER TRAGEDY

Leadership, Capacity and Needs

in Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi

After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita



Prepared by The Center for Social Inclusion: A Project of the Tides Center  
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## **TRIUMPH OVER TRAGEDY:**

### **Leadership, Capacity and Needs in Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi After Hurricanes Katrina and Rita**

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## **The Center for Social Inclusion**

The Center for Social Inclusion (CSI) is a national policy advocacy organization. CSI's mission is to build a fair and just society by dismantling structural racism, which undermines opportunities for all of us. CSI partners with communities of color and other allies to create strategies and build policy reform models to promote opportunities by understanding the role that race plays in preventing them. With our partners we conduct applied research, translate it, teach our communities, inform the public, convene stakeholders, nurture multiracial alliances and support advocacy strategies.

## **Acknowledgments**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**“The South is best understood through the first person stories of triumph over formidable barriers and challenges to a way to self-determination, empowerment and transformed community.”**

**Denise Jennings, Consultant, Atlanta, GA**

**B**uilding healthy, sustainable and equitable communities, and by extension a strong nation, requires civic and social engagement of community members. Civic and social engagement, in turn, requires leadership to create engagement opportunities and to facilitate it. There are many forms of community leadership, including electoral, nonprofit, associational and informal leadership. All are important. In particular, this report focuses on nonprofit, associational and informal leadership capacity: its successes, its needs and the nature and level of investment indicated to support leadership in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi which can help meet community building goals.

## **Key findings of this report are:**

**Communities and groups facing barriers to opportunity before the 2005 hurricane season face the greatest rebuilding challenges and are disproportionately Black, Asian, Latino and rural White communities.**

Weak social and physical infrastructure both predated the storm season and contributed to its devastating impact. This is a critical point. If the area had strong social infrastructure, including an array of community-based organizations with research, policy advocacy and communications capacity or support,

the state of the physical infrastructure (e.g., levees in New Orleans, public transit and adequate housing), political infrastructure (e.g., lobbying, advocacy and organizing), and social infrastructure (e.g., educational quality, nonprofit capacity, neighborhood associations) may have been stronger and the capacity to both provide relief, direct support and organize for healthy rebuilding would have been stronger.

**Important nonprofit community building infrastructure existed before the storm season, but was under-resourced at a per capita ratio of 2 to 1 compared to the national average.**

Groups which existed prior to the hurricanes and had some national support appear to be better resourced. Groups and individuals that began work after the hurricanes appear to be less likely to thrive, in part because funding has not supported their development and they lack other national organizational relationships that could assist them in building their infrastructure. A notable exception is groups whose work includes direct relief that draws volunteers from outside the region. Organizations in Arkansas and Georgia, which received large numbers of displaced Louisiana residents and some Mississippi residents, had little capacity to support either the needs of displaced people, or incorporate the needs into their strategies for community building. This is critical, given the tens of thousands of people still displaced in these states, many of whom have been historically marginalized and thus are less able to return to their homes to rebuild.

**In each state, there were gaps in organizational capacity.**

All nonprofits interviewed need more support than they have received. On the whole, education reform, community planning capacity, civic engagement infrastructure and the capacity for innovative resource development strategies need strengthening. Little capacity exists for inter-state collaboration or federal interventions in the rebuilding process.

**In all studied states there are important examples of effective and impressive leadership at work.**

**These “success stories” share important characteristics:**

- a. Leadership with a vision for how to build community participation and multi-institutional and multi-sector relationships
- b. The ability to recognize the relationship between several issue areas and navigate them while maintaining their mission
- c. Somewhat diverse resources supporting the work – from funding to local, regional and national partnerships

**Collaborative work needs to be strengthened.**

Relationships, networks and alliances necessary to focus attention and get results do not always exist or do not have the geographic coverage they need. Racial tensions exist between communities and this manifests in the power dynamics among leadership. There are a number of successful and impressive groups in the region, but peer-to-peer learning opportunities are virtually non-existent so they

are unable to share their knowledge, experiences and strategies regionally.

Challenges faced by communities across the Gulf Coast south and states indirectly impacted by the 2005 hurricane season, are surmountable. People and organizations have shown enormous resilience and continue to provide entry points to create effective community building. For this to fully happen, funders can provide three types of critical support: 1) core support grants to stabilize and build existing organizations; 2) money for relationship and alliance-building within states and across the region; and 3) financial and technical assistance support for the creation of capacities (whether new or existing groups) to address gaps in the work.

Because national groups need relationships with local groups to be successful, they also have a critical role to play in supporting local groups. National groups can: 1) share financial resources with local groups to accomplish goals and meet grant obligations; and 2) provide or connect local groups with the technical assistance and other forms of in-kind support, which builds local capacity. National groups can also publicize the contributions of local groups in their work and help connect local partners with funders, policy makers and business leaders.

# INTRODUCTION

**“There was a need for relief prior to Katrina. Katrina exacerbated an existing situation and if we do not realize that...then we are doing the people in the region a real injustice.”**

**Georgia Community Leader**

**T**here are many important reports on the rebuilding needs of the Gulf Coast and other states in the South which provide information to guide funders, national organizations, community-based groups, business leaders and policy-makers who wish to support the rebuilding of an opportunity-rich, resilient and equitable Gulf Coast region. One example is the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s Landscape Analysis and Needs Assessment of Gulf Coast Nonprofits (August 31, 2006). The Universalist Unitarian Service Committee also commissioned a report on New Orleans entitled *Making Our Way Home: A Vision for Community Organizing of New Orleans Evacuees*, (February 2006).<sup>1</sup> The Institute for Southern Studies has a forthcoming report on the state of organizing in southern states, which includes Mississippi and Louisiana, among other states not covered in this report. This report, then, should be read as one in a series of reports that can help shape and inform how to build the leadership capacity and infrastructure to build an equitable, healthy and sustainable Gulf Coast and nation.

This report is based on three primary assertions: 1) Gulf Coast rebuilding should be seen as a national priority because of its

implications for communities all over the country which face similar vulnerabilities and require national policies, practices and investments to support local and regional community building efforts; 2) to be effective, rebuilding strategies require a structural analysis that takes race, gender and poverty into account; and 3) effective rebuilding strategies require community-based leadership which has the capacity to identify, develop and carry-forward structurally transformative community building strategies.

On this third point, in a report by the Institute for Policy Studies at Northwestern University on asset-building approaches to community revitalization, for example, the introduction states that “all the historic evidence indicates that significant community development takes place only when local community people are committed to investing themselves and their resources in the effort. This observation explains why communities are never built from the top down, or from the outside in.”<sup>2</sup>

This report, based on interviews with over 80 community-builders conducted by consultants from the region, examines public resource available for community building in the region, hurricane-related damage and local response in each state. It then examines leadership capacity for civic engagement, community economic development, community planning, leadership development and collaboration.

<sup>1</sup> Jainey Bavishi, Leigh Graham, Rachel Wilch and Susana Williams, *Making Our Way Home: A Vision for Community Organizing of New Orleans Evacuees: Grassroots Community Organizing Mapping and Support After Hurricane Katrina* (February 2006).

<sup>2</sup> John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community’s Assets* (Evanston, IL: Institute for Policy Research, 1993), 5.

## COMMUNITY BUILDING DEFINED



**T**his report defines effective community building as comprehensive, locally driven, but regionally and nationally linked efforts that create healthy, sustainable and democratically controlled communities. Important to this definition is not a particular organizational form or structure, but rather a set of principles which guides the work. To break these elements down further, this definition includes the following elements: 1) comprehensive in approach, including a recognition of the relationship between issue areas and fields of work; 2) based on locally driven visions for a healthy community that is place-based, but still recognizes a place's relationship to a bigger geographic area that crosses relational, political, physical and psychological boundaries (e.g., race and class)<sup>3</sup>; 3) includes multiple activities and relationships – from economic development and resource generation to policy advocacy and organizing; and 4) an analysis and set of strategies which go beyond the neighborhood.

Regarding this fourth element, as the Aspen Institute points out, “[T]he well-being of the neighborhood is deeply influenced by the structures and systems beyond its borders.”<sup>4</sup> For example, communities may need jobs, but employers may choose to locate for a more educated work force and an infrastructure that better suites their operations. Multiple

<sup>3</sup> Aspen Institute Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Building Initiatives, “Introduction to CCIIs,” [http://www.commbuild.org/html\\_pages/introtoccis.htm](http://www.commbuild.org/html_pages/introtoccis.htm).

<sup>4</sup> Aspen Institute Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Building Initiatives, “Policy and Institutional Reform,” [http://www.commbuild.org/html\\_pages/showresults.asp?topic\\_search=primary&template=policyandreform.htm&box=14](http://www.commbuild.org/html_pages/showresults.asp?topic_search=primary&template=policyandreform.htm&box=14).

governmental agencies and broader public opinion influence both of these factors. Therefore, communities must be built based on the community's vision for itself, and also in recognition of how it is both linked has influence on the region, and even the nation. This requires that funders and national organizations support communities to participate in the civic life of their own communities, the region, and the country.

A disproportionate number of hard hit communities in the Gulf Coast region benefited from community assets, although they were poor rural and urban communities and often populated by people of color who were excluded from the economic, political and civic lives of their regions. Communities of all races and classes were vulnerable due to crumbling public infrastructure (levees and roads), weakened government and public sector capacity and the frayed social infrastructure (schools and health care). For example, as reported by the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, “One football field worth of Louisiana's coast erodes into the gulf every thirty seconds. Yet in the years leading up to Hurricane Katrina, funding for drainage improvement initiatives and Army Corps of Engineers projects were continually cut. In addition, millions of dollars in oil royalty payments were bypassing the state as it struggled to minimally maintain projects.”<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, some neighborhoods received more public resources than others. Thirty million dollars worth of levee enlargements – 57 miles of levee – occurred on the west side of the city prior to hurricane Katrina. There was no storm surge there. This occurred while parishes concerned

<sup>5</sup> Terry O'Connor, “Commentary: La's Coastal Erosion Concern Must Become a Presidential Priority,” *New Orleans CityBusiness*, February 14, 2005, cited in *The National Alliance to Restore Opportunity to the Gulf Coast & Displaced Person*, “Fact Sheet D: Infrastructure Disinvestment and Katrina,” [http://www.linkedfate.org/documents/Factsheet%20D\\_Infrastructure%20and%20Katrina2.pdf](http://www.linkedfate.org/documents/Factsheet%20D_Infrastructure%20and%20Katrina2.pdf).

about levee deterioration were left without project funds.<sup>6</sup>

Not all affected communities of the Gulf Coast region have the economic and political capacity necessary to advance community rebuilding. Poor people of color were most deeply harmed and least likely to have private resources or the ability to access public resources to support their stabilization and rebuilding.

Events since 2005, like tornadoes in the mid-West and fires in the West, make clear that the Gulf Coast presents an exaggerated microcosm of our vulnerabilities across the country. Therefore, Gulf Coast recovery serves as a national lesson and an incubator for policy strategies to correct our mistakes.

## ANALYTIC APPROACH



To understand what kind of leadership and infrastructure is required for effective community building, it is important to examine why and how vulnerable communities are created. US society is made up of many public and private institutions -- schools, colleges and universities, employers, banks, housing, transportation systems and news media. None of these institutions operate in isolation. Rather, they work together and affect each other. Employers want to be near transportation hubs. Those with financial means and who are not subject to discrimination look for and secure housing near good schools.

6 Louis Uchitelle, "Disasters Waiting to Happen," New York Times, September 11, 2005, cited in The National Alliance to Restore Opportunity to the Gulf Coast & Displaced Person, "Fact Sheet D: Infrastructure Disinvestment and Katrina," [http://www.linkedfate.org/documents/Factsheet%20D\\_Infrastructure%20and%20Katrina2.pdf](http://www.linkedfate.org/documents/Factsheet%20D_Infrastructure%20and%20Katrina2.pdf).

Because schools are locally funded, they tend to be better where housing is expensive.

These structures are neither natural nor neutral. Our history of racism and gender hierarchy are due to policies and behaviors that have built and reinforced the exclusion of people of color and women of all races from opportunity across generations. Race is a social construct with no biological existence. Racial classifications exist only as a matter of constructed social identities. Race, gender and class hierarchies were historically produced in concert to promote racialized identities, which in turn, reinforced race discrimination, patriarchy and class distinctions.<sup>7</sup>

The relationship between race, gender and class hierarchies has denied people of color, women of color and white women, as well as poor white men and women, a quality education, sustaining jobs and opportunities to create wealth. The impacts are cumulative over generations. Our present day conception of "the middle class" is relatively new and was created by both racist and race-neutral federal, state and local policies. For example, government-created incentives subsidized White flight from cities and their relocation to the suburbs.<sup>8</sup> New Deal legislation— the National Housing Act of 1934— created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), which subsidized mortgages and insured private mortgages. Federally subsidized mortgage loans often required new owners to incorporate racially restrictive covenants into their deeds.<sup>9</sup> By the 1950s, the FHA and the Veterans Administration (VA) were insuring half the mortgages in the United States, but only

7 See Steve Martinot, *The Rule of Racialization: Class, Identity, Governance* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 2002).

8 Id. at 51.

9 Richard Thompson Ford, "The Boundaries of Race: Political Geography in Legal Analysis," *Harvard Law Review* 107 (1995): 451.



in “racially homogenous” neighborhoods.<sup>10</sup>

So effective were federal incentives to suburbanize that by 1990, two-thirds of the metropolitan population lived *outside* the central city in 168 census-defined metropolitan areas, compared to 1950 when 60% lived *in* central cities.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, 152 new metropolitan areas emerged during four decades of “new” urban growth. As a result, three-quarters of the American public lived in 320 metropolitan areas, most outside of the city centers.<sup>12</sup> These new suburbs were segregated and inner cities saw an increase in the concentration of poverty and economic and social disinvestment.

In addition, insurance and credit redlining made access to capital very difficult for poor communities of color, further excluding them from wealth creation over generations. Given that public elementary and secondary education is locally funded, the policies that drove White flight (and thus jobs and other resources) from urban centers left the tax base of cities weak. This eroded education equality by leaving fewer dollars for inner-city public education (predominantly serving poor students of color). Poverty concentrates and becomes multi-generational, which results in the creation of vulnerable populations with little money to flee disaster or rebuild post-disaster, as happened post hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005.

The implications of these structural arrangements which reproduce poverty and exclusion for whole groups of people have significant implications on solutions to group-based vulnerabilities, such as disasters. They also necessitate the advancement of larger societal goals like reducing poverty, building democratic

<sup>10</sup> David Rusk, *Inside Game/Outside Game: Winning Strategies for Saving Urban America* (Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1999), 86-88.

<sup>11</sup> *Id.* at 67.

<sup>12</sup> Rusk, 67-68.

## STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY IN NEW ORLEANS

**Prior to the broken levees, according to the 2000 Census, New Orleans' population was 67.3% African American, 26.6% White, 3.1% Latino and 2.3% Asian. As the Brookings Institution has indicated, the city was shrinking in both population and opportunity. It was not always predominantly Black. In the first half of the 20th Century, New Orleans was racially and culturally vibrant and heterogeneous, despite its poverty. After 1970, segregation and concentrated poverty skyrocketed. In fact, in 2000 New Orleans ranked 29th in the country based on Black/White racial segregation and second among the 50 largest cities in the country based on the number of extreme poverty neighborhoods. The number of concentrated poverty (or high poverty) neighborhoods in New Orleans grew by two-thirds between 1970 and 2000, even though the poverty rate stayed about the same (26-28%).<sup>1</sup> A major contributing factor for this demographic shift was that half of the city's White population moved to the suburbs during this time-period. The New Orleans that existed before the 2005 hurricane season suffered from a shrinking tax base, racial isolation and environmental degradation that has become the trademark of suburbanization policies.**

**Given disproportionate Black poverty in New Orleans prior to the levee failures, it is no surprise that two-thirds (32.7%) of Black residents had no car to escape the flooding, as compared to less than 10% of Whites.<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> Alan Berube and Bruce Katz, “Katrina’s Window: Confronting Concentrated Poverty Across America,” The Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program, October 2005.

<sup>2</sup> The Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program, “Access to Cars in New Orleans,” [http://www.brookings.edu/metro/20050915\\_katrinacarstables.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/metro/20050915_katrinacarstables.pdf).

practice, the creation and fair distribution of resources and environmental sustainability. It suggests that our leadership must have the capacity to both identify and create innovative strategies to transform these structures. In order to do this, vulnerable communities must have the right infrastructure for civic, political and economic engagement and adequate access to the right relationships with other organizations, leaders, government agencies and colleges and

universities. Above all, it requires infrastructure which is structurally transformative.

Indigenous leadership of traditionally excluded and disinvested communities is capable of engaging in long-term structural reforms. If funders, national and regional organizations, business leaders and others supporters further develop both institutional and extra-institutional leadership, we will better promote opportunities for everyone, including the white working and middle classes. Because all of our fates are linked, we must work for the well-being of the collective to achieve personal and community well-being.

While the structural arrangements that perpetuate racialized, gender and rural poverty have particularly harsh impacts in marginalized communities, it is also true that they implicate the well-being of more privileged members of society. Our individual and collective well-being is eroded by unsustainable environmental practices or an under-resourced, fragmented public education system. In the interest of our national health and development, we must nurture a unified polity and a sustainable global economy to produce greater social and financial equity and preserve personal and environmental well-being.

The South as a region has been both a driver of national policy and battleground for the ideological fights on the role of race, class and religion in American society. It is the poorest region in the country with one of the fastest growing populations. It is home to 54% of the nation's Black citizenry and a rapidly growing Latino and Asian immigrant community. The Gulf Coast region, in particular, has boasted some of the most rapid economic growth in the region with little impact on the prosperity

of low-income rural and urban communities. The region remains the poorest, most environmentally distressed and racially polarized in the country.

The states of the Gulf Coast South have absorbed large numbers of displaced people, which presents the nation with a unique opportunity. We can choose to redefine democracy, opportunity, and our relationships to one another to promote prosperity, sustainability and strengthened regional and national economy.

It is not too late. Given the length of time required by others to recover from such devastation, two years is a bat of an eye. For example, hurricane Andrew's effects were still felt more than ten years after the 1992 storm devastated Florida.<sup>13</sup> The course of recovery should be considered at least a two decade project that will have many important milestones of progress along the way, including its ability to focus the nation on community building needs and democratic practices for prosperity and posterity. If we are to improve the public discussion by focusing on transforming vulnerable communities into resilient ones, we must include leaders from the South as we incubate strategies for healthy, sustainable and equitable communities.

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<sup>13</sup> Adrian Sainz, "Ten Years After Hurricane Andrew, Effects Are Still Felt," Sun-Sentinel, April 23, 2004.

CSI became interested in an examination of Gulf Coast leadership capacity for three reasons:

1. To deepen funders', national organizations' and local leaders' understanding of the capacity and capacity building needs of local Gulf Coast leadership in order to develop mechanisms, tools and support for a stronger and more effective local voice for rebuilding;
2. To develop mechanisms and tools to advance leaders' inter-state relationships to increase the effectiveness of rebuilding efforts across the region; and
3. To help funders, national organizations and local and state leaders in the Gulf Coast understand local leaders' priorities and needs to learn the best ways to support local engagement in the debate on rebuilding.

CSI also saw the scan itself as a mechanism for testing out the most effective types of relationships that bridge the gap between national policy intermediaries and local leaders.

We did not have the capacity to examine every single community-based organization, state or community leader, policy-maker or business leader. Rather we set out to capture a cross-section of community building organizations and leaders which would represent the spectrum of work within a state.

For purposes of this scan, we defined community building as efforts at developing social, economic and political engagement of traditionally marginalized communities, particularly in communities of color. This included community-based economic development and direct social service organizations, community, state or regional organizing and leadership training groups, state-level policy advocacy and research groups,

and religious and business leaders.

The project assumed that all of these activities are relevant to effective community building. We also assumed that where there were active and robust relationships among community building groups, community building work would be more effective.

Geographic selection of states included those directly impacted by the 2005 hurricane storm season (that received direct wind or storm surge damage) as well as states in the region which received persons displaced from directly impacted communities.<sup>14</sup>

## ASSUMPTIONS



We assumed that effective community building requires an informed and engaged community which develops and supports indigenous leaders who are in relationship with other communities. We also assumed that local leadership that both supports and makes effective community building efforts are often not organizationally connected. Organizational capacity can and should feed and seed the participatory capacity of community members beyond the specific work or agenda of the organization. When it does, more local and state level leadership are engaged in community transformation, thus lending to its success. These assumptions have two methodological implications:

- 1) effective leadership may exist in the absence of organizational infrastructure, which requires that

<sup>14</sup> Texas is a critical state for examination based on both direct and indirect impact. Houston, in particular, received over one hundred thousand displaced New Orleanians and many are still in Houston today. Texas is not included in this scan because we lacked the resources and capacity to include it.

we search for leadership in untraditional places; and 2) measuring effective community building should include the role that organizations play in developing leaders who live and work outside of these organizational structures.

## METHODOLOGY



CSI's approach to capacity building is grounded in a partnership-based learning model. This is a qualitative scan. We worked together with community leaders to build shared knowledge of the local context within which community priorities develop and must be understood. Doing so also furthered the ability of local residents to carry out strategies to address their priorities. Through facilitated meetings, we then used the gathered knowledge to develop a shared analysis.

We have found that this collective and reflective process builds knowledge, strategies and relationships, which in turn advances the strategies for achieving transformation. CSI works to support the strategies and capacity needed to carry them out with tools that are either produced by CSI (e.g., data crunching and mapping) and in tandem with local leaders (reports, talking points, etc.). CSI also works to catalyze local groups' relationships with national groups to build resources to implement strategies effectively.

Given these interrelated interests, CSI developed its research methodology for the

Gulf Coast Leadership scan as follows. CSI's methodology is based on interviews with nonprofit organizations and community leaders, as well as some national organizations and local and national funders. Because CSI seeks to support and build local capacity, we made local experts central to the project. CSI sought local consultants who had their own body of community building work and experience and, therefore, a keen understanding of the local contexts we examined. They also have more credibility and rapport with local groups. Because the methodology is interview-based, we believed these insights and relationships would greatly strengthen the interviews themselves, while also sharpening the overall analysis by surfacing important nuances that only they might notice.

To identify consultants, CSI drew upon research and relationships with locally-based leadership. The criteria for consultant selection includes:

1. Consultants must be based in the state;
2. Consultants must have demonstrated commitment to their communities, including a significant history of work and relationships for contextual understanding of the dynamics of marginalized communities;
3. Consultants must deeply value collaboration and alliance-building; and
4. Consultants must be in a position to make use of what is learned in the project in other areas of work after the project is concluded.

We asked local leaders who they respected and believed met our criteria both in their own states and in other states in the Gulf Coast region. Through these conversations,

CSI identified competent, locally-based consultants who have established relationships and rapport with groups in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi. (See consultant biographies in Appendix A.)

In collaboration with the consultants, CSI then developed a list of interview questions to guide the interviews. (See interview guide in Appendix B.) The questions focused on organizational background and community building work, response to the 2005 hurricane season, basic capacity strengths and needs, partnerships on local, regional, and national levels, strengths and challenges of collaborative work, community leadership and capacity to serve as an anchor organization in one's community.

This extensive list of questions was not a script. Rather, it was created as a guide for the consultants to remind them of the information needed from the interviews. A CSI staff accompanied the consultants throughout the interview process to support them and learn from the content shared. CSI also stayed in close conversation with the consultants to further sharpen the question guide and revise it as necessary.

We convened the consultants for an all-day,

in-person meeting to deepen our relationships, develop their understanding of the project and help us improve the methodology and analysis. We also convened to help them build a relationship with one another as leaders from different states in the region, backgrounds and expertise. The meeting focused on the project, how to best accomplish its goals and how to support best practices for effective interviewing.

We also remained in close contact with the consultants and supported their relationship with one another through regular conference calls. These calls surfaced questions and fostered sharing experiences, tips and advice to solve problems.

The result has been an increase in the skills of consultants and/or the growth of their relationships with both "the field" and each other. For example, one consultant had never interviewed funders before. The project built her skill set to both interview and relationship-build with funders. Another consultant met with an effective organization working within her state that she is now considering a joint project with. Through their participation in the project, consultants are developing a more complete and nuanced picture of the states in which they work and the actors within each of them.

**T**he South of the United States contains one-third of the US population and 54% of the nation's Black population. It is both the poorest region and one of the two fastest growing regions of the country. In 2005, over 15% of the South was living below the poverty line, while other regions had poverty rates of 13% or lower.

From 2000 to 2005, the population in southern states grew by more than 4%, slightly behind western states' growth rate of over 5%.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, some parts of the South are seeing exponential growth among Latino populations. Texas already has a majority Black, Latino and Asian population, thanks in part to the immigration of Mexican and other Central American immigrants. If demographic trends remain the same, Florida will be majority non-White by 2010. The "Black-Belt" south is also seeing exponential growth in Latino immigrant populations, although total numbers remain small. Based on these demographic trends, the South in general should be a region targeted by foundations and national organizations for resource support.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Census 2000, 2005.

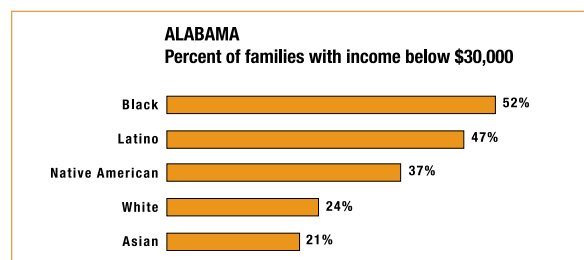


Figure 1: Alabama families not earning a living wage

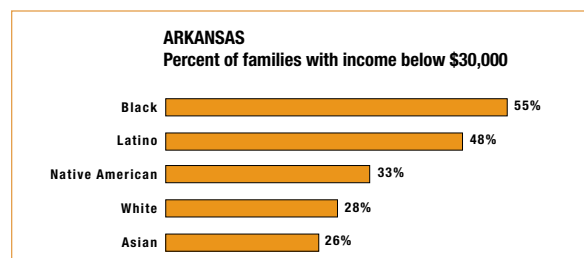


Figure 2: Arkansas families not earning a living wage

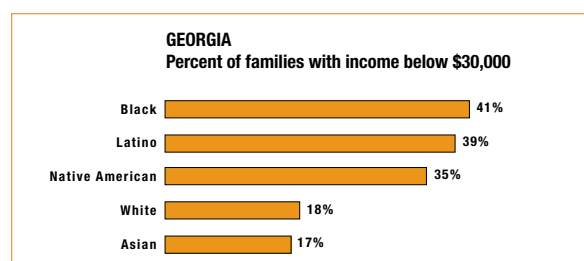


Figure 3: Georgia families not earning a living wage

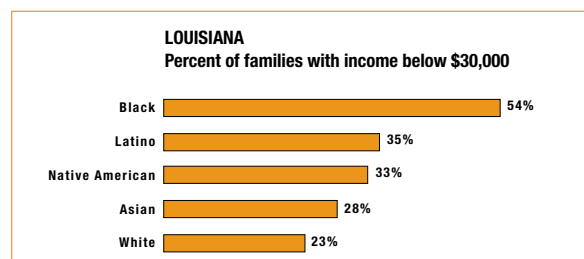


Figure 4: Louisiana families not earning a living wage

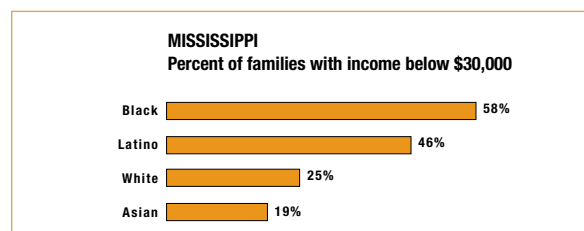


Figure 5: Mississippi families not earning a living wage

Source for Chart Data: U.S. Census 2005

## FUNDING



In this section, we analyze the nonprofit capacity of the states studied. Foundation dollars, charitable giving and other forms of resources for community building are not keeping pace with rebuilding needs and other demographic trends. Prior to the 2005 hurricane season, nonprofit infrastructure in southern states was undercapitalized compared to that of other regions there are far fewer nonprofit organizations per person in poverty in the south. Mississippi, for example, has half as many nonprofit organizations for each person below the poverty line as the national average and less than a third of the capacity of Connecticut, a state with significantly less poverty. Furthermore, while the total number of organizations increased from 2004 to 2007 by 5.8%, during this period the number of organizations filing Internal Revenue Service Form 990 decreased in Louisiana and Mississippi by 5.75% and 1.6%, respectively. Federally tax-exempt nonprofits that have incomes of more than \$25,000 and all 501(c)(3) private foundations, regardless of income file Form 990.<sup>16</sup>

After hurricanes Katrina and Rita, only 2% (\$2.4 billion) of the total federal and national philanthropic support for recovery efforts has been available for the nonprofit sector. Also, recovery funding appears to have lagged behind that of relief funding, particularly in light of the resource needs for recovery. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation analyzed the total per capita expenditures for nonprofit human services and community improvement in 2004.

<sup>16</sup> Religious organizations or subsidiaries of foundations are not captured by this data.

Based on IRS Form 990 filings, the report found that the nonprofit sector in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi were under resourced.<sup>17</sup>

Other key findings of that report included:

1. An estimated 20-50% decline in local funding support since the 2005 hurricane season with a projected lost local revenue for nonprofits of up to \$1.2-3 billion over the next three years.<sup>18</sup>
2. Only 2% (\$2.4 billion) of the total federal and national philanthropic support for recovery efforts has been available for the nonprofit sector.
3. The national foundation response, according to the report, has been approximately \$577 million, of which 54% supported relief, 27% recovery and 17% was uncommitted. "Much of this new funding will be required just to restore the sector's admittedly weak pre-Katrina capacity."<sup>19</sup>
4. National charitable response has largely supported national nonprofits. Only 9% of grants went to Louisiana-based organizations and only 4% went to Mississippi-based organizations.<sup>20</sup>

Based on data analyzed for this report, the region has much more limited nonprofit capacity than national averages.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> "Gulf Coast Non-Profits: Landscape Analysis and Needs Assessment," Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, August 31, 2006, 12.

<sup>18</sup> Id. at 13.

<sup>19</sup> Gulf Coast Non-Profits: Landscape Analysis and Needs Assessment, 14.

<sup>20</sup> Id.

<sup>21</sup> Internal Revenue Service, Exempt Organizations Business Master File (2007, Jan) The Urban Institute, National Center for Charitable Statistics, <http://nccsdataweb.urban.org/> ©2007

On average:

- Per-capita revenue for 990 organizations is approximately \$3,600, which is almost \$2,000 below the national average of \$5170.
- Per-capita assets for 990 organizations are approximately \$6,500, which is over \$5,000 below the national average of \$11,541.
- The number of total organizations grew by 7.2% from 2004 – 2007 (number of 990 organizations stayed relatively the same).
- Both revenue and assets for 990 organizations grew by over 7% from 2004 – 2007.
- Nationwide, nonprofit capacity grew from December 2004 to January 2007, with an almost 6% increase in total organizations and almost 25% increase in revenue for 990 organizations.
- In the states examined for this report the total number of organizations increased from 2004 to 2007 by 5.8%, but during this period the number of 990 organizations decreased in Louisiana and Mississippi by 5.75% and 1.6%, respectively.
- The Louisiana nonprofit sector also experienced a decrease in revenue (\$1.4 billion) and assets (\$1.8 billion) for 990 organizations. Arkansas also experienced a decrease in revenue, although assets grew.

Examining the 990 organizations and revenues compared to the number of persons living in poverty in the states examined for this report, it is even clearer that studied states are grossly under-resourced given their share of poor people.

Compared to the rest of the country, there are far fewer nonprofit organizations per person in poverty for the states studied. Louisiana and Alabama each have about one-third of the capacity of the national average and less than half as many organizations per person in poverty as Connecticut.

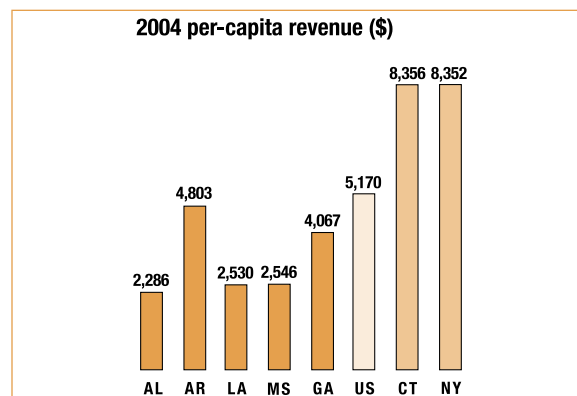


Figure 6:  
990 Organization financing

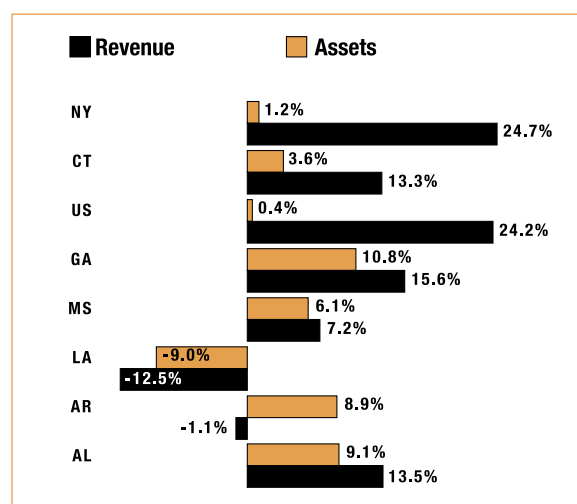
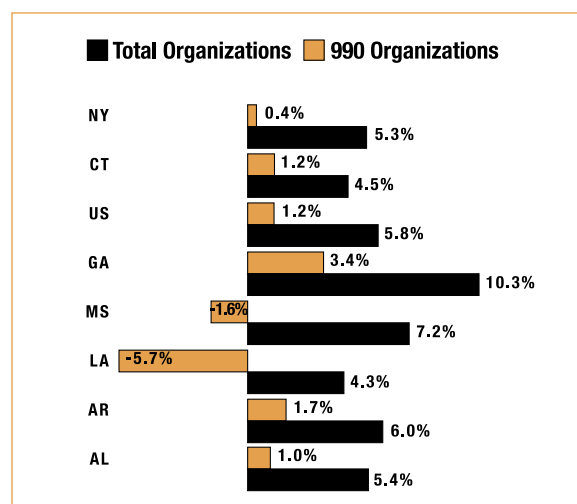


Figure 7:  
Changes in nonprofit organizations and financing (2004-2007)



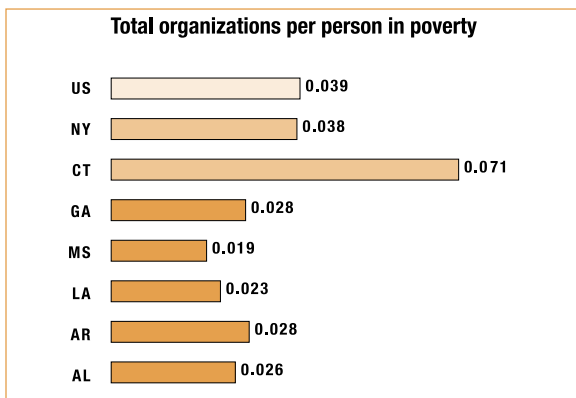
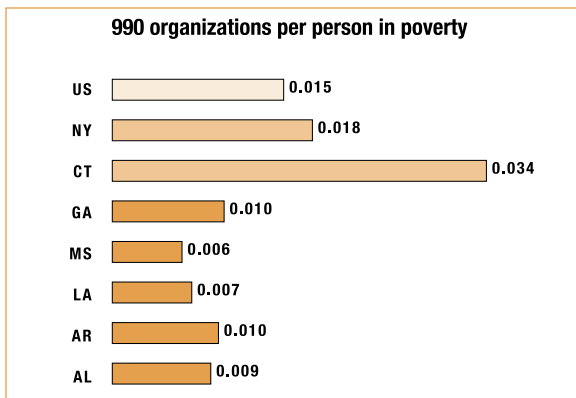


Figure 8: Number of organizations in relation to the poor

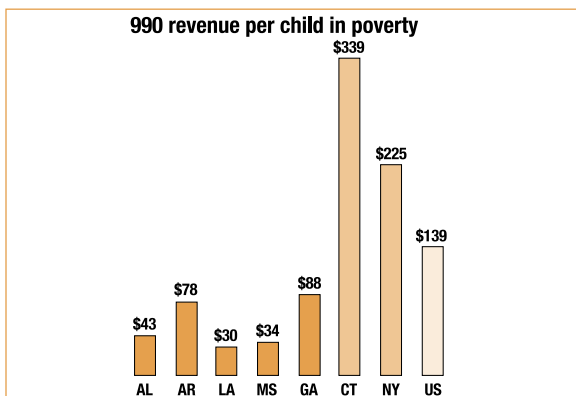
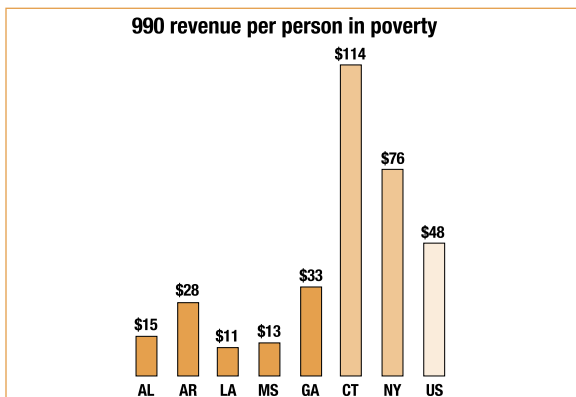


Figure 9: Organizational funding in relation to the poor

Sources for Chart Data: U.S. Census 2005, Internal Revenue Service, Exempt Organizations Business Master File, The Urban Institute, National Center for Charitable Statistics, <http://nccsdataweb.urban.org/>  
©2007, U.S. Bureau of the Census American Community Survey 2005

Not surprisingly, there is also significantly less nonprofit revenue relative to poverty in these states. Louisiana has the lowest 990 revenue levels per person in poverty at \$11,000 per person. Mississippi and Alabama have the next lowest 990 revenue levels per person in poverty -- \$13,000 and \$15,000, respectively. The national average 990 revenue per person in poverty is \$48,000 and New York and Connecticut's are \$76,000 and \$114,000, respectively. Relative to children in poverty, the numbers are equally dismal.

## HURRICANE RESPONSE



To be successful, relief efforts require resources, relationship-building and flexibility. Some states were hit directly by either high winds or storm surge caused by hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma and experienced significant displacement of populations and destruction of lives and property. Others who were not hit directly, however, were still deeply impacted by an unprecedented influx of displaced people. States that received large numbers of displaced people, mostly Black and often with limited resources, already had high levels of poverty and insufficient nonprofit infrastructure to support those displaced. Thus, the need for relief was dispersed across the country and particularly across the region. In many instances, this required flexible and significant investment in both existing and new leaders. It also required recognition that relief work was one step in a long road to recovery.

In states directly hit by hurricane Katrina or its winds and storm surges, new leaders and organizations emerged and longer-standing organizations and leaders moved to respond to the crises at hand to develop strategies for rebuilding communities. As the previous section illustrates, the lions-share of the relief funding did not support local nonprofit capacity or build new capacity.

## HURRICANE DAMAGE IN ARKANSAS

Government officials estimated that approximately 75,000 people sought refuge in Arkansas after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast. By November 2005, government officials reported that most had returned home, but about 20,000 people remained in hotels.<sup>1</sup> Displaced persons entered a state facing significant challenges to opportunity creation for its residents. It is safe to assume that many of the people who remain displaced in Arkansas have few resources to return home or to new cities, which means that they may have the same or increased barriers to opportunity as compared to Arkansans.

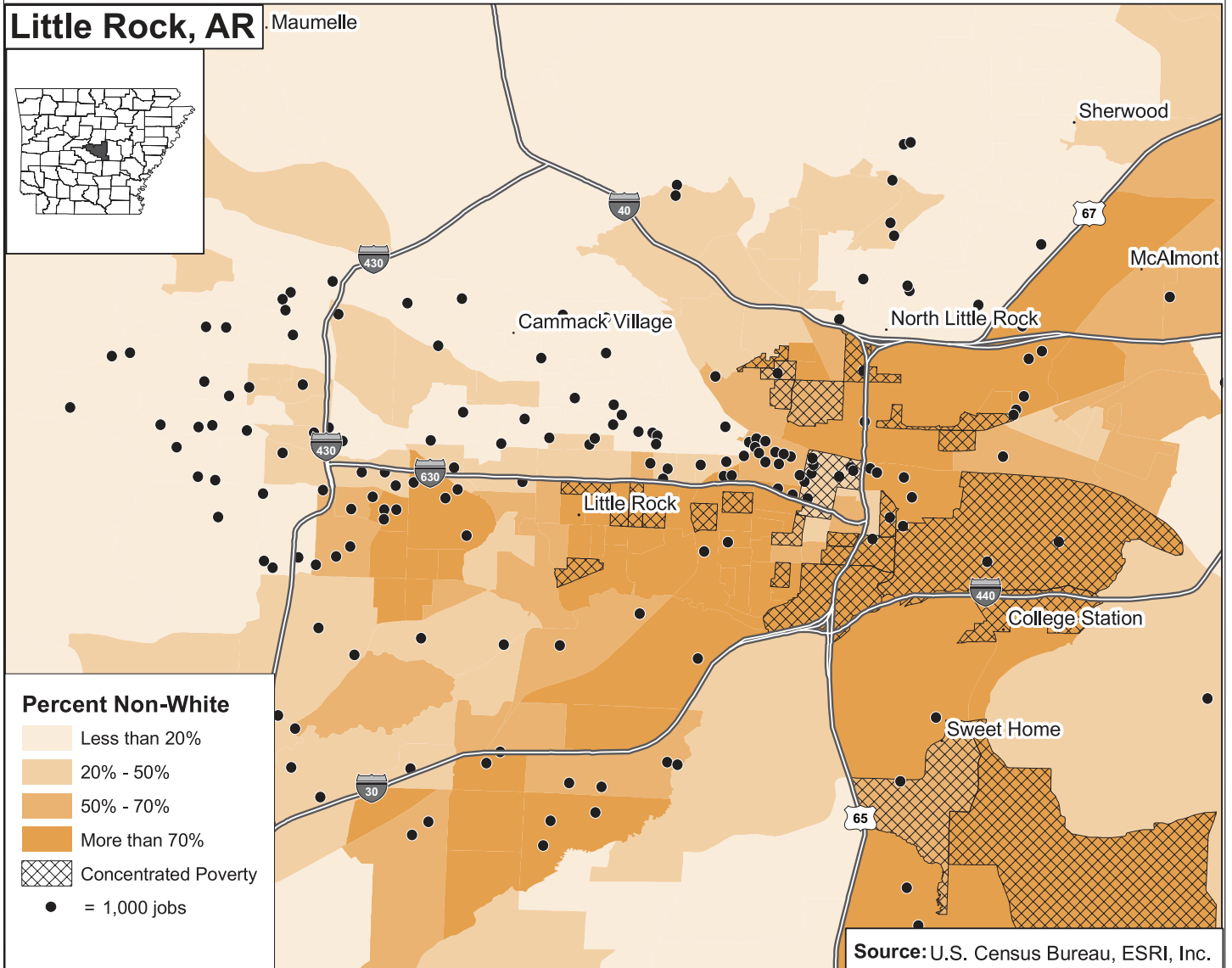


Figure 10: Opportunity mapping in Little Rock, AR

<sup>1</sup> Rob Moritz, "Arkansas' Effort Helping Katrina/Rita Homeless Praised," Arkansas News Bureau, November 2, 2005.

## HURRICANE DAMAGE IN GEORGIA

Georgia was a major destination for displaced persons from the Gulf Coast, with over 47,000 displaced households. More than \$210 million in FEMA individual assistance was awarded to displaced persons in Georgia. In addition to the indirect impact of the massive influx of displaced persons in the state, on August 29, 2005, Georgia experienced a record 18 tornadoes. The level of displacement required both the capacity to provide emergency assistance and support, as well as to advocate over the long-term for the needs of displaced people.

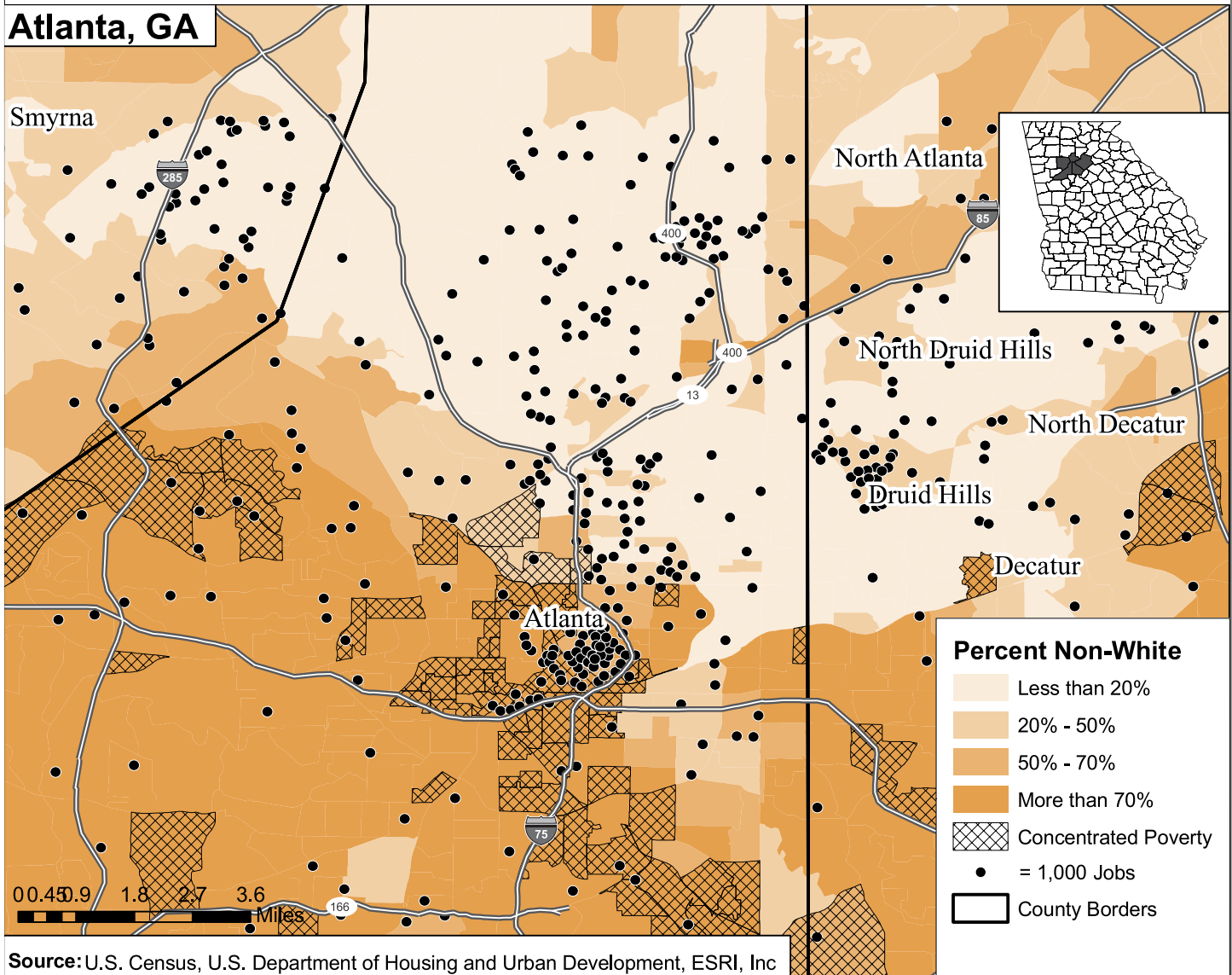


Figure 11: Opportunity mapping in Atlanta, GA

As shown in figures 10 and 11, people of color in Little Rock, AK and Atlanta, GA, particularly those who live in communities with concentrated poverty – 40% or more residents living at or below the federal poverty level – have few jobs in their communities.

### Arkansas and Georgia

States like Arkansas and Georgia received large numbers of displaced persons from Louisiana. Community groups and others organized support for displaced people. However, existing nonprofits had relatively few resources for their work.

For Example, a \$50,000 grant award from the Marguerite Casey Foundation to Promised Land Church Ministries helped them convert their gym into a temporary shelter that housed forty-two families. They then provided food, clothing, child care, transportation, benefits counseling and related services to families. They helped twenty-two people find jobs, eight of who they hired and remain on the staff.

La Casa, a health care organization in Arkansas, assisted ninety displaced persons in Southwest Arkansas. It provided food, clothing, financial assistance for traveling to re-unite with family and employment assistance. This type of emergency support work is not uncommon for them, although often unfunded.<sup>22</sup>

Promised Land Ministries, La Casa and others provided important relief to displaced families. But seventy-five thousand people sought refuge in Arkansas and as many as 20,000 are still there.

In Georgia, as in many states, individuals as well as organizations supported displaced people. Saving Our Selves (SOS) formed in 2006 as a coalition of over one hundred and seventeen groups with historical ties, contacts and interests in low and moderate-income rural communities who were also impacted by the 2005 hurricane season. SOS has worked with Operation USA to provide medical services in rural communities

and hired a skilled carpenter to assist unskilled laborers in repairing and rebuilding homes. SOS set up temporary long-term structures in Selma and Mobile to house the displaced. It also partnered with the Vietnamese Community to organize the distribution of food, water and other supplies. It has set up health clinics in seven different communities. People displaced to Atlanta were met by SOS organizers to help them identify resources and to handle paperwork.

Existing organizations structured their work to meet the important challenges presented by the large numbers of people displaced to Atlanta. Faith and the City, a nonprofit organization in Atlanta, established a rapid response center - *Caring for the City* (National Emotional Support Center), including Orientation and Skills Enhancement Workshops to prepare for response to future natural catastrophic disaster. They traveled to the region once a month to help on the ground and provided care and services to the clergy to help be better caregivers.

Project South, a membership driven institute which works for the elimination of poverty and genocide through popular political and economic education and action research, changed their priorities after Katrina. They diverted a lot of their time and energy to the relief effort and to serving the displaced in the Atlanta area. They also supported efforts to organize many thousands of displace families.

As in Arkansas, the efforts in Georgia have been important but hardly sufficient to meet the needs of fifty-thousand displaced people. Given the length of time people have been displaced,

<sup>22</sup> In early March 2007 a tornado hit Dumas, Arkansas and destroyed many of the businesses and homes in the area. La Casa was called upon to provide assistance to Latinos living in the area that had lost their jobs and homes.

building capacity to support those displaced to advocate for themselves, as well as to support policy strategy development and adoption, have been equally important to relief efforts but sorely lacking. With the exception of groups like Project South and Saving Our Selves, few of the organizations participating in hurricane relief efforts have had any capacity to engage displaced people in large numbers.

### **Alabama**

Many groups of people organizing support efforts after the hurricane did not formally become “organizations” because of their inability to raise funds, their lack of capacity to develop the structure required for a 501(c)(3) organization and other related barriers. Most of the organizations in Mobile that were newly created after Hurricane Katrina have a fiscal partner or other relationship to an agency outside of Mobile that helped them to quickly create an infrastructure. If a group of people did not have access to an outside organization prior to the Hurricane, their likelihood of ever getting beyond small scale relief efforts (distribution of toiletries, clothes and other necessities) were slim.

The Alabama chapter of Saving Our Selves (SOS) began when a group of people who had local ties to Mobile, including Jessica Norwood (the Alabama consultant for this report) decided that they needed to do something for the people

of the Greater Mobile area without relying solely on a governmental response. Many of the organizers and board members of SOS either worked for or with 21st Century Leadership Movements, a nonprofit leadership organization in Selma, AL. SOS in Alabama, like many post-Katrina efforts to support communities impacted in the state, has been unable to attract sufficient funds to maintain its work.

In addition to some new chapters or affiliates of national organizations, a new coalition formed in the greater Mobile area after Hurricane Katrina. “Rebuild the Bayou Committee” was created in November 2005 by the Community Foundation, which in turn received support from the Ford Foundation. A group of leaders from organizations met to discuss broad goals and action steps for the redevelopment of the coastal communities. They eventually created the “Bay Area Community Development and Partnership Council” which seeks to “serve as the leading management and educational service for networking people, assets, resources, knowledge and services for the benefit of the people and organizations of the Mobile County Alabama Bayou Community for sustainable prosperity.” It is unclear what activities and impact this coalition is having. Some who participated in some of the early discussions were unaware of follow-up actions or activities of the coalition when interviewed.

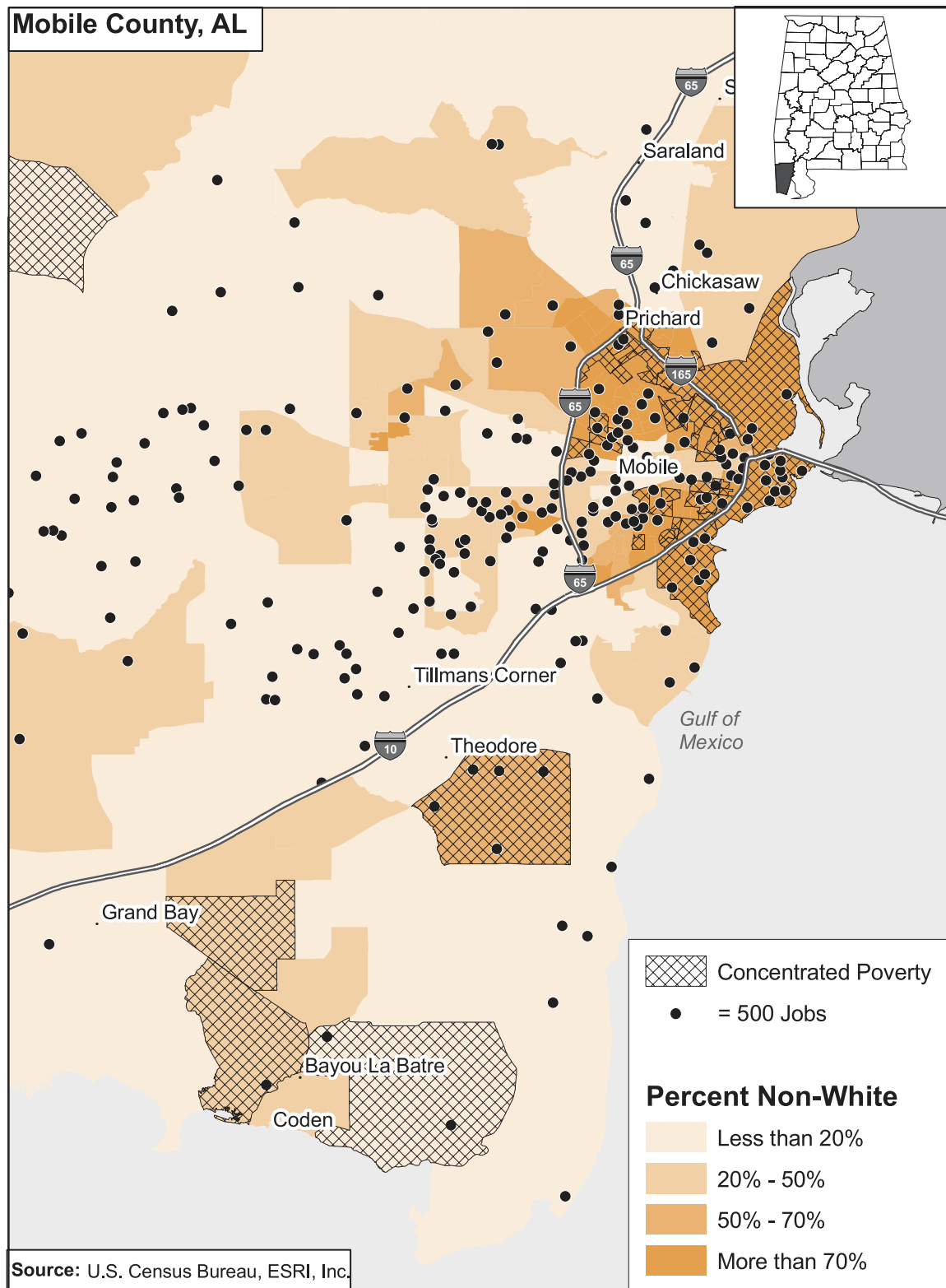


Figure 12: Opportunity mapping in Mobile, AL

## HURRICANE DAMAGE IN ALABAMA

Hurricane Katrina did not hit Alabama's Gulf Coast directly but, as a result of the hurricane, it experienced historic levels of storm surge – the highest in ninety years. The damage in Bayou La Batre, Coden and Dauphin Island was catastrophic. As the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported:

“Many homes were completely engulfed by Katrina's surge in Bayou La Batre. The surge in Mobile Bay led to inundation of downtown Mobile causing the imposition of a dusk-to-dawn curfew. The Mobile State Docks surge value of 11.45 feet was extremely close to being the highest value ever recorded (previous record of 11.60 feet that occurred on 5 July 1916).”<sup>1</sup>

Up to 80% of the homes were flooded, many of which were severely damaged or destroyed. Most of the seafood processing plants and fishing vessels were damaged or destroyed. The local Chamber of Commerce described the Bayou La Batre as the “Seafood Capital of Alabama” for packaging seafood from hundreds of fishing boats. An estimated 85% of Bayou La Batre area residents earned their living in seafood fishing and processing industries prior to hurricane Katrina. Shrimping is a major industry where a sizeable number of Vietnamese and Laotians work.

A network of organizations called Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) formed the Mobile County Long-Term Recovery Committee (MCLTRC). The MCLTRC is funded by FEMA and has been a place for service-delivery organizations to pool resources in order to provide services to those impacted. Unfortunately, because the case management capacity of community-based service providers

in Black communities in South Mobile are relegated to subcontractors, they are the ones with the capacity to participate in MCLTRC. So, while it provides an important resource, the MCLTRC does not serve to increase the capacity of community-led case management and service delivery efforts in vulnerable communities of color.

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<sup>1</sup> National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, “Hurricane Katrina Service Assessment: High Water Mark Collection for Hurricane Katrina in Alabama,” <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/mob/0805Katrina/>.

## Louisiana

In the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita—the most destructive storms ever to impact one of the fifty United States—no report can profess to provide a complete understanding of the complexities and nuances that will exist for years to come in the recovery and rebuilding of New Orleans or Southeastern Louisiana. Suffice it to say, no organization had the capacity to respond to all of the pressing needs by faulty levees permitting flood waters to destroy the city and kill thousands.

New Orleans hosted a number of organizations predating the destruction of the City. Notable ones include the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), a national organization with both state and city chapters; the African American Leadership Project (AALP), a local think tank; important community development agencies, including Neighborhood Housing Services and Neighborhood Development Foundation; and legal service groups and civic minded academics, to name a few. According to the Greater New Orleans Foundation, New Orleans had a sizable number of nonprofit organizations compared to the region. Nonetheless, given the relative enormity of some of the assets available in New Orleans, organizations faced significant challenges. Some include the displacement of much of the population, including organizational staff who themselves had to cope with destroyed homes and offices and the needs of family, as well as the substantial gaps in capacity predating the 2005 storm season for efforts such as education reform.

After the storm, New Orleans witnessed not just the action of existing organizations,

but also the development of new, local organizations rising to meet community needs. Notable new groups include, among others, New Orleans Network, Ninth Ward Neighborhood Empowerment Network Alliance, Moving Forward Gulf Coast, Safe Streets Safe Communities and Workers Center for Racial Justice.

New organizations that have been able to rely heavily on out-of-state volunteers or supported by a national organization have been more able to operate with stability. These include People's Hurricane Relief Fund, People's Organizing Committee and Common Ground Collective.

For the most part, post-Katrina organizations led by women of color have struggled to survive and meet their missions. These leaders are often the most ready and willing to collaborate, and yet the most unsupported by philanthropy, business leaders and others. There are clear gender-based tensions within organizations. Women have expressed the difficulty they face in impacting strategies, forming relationships and generally participating in high-level decision-making. Yet and still, women are sometimes expected to provide services to those who need it with little to no compensation or remuneration.

An important dynamic in New Orleans, in particular, is the need to respond quickly to emergencies. With a lack of accountable leadership, citizens feel morally tasked to solve problems that are generally the responsibility of government. The people who take on the challenge are often not trained, not connected to an organization or other institution, not resourced and, therefore, are stressed and less effective than they might otherwise be.

Additionally, organizations are stretched beyond capacity by the demands of rebuilding.



## HURRICANE DAMAGE IN LOUISIANA

Much of Louisiana suffered severe damage during Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma. 29% of owner-occupied housing units and 35% of rental units were damaged statewide. The five hardest hit parishes were Cameron (90% of homes damaged), Plaquemines (80%), St. Bernard (81%), Orleans (71%) and St. Tammany (70%).

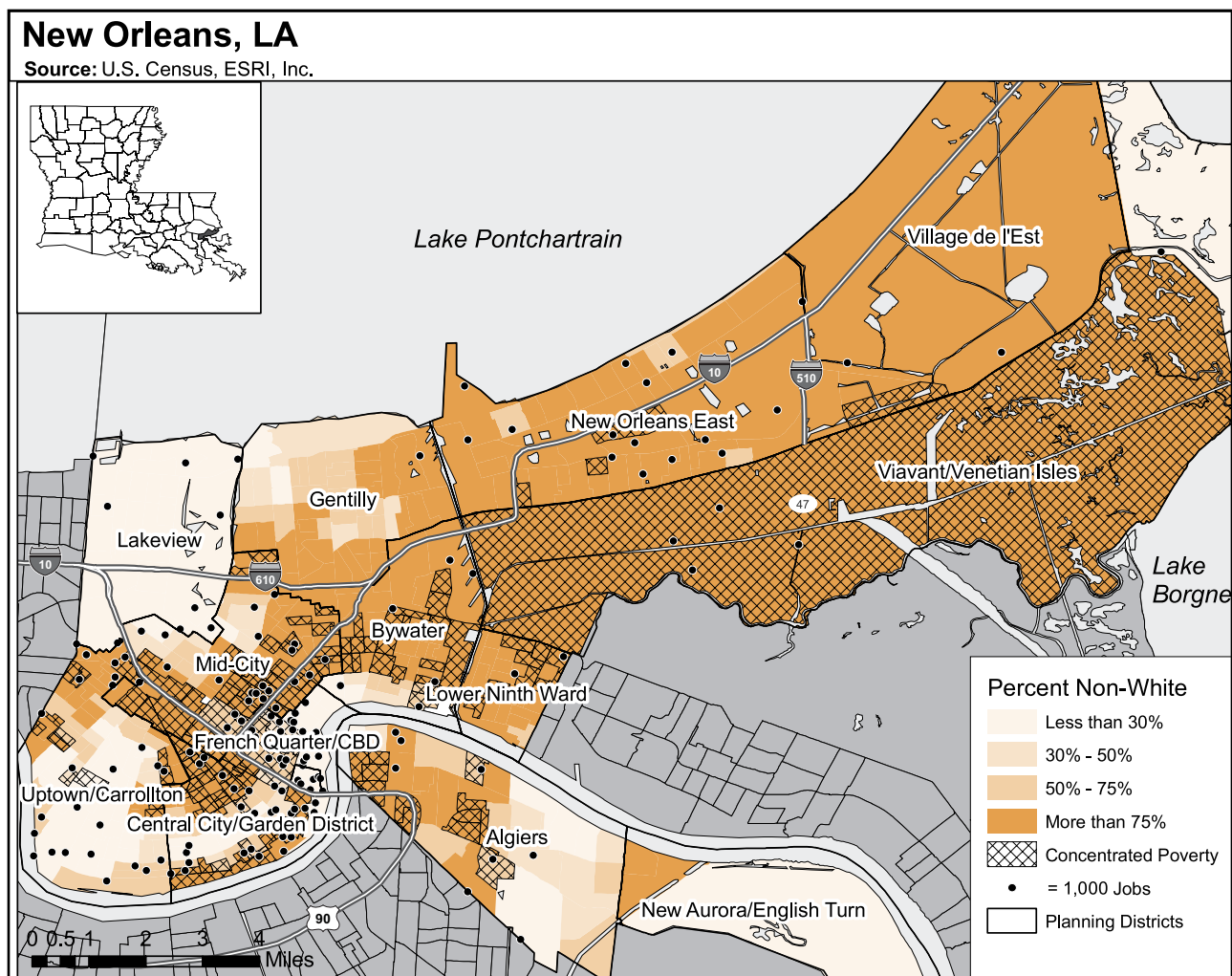


Figure 13: Opportunity mapping in New Orleans, LA

New Orleans Worker Center for Racial Justice, for example, is working on a number of campaigns with staff workdays that start from 5:00 a.m. and end at 2:00 a.m. ACORN appears to be one of the few organizations that has not

experienced large scale staff turnover. This may be due to its capacity to pay its staff through membership dues. Nonetheless, no organization is sufficiently resourced given the tremendous demands placed on nonprofit capacity.

### HURRICANE DAMAGE IN MISSISSIPPI

In Mississippi, over 220,000 housing units experienced some level of damage from Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma.<sup>I</sup> Over 93% of all destroyed homes and apartments in Mississippi were in the three coastal counties of Harrison, Hancock and Jackson and just over 54% of all Mississippi dwellings enduring major damage were located in those three counties.<sup>II</sup> In the hardest hit region of Gulfport-Biloxi, MS, four out of five residential structures endured some level of damage and half faced either substantial damage or were destroyed.<sup>III</sup> The same region saw over a 22.6% drop in employment rates after the storm.<sup>IV</sup> Homeowners in this region of the state, for the most part, could not afford to rebuild on their own.<sup>V</sup> As of June 2006, the Mississippi Development Authority received over 16,500 applications for the Katrina Homeowner Grant Program.<sup>VI</sup>

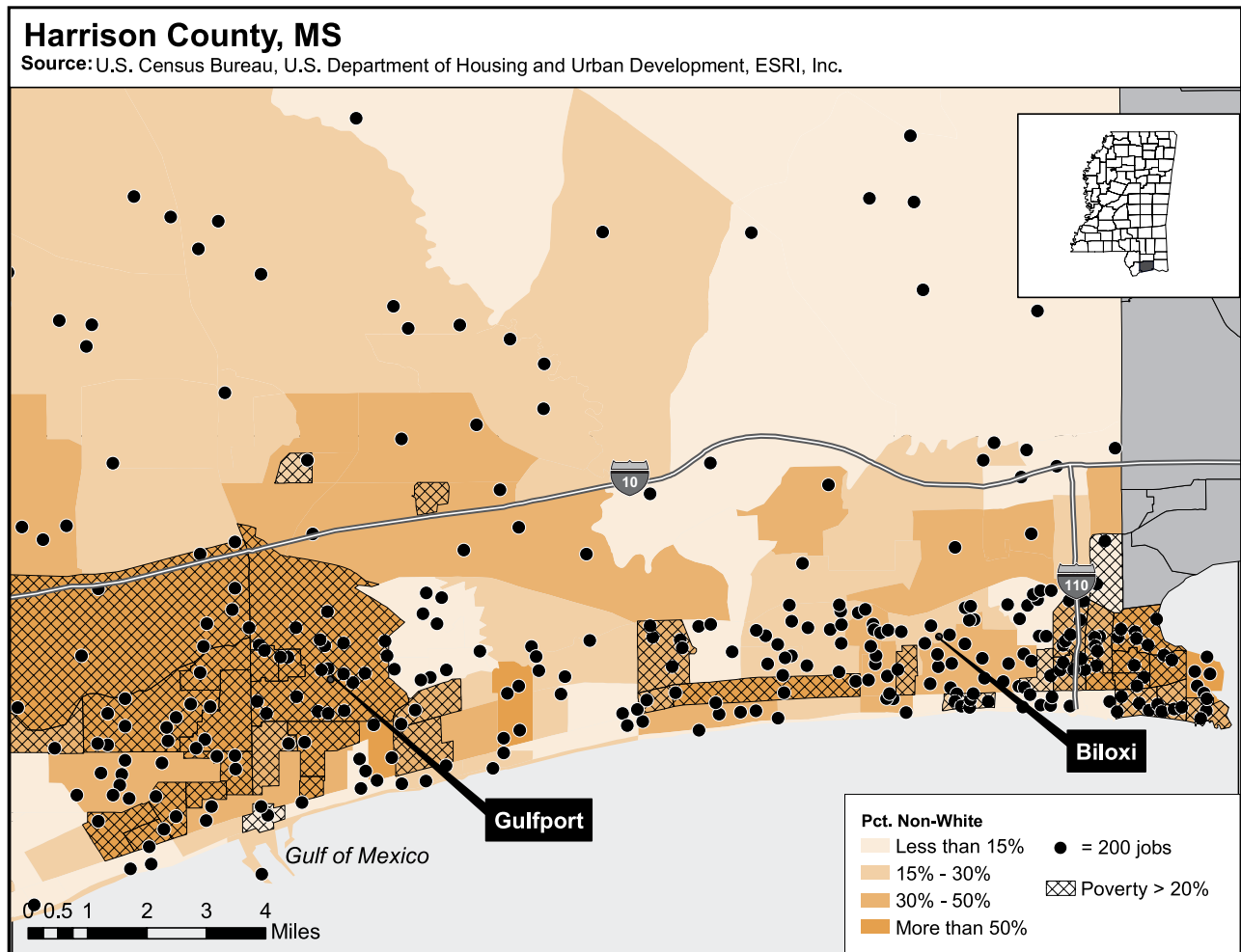


Figure 14: Opportunity mapping in Biloxi-Gulfport, MS

I Current Housing Unit Data Estimates: Hurricane Katrina, Rita, and Wilma," Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, Revised April 7, 2006. [www.gnocdc.org/reports/Katrina\\_Rita\\_Wilma\\_Damage\\_2\\_12\\_06\\_\\_\\_revised.pdf](http://www.gnocdc.org/reports/Katrina_Rita_Wilma_Damage_2_12_06___revised.pdf) (accessed August 13, 2007).

II Current Housing Unit Data Estimates: Hurricane Katrina, Rita, and Wilma," Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, Revised April 7, 2006. [www.gnocdc.org/reports/Katrina\\_Rita\\_Wilma\\_Damage\\_2\\_12\\_06\\_\\_\\_revised.pdf](http://www.gnocdc.org/reports/Katrina_Rita_Wilma_Damage_2_12_06___revised.pdf) (accessed August 13, 2007).

III Tony Pipa, "Forgotten Communities, Unmet Promises: An Unfolding Tragedy on the Gulf Coast," Oxfam America, August 2006, 20.

IV "Mississippi Economic Review and Outlook," Center for Policy Research and Planning at the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning 20, no. 1 (2006): 10.

V Id. at 20.

VI Mississippi Development Authority, "Update on Homeowner Assistance Programs," news release June 27, 2006.

## Mississippi

The 2005 hurricane season struck the Gulf Coast of Mississippi and intensely affected the entire state. The government's response to the hurricane season exacerbated already existing structural inequities. Government officials in Biloxi, MS prioritized the salvation of the city's damaged casinos. The stated intent of these policy decisions was the attraction of economic investment to the region, but they ignored the housing needs of low-income residents in the city. By doing so, they ignored an important component of economic development and one measure of successful economic investment -- workforce housing. The tight housing market in affected regions was only squeezed tighter by the displacement of thousands of residents.<sup>23</sup> The economic activity around casinos and hotels has brought about tax increases and higher costs of living for local residents, who are increasingly unable to afford higher rents and rebuilding costs.<sup>24</sup> For example, between 2005 and 2007 fair market rents of one-bedroom apartments and efficiencies in Biloxi have increased by over 9%.

The state and local governments' economic development policy is out of sync with the needs of its people.

The Mississippi state government created a post-Katrina housing plan which focused its efforts on middle-class homeowners who had insurance. Middle-class homeowners without insurance, poor homeowners and renters were largely ignored by initial state policy responses despite the sizable number of Mississippians who fell into those categories. Insurance premiums for wind damage have increased by 90% since Katrina, thus pricing many homeowners out of the market.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Pipa, 8.

<sup>24</sup> Id. at 24.

<sup>25</sup> Mississippi Insurance Department, "Dale Pledges Continued MID Dedication on Katrina Anniversary," news release August 28, 2006; "Katrina: Insurance Resolution Critical Issue," Clarion-Ledger, August 20, 2006, Editorial.

Fortunately, Mississippi has benefited from some important legal advocacy capacity, including the Mississippi Center for Justice that provides important legal representation to renters and homeowners. Also, the Mississippi NAACP state has been working to build housing policy advocacy capacity in states. According to the NAACP's assessment, most of the state's nonprofit capacity was located near Jackson and in the Delta Region, among who were not working specifically on affordable housing issues.

At local levels, many important conversations about rebuilding occur during the local planning process. Although it is critical that the planning process is informed by all members of the community, in the Mississippi Gulf Coast, communities of color have largely been excluded. There has also been little capacity at the community level for developing community plans and advocating to impact the planning process, although some capacity exists.

An example of an important pre-Katrina community building group is Turkey Creek Community Initiatives (TCCI), an innovative nonprofit 501(c)(3) community development corporation engaged in the comprehensive revitalization of coastal Mississippi's low-income, historic and environmentally challenged Turkey Creek community and watershed. Recognized in 2001 as one of Mississippi's Ten Most Endangered Historical Places, the Turkey Creek estuary was settled following the Civil War by African-American freedmen whose twenty-first century descendants now find themselves besieged near Gulfport—the geographic and commercial epicenter of Mississippi's second largest and fastest growing city. TCCI recognizes and utilizes the history of the Turkey Creek community to promote future planning and redevelopment based on sustainable ecology.

Facing urban sprawl, environmental racism and political-economic isolation since the arrival of casinos, airport expansion, and municipal annexation in the 1990s, community members organized TCCI in 2003 to conserve, restore and utilize the unique cultural, historical and ecological assets of their community, creek and coastal stream basin for education and other socially beneficial purposes.

TCCI's mission and goals for comprehensive revitalization remain steadfast, with resource stewardship and community values at its core. After Hurricane Katrina, TCCI has distributed over \$20,000 to residents of the Turkey Creek basin and nearby communities and is working to protect the watershed's cultural, environmental and housing resources from additional harm during the redevelopment process.

Southern Echo, a regional training institute based in Jackson, Mississippi, conducts capacity-training on a host of issues, from the No Child Left Behind Act to the community planning process. As a state-based and regional resource for building community planning support, it is a critical organization. It also participated in relief efforts. Southern Echo influenced the Red Cross to expand services to more rural, Black communities when it was serving disproportionately White areas. It has also provided food, water and financial assistance and has conducted a community planning training in the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Although Southern Echo has begun this work, there is a tremendous need for more community capacity building in the planning process. It presents a chance for local communities to help shape the future of their livelihoods and to increase

systemic opportunity through the establishment of good schools, affordable housing and a healthy environment.

Even for established organizations, like Southern Echo, the decision of what relief work is appropriate given limited resources and on-going priorities, was a difficult one to manage. Indeed, groups have had to struggle with this question with little capacity or support to help answer it.

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



**“Community groups that start from the dirt they stand on and are neither tied to funders nor to institutions are the majority of organizations on the ground prompting real levels of solution building through civic engagement.”**

**Colette Pichon-Battle, Moving Forward Gulf Coast,  
Slidell, LA**

**“The people who are suffering are not frustrated by the process, they are frustrated by the results of over processing. There is massive policy work with no policy change. We lack a process that is transparent and accountable to the people.”**

**Ishmael Muhammad, People's Organizing Committee**

To be successful, community building requires three things:

- 1) a vision for community health, well-being and sustainability, and strategies to achieve the vision;
- 2) public resources; and
- 3) public control and/or accountability for those resources.

This is not an exhaustive list, but these are indispensable components. All of these elements require democratic processes produced through civic engagement. Mechanisms of civic engagement help community members consider how resources should be developed and spent, influence institutions that can or should play a role in helping the community meet its vision, and address conflict and tensions between communities about the creation and distribution of public and private resources for public good. Therefore, community members must be engaged in policy dialogues, legislation and rule-making and electoral politics in order to build healthy communities.

Civic engagement groups are those that support public participation in policy dialogue, encourage policy development and legislative action, and engage in electoral work, such as voter registration and get-out-the-vote. State-level policy advocacy capacity is critical for community building in every state in the region. Cities and towns are all impacted by state-level decision-making, and states can create incentives or disincentives for good policies at the local level. For example, in Alabama the state constitution is so outdated that major community building strategies, like public transit, are hampered by a clause of the constitution that prohibits gasoline tax expenditures for transit. Also, the state legislature remains preoccupied with local lawmaking and not state lawmaking. According to the constitution, local governments must seek constitutional amendments to pass certain

local ordinances. Over 70% of constitutional amendments apply to a single city or county. As a result, the state legislature spends nearly 50% of its time debating local issues. Thus, community building in Alabama must include engagement in the issue of constitutional reform.

All of the states examined have groups positioned to do civic engagement work. Yet, in none of these states do groups have the staffing, budgets, communications support or relationship-building resources necessary to sufficiently serve the size of their marginalized populations.

### Political Structure

It is important to note the political structures within which civic engagement for community building must operate.

- All of the state legislatures in states covered by this study have part-time legislators. Part-time legislatures:
  - o have more difficulty recruiting candidates for office because they split their time between jobs; and
  - o often employ those who are more susceptible to bribes because of the lower pay and the tendency for individuals with less expertise in matters of government.<sup>26</sup>
- Most of these states have Democratic majorities, but elected officials from both the Democratic and the Republican parties lean conservative on the spectrum of their respective parties.
- Because Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Mississippi have long histories of disenfranchising Blacks of voting age, they are subject to obligations of pre-clearance under section five of the Voting Rights Act

<sup>26</sup> Dawson Bell, Chris Christoff, and Kathleen Gray. "Idea of a Part-Time Legislature Gains Favor," *Detroit Free Press*, May 24, 2007.

of 1965.<sup>27</sup> They must demonstrate to the US Department of Justice that any changes to their voting procedures are not meant to discriminate and will not make the voting process harder for non-Whites.

### Political Participation

As table 1 below indicates, Black and female voter participation rates in the region is generally equal to or greater than national Black and female voter participation rates. Asian and Latino voter participation tends to be lower than national averages. Undocumented status accounts for some of the disparity, but may not account for all of it.

The voter participation rates in the region suggest that despite weaker civic engagement capacity than other regions of the country, overall voter participation is relatively good. This suggests fertile ground for greater engagement and participation in a range of civic activities.

<sup>27</sup> Voting Rights Act of 1965, 42 U.S.C. § 1973c.

### Electoral Politics

Organizations like the NAACP, ACORN and Jeremiah (Industrial Areas Foundation) tend to have get-out-the-vote operations and engage in voter education activities often. However, the capacity for this kind of work varies across the states, and even when they do, many organizations do not have the capacity to focus more heavily on traditionally marginalized communities. As state or local chapters or affiliates of national organizations, these organizations are able to leverage resources from national headquarters for these activities or have greater name recognition and credibility with funders. Unfortunately, groups without these national relationships tend to have a harder time attracting resources for these activities.

Beyond voter registration and get-out-the-vote activities, electoral participation work is relatively weak. Capacity to develop candidates and issue-positions for different local and state-level races, needs to be strengthened. Southern

	USA	AL	AR	GA	LA	MS
Total	58%	62%	57%	53%	63%	61%
Male	56%	60%	54%	49%	63%	55%
Female	60%	64%	59%	56%	63%	65%
White	66%	63%	61%	57%	65%	60%
Non-White	41%	59%	42%	44%	59%	62%
Black	56%	64%	49%	54%	62%	67%
Asian*	30%	10%	0%	16%	25%	0%
Latino*	28%	5%	10%	7%	24%	26%

Source: US Census

\*the base is too small to give an accurate measure.

Table 1: 2004 Presidential Election Voter Participation

Echo has been an important Mississippi-based and regional trainer and has contributed significantly to 1) the number of Black elected officials at state and county levels and 2) local capacity to influence redistricting. The Mississippi NAACP state conference is 501(c)(4) organization, which significantly increases its ability to participate in the legislative process and to endorse candidates. Importantly, this work is rooted in community needs and priorities. There is a tremendous need to further build this type of capacity both in Mississippi and around the region.

#### **Policy Development, Dialogue and Engagement**

**“There is no policy without people. People make policy...fund the capacity of the people to have an informed awareness; their ability to interrupt...then there’s the question of accountability...let’s be clear about who’s accountable for enforcing policy.”**

**Georgia Community Leader**

There is important civic engagement leadership in every state examined for this report, which is a critical component of community building efforts. A particularly potent form of civic engagement activity comes from organizing groups. Their approach is to educate community members on strategies to develop policies, democratic practices and governmental accountability in order to solving problems and work toward their vision for their communities. The organizing capacity in each state varies and major swaths of each state have little to no organizing capacity. For example, in Mississippi, Southern Echo has spawned leadership development that includes organizing capacity through its training model

### **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT GROUPS**

#### **Alabama**

- **Alabama Citizens for Constitutional Reform**
- **Greater Birmingham Ministries**
- **Alabama Arise**
- **Alabama Organizing Project**

#### **Arkansas**

- **Arkansas Hunger Coalition**
- **Arkansas Public Policy Panel**
- **ACORN**
- **Women of Color Lobbying for Social Justice**

#### **Georgia**

- **Georgia Living Wage Coalition**
- **Georgia Stand Up**
- **Georgia Citizens’ Coalition on Hunger**

#### **Louisiana**

- **Louisiana ACORN**
- **Louisiana American Civil Liberties Union**
- **Jeremiah (Industrial Areas Foundation)**
- **All Congregations Together (ACT)**
- **Families of Louisiana’s Incarcerated Children (FLIC)**
- **Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana (JJPL)**
- **Critical Resistance**
- **Safe Streets Safe Communities**
- **The African American Leadership Project (AALP)**
- **New Orleans Worker Center for Racial Justice**

#### **Mississippi**

- **ACORN**
- **Mississippi American Civil Liberties Union**
- **NAACP state conference**
- **Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance**
- **Southern Echo**

**See Appendix C for a full list of interviewed groups.**



of organizing. It has also worked to support this capacity across the region, when funds permit. Yet there has not been significant organizing capacity in the Gulf Coast region of Mississippi, although there are some important and effective community building groups there. In Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia and Louisiana, there are few organizing groups outside of a few major urban areas, like Birmingham, Selma, Little Rock, Atlanta and New Orleans.

#### **Opportunities for Building Civic Engagement**

Post 2005 storm season, there has been a tremendous opportunity to increase organizing and other civic engagement capacities as new, and often younger, leadership emerged to form new institutions or simply to work externally with an existing institution. Examples include: Saving Our Selves, based in Atlanta, which created chapters in the region; Gulf Coast Women's Coalition in Mississippi; Moving Forward in Slidell, LA; New Orleans Network in New Orleans; and People's Organizing Committee in New Orleans. In Arkansas, The Women of Color Lobbying for Social Justice formed in 2006 to develop knowledge and skills necessary to become thoughtful community leaders.

Importantly, the majority of this new leadership appears to be women of color, often under forty years of age. Despite emerging local leadership, resources have tended to go to larger groups with pre-storm capacity and presence. There is not enough support for newly emerging groups and leaders, who add capacity to community building efforts and cover issues that were not sufficiently covered before hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Work developed after the storm has languished because of a lack of funding.

For example, after discussions with the Louisiana Family Recovery Corps, a nonprofit agency dedicated to helping Louisiana citizens return to the state, Bright Moments was asked to develop an Advocacy Project to provide comprehensive information to evacuees and to organize them to impact policy decision being made on their behalf. A review of several surveys and studies done on Katrina/Rita evacuees suggest that several of the policies, which guide the administrative practices of programs created to assist evacuee return to Louisiana, are in fact out of sync with the realities that many evacuees face when making the decision to return. This work represented a critical and important beginning to rebuilding that does not have the funds to continue.

Until 2006, the Arkansas Hunger Coalition received federal funding through the Community Food, Nutrition and Health Education program administered by the Department of Human Services. The Coalition must find foundation grants and donor contributions if they are to survive. This is a tremendous challenge because the Coalition has only a part-time executive director and has been operating with a small budget that has not increased since 1999. Additionally, they will be competing with many of the food pantries and food banks who make up the Coalition's membership, which are themselves under-resourced. Hope Walker, the Coalition's director, pointed out that many foundations seek to support programs which teach nutrition and education seminars on eating healthily. Many of the food pantries and banks do not have the capacity to provide those types of programs.

In sum, a critical base of organizations and emerging leaders has presented an opportunity to strengthen and expand civic engagement



work. Funders and national organizations should build these new organizations, as well as stabilize older ones.

Gaps exist in the civic engagement infrastructure of all states studied. For example, there is insufficient support for rural communities to civically engage. At the local level (urban, peri-urban and rural) there is an inadequate infrastructure for supporting community engagement in planning processes. There is insufficient support for community leaders to engage in the very conversations that might promote and lead to more civic and political engagement over time.

### **Regional Civic Engagement**

It is critical that civic and political engagement groups have the capacity to cross political jurisdictional boundaries to work effectively. This is because opportunity structures—the relationship between institutions which promote or bar opportunities for communities—cross jurisdictional boundaries. For example, in metropolitan areas policy development and planning around transportation, housing development, job creation and public resource protection and development, require cross-jurisdictional collaboration and strategy. Increasingly, real solutions require multi-jurisdictional approaches which cross our fragmented governmental boundaries. Civic and political engagement groups must have the capacity to work in a multi-jurisdictional way, which might mean expanding geographic areas of coverage and/or building relationships with other groups to align strategies across jurisdictional areas.

There have been some nascent efforts to develop a regional policy platform around rebuilding an equitable Gulf Coast region,

### **THE MS STATE CONFERENCE OF THE NAACP: BUILDING ADVOCACY CAPACITY**

**The Mississippi State Conference of the NAACP sponsored an assessment of the housing policy environment and determined the critical need for research, technical assistance, training and education for local communities. The assessment also showed that nonprofit capacity existed largely in Jackson and in the Delta Region of the state. No groups were working specifically on affordable housing policy. Before 2005, the last substantial state housing policy initiative occurred in 1991.**

**As a result of this void, Mississippi is one of the few states without a Fair Housing Act and limited anti-predatory mortgage lending statutes, but that still allows non-judicial foreclosures. Additionally, the state provides very few resources to support community development corporations or other affordable housing developers in their efforts to facilitate the construction of affordable homes. Even the state's landlord tenant laws favor landlords, giving them the right to evict, in some cases, without ever going to court. After this assessment, the NAACP, a 501(c)(4) organization, began to develop a 501(c)(3) organization and to try and actively build its housing policy capacity.**

**Along with the Enterprise Corporation of the Delta, the NAACP organized a legislative Gap Convening which gathered stakeholders, state policymakers, community leaders and experts to discuss pre-Katrina state housing policies. The convening identified policy gaps in preparation for the 2006 legislative session. As a result of this convening, policymakers introduced twelve bills both in the House and the Senate, including bills to strengthen the protections afforded to tenants, protect consumers from predatory lending and strengthen Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) requirements to better provide housing for very low income families. It also included a bill to create a Post-Katrina Legislative Oversight Committee (House Bill 1318) which would provide oversight of the more than \$5 billion in CDBG funds that the state would receive from the federal government to finance recovery and rebuilding efforts. Though many of the organizations twelve legislative priorities passed at least one body of the Legislature, none were enacted into law. According to those involved, there is no sustained research or technical assistance for important housing-related programs and policies in the state.**

but they are still relatively new and cannot function well without more support. Local civic engagement capacity is critical for national policy development for three reasons: 1) local communities will not engage in regional or national policy conversations if they cannot relate that engagement to state and local priorities; 2) national policy dialogue which is not supported by local communities will neither be credible nor particularly saleable; and 3) for local communities to make use of national policies, they must be able to navigate the context within which the policies must be implemented.

Unlike Mississippi, Florida or Post-September 11<sup>th</sup> New York, Louisiana and the City of New Orleans had Democrats as Governor and Mayor while the federal administration was controlled by Republicans, leaving some to speculate that federal responses to those states has been more robust. Tensions between the states on issues related to resources exist. Many groups and government officials state that Louisiana has not gotten a fair proportion of rebuilding dollars in light of the level of devastation it has experienced, creating tensions between the two states.

Further complicating matters, Louisiana has done a poor job of distributing its resources. Mississippi has been able to move money much more efficiently than Louisiana. Take, for example, the two large-scale programs aimed at rebuilding homes in the two states. In Mississippi, over 72% of applicants to the Phase I program received a grant by April 4, 2007, while in Louisiana, as of May 14, 2007, less than 13% of Road Home Program applicants had received a grant. Mississippi Schools are operating at 90% percent of pre-Katrina enrollment, while

fewer than half of New Orleans's schools are open and enrollment is no where near pre-Katrina capacity.<sup>28</sup> But Mississippi state government has largely ignored the needs of poor and uninsured people and their policy priorities—affordable rental housing and homeownership opportunities, transit and economic development—which will promote living wage jobs. These are priorities shared across the region and could be a rallying point for more collective thinking and influence on national policy debates, if supported properly.

Proper support includes stabilizing existing organizations, which represent important community building assets and a base from which greater policy development and regional convenings can be based. Regional peer-to-peer learning opportunities and convening resources could help produce more regional cooperation.

## COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



**“Why are we going to give \$400 million to St. Peter Claver Catholic Church to tear down the Lafitte Housing Development, when we could put in \$1 million to make it a super star place, and then invest \$3 million into the neighborhood? ... There's only one reason: developers make more money.”**

**Nathan Shroyer, Neighborhood Planning Network,  
New Orleans, LA**

Not only is there a pressing need for more economic development capacity at the community level across the states, there is a critical need to rethink the shape and goals

<sup>28</sup> Tronn Moller, “National Council of Churches Special Commission for the Just Rebuilding of the Gulf,” National Council of the Churches of Christ Special Commission Governing Board Report, May 2007, 3-8.

of the existing development efforts. More specifically, economic development should include not only building housing or grocery stores, but developing what Massachusetts Institute of Technology Urban Planning Professor J. Philip Thompson calls “political economy” by building financial resources for communities. It should resource people’s ability to leverage political power which can further achieve their vision for their communities.

Government investment in communities often benefits the private sector with marginal or short-term benefits to the communities themselves. An example is River Gardens, a Hope VI development near downtown New Orleans.<sup>29</sup> River Gardens replaced St. Thomas Housing projects, which housed nearly 1,700 people in 2000.<sup>30</sup> Through the organizing efforts of groups like People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond, St. Thomas Health Clinic and St. Thomas resident leaders, the community fought for and won a 30% share of the units for former St. Thomas residents. By the end of the project, St. Thomas residents were only to receive 10% of the units and were faced with many restrictions and hurdles in order to rent a unit.

Prior to the flooding of New Orleans, almost none of the units were inhabited by former St. Thomas residents. Immediately after the storm, the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) placed its own employees in the units, reducing the availability of housing for low-income New Orleanians. HANO later introduced a plan to destroy thousands of units of public housing, much of which could have been rehabilitated to

29 Hope VI is a federal program designed to deconcentrate poverty in “severely distressed” public housing. Private developers receive public dollars to build mixed-income neighborhoods. Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, “About HOPE VI,” <http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/hope6/about/>.

30 Kari Lydersen, “New Orleans Public Housing Residents Set to Fight Off Developers,” *The New Standard*, February 26, 2007. <http://newstandardnews.net/content/index.cfm/items/2868> (accessed June 11, 2007).

offer rental housing for displaced Black residents. With little evidence to support the conclusion, and with some evidence to the contrary, officials assumed that displaced people would be better off where they had been relocated.<sup>31</sup>

In Gulf Coast rebuilding, and the nation as a whole, private contractors benefit directly from public rebuilding dollars and corporations tend to be increasingly positioned to benefit from development dollars in a way that leaves few resources for communities.<sup>32</sup> In New Orleans, private corporations are receiving public investments for rebuilding but local businesses are largely left out, residents are rarely benefiting from the employment opportunities and foreign born and US. born laborers are undergoing labor abuses. Utilities seek publicly financed bailouts while rates increase.<sup>33</sup>

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Mississippi handed out \$5.1 billion in business grants, though critics say too much of that has been given to big businesses like casinos with little left over to support the state’s small businesses.<sup>34</sup> Gaming industry tends to provide generally low-wage jobs and does not generally support a living wage based on housing costs alone.<sup>35</sup> Anthony Sanfilippo, president of the central division of Harrah’s, which is spending as much as a billion dollars on a Biloxi casino, said regarding the fate of neighborhoods like East Biloxi, “Change is going to create some discomfort for people.” He argued that Harrah

31 Rick K. Wilson, Robert Stein, *Katrina Evacuees in Houston: One Year Out*, Division of Social Sciences, Rice University, September 8, 2006. [http://brl.rice.edu/katrina/White\\_Papers/White\\_Paper\\_9\\_8\\_06.pdf](http://brl.rice.edu/katrina/White_Papers/White_Paper_9_8_06.pdf) (accessed August 13, 2007).

32 Rita J. King, “Big, Easy Money: Disaster Profiteering on the American Gulf Coast,” *CorpWatch*, August 2006.

33 Matthew Penix, “Entergy N.O. Could Turn Lights Out,” *New Orleans CityBusiness*, September 4, 2006.

34 Aaron Glantz, “Casino’s Post-Katrina Opening Not All Fun and Games,” *OneWorld US*, August 31, 2006.

35 Mississippi State Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, “Envisioning a Better Mississippi: Hurricane Katrina and Mississippi – One Year Later,” [http://www.policy.rutgers.edu/irct/Envisioning\\_Conference.pdf](http://www.policy.rutgers.edu/irct/Envisioning_Conference.pdf) (accessed June 11, 2007).

is expected to create about 3,000 new jobs. But when asked where all those employees were expected to live, he replied that casinos, like any other business, relied on market forces to take care of such things. "You can still have homes that are part of the community," he went on, "It's just not likely to be in the same areas."<sup>36</sup>

The displacement of largely Black and Asian populations in Biloxi also ignores the flow of public dollars supporting big corporations over transit needs of these communities. In February 2006, a \$700 million amendment was added to a recovery bill to reroute a railroad to facilitate casino development in Mississippi.<sup>37</sup>

This is not to suggest that all corporate actors are bad actors, but without counter-balancing political economies of scale, they are not necessarily good actors. While some corporate welfare may be appropriate, the civic and social engagement of members of the region do not receive equal investments and by comparison their political economy – their resource power to shape their future – is deeply curtailed.

The needs are great. In all states studied, affordable housing, public transit, public services, education, environmental justice, sustainable development and meaningful job creation were top priorities before the 2005 hurricanes and became even more critical after. While priorities are similar across the region, they do not necessarily fall in the same order of importance or are likely to respond to the same methodology.

In all states' solutions for rural housing, transportation and economic issues require significantly different solutions. Important economic development capacity exists in rural

areas of all of the states, but tends to have limited geographic reach, inadequate resources and lack support for developing innovative and new methods of resource generation for communities. This is particularly true for those which can both create place-based opportunities and link community members to regional job opportunities.

## COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT



Community planning capacity is critical in all areas. Planning has the potential for being a powerful tool to improve the well-being of communities and regions and is also central to many decisions which can help build communities. In New Orleans, LA, Biloxi-Gulfport, MS and South Mobile, AL, community planning is a critical part of the rebuilding process. Government planning processes and community capacity to participate in those processes have varied widely across the region.

In New Orleans, the city government has sought and attempted to support community engagement in planning for the future. The city-sponsored community planning process to develop the Unified New Orleans Plan was an important attempt to create a participatory rebuilding plan for the city. Effective community planning is extremely challenging when more than half of the pre-Katrina population of New Orleans is still displaced. FEMA parks, like Renaissance Village in Baker, LA (with over 600 trailers), have no telephones and more than half of the population remains unemployed,

<sup>36</sup> Jim Lewis, "Battle for Biloxi," New York Times, May 21, 2006.

<sup>37</sup> Ronald D. Utt, Ph.D., and Brian M. Riedl, "Senators Should Derail Mississippi's 'Railroad to Nowhere'," The Heritage Foundation, April 25, 2006. <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Budget/wm1048.cfm> (accessed June 6, 2007).

so they cannot afford cellular phones or other means of constant communication. Still, others in Houston, Dallas, Lafayette, Atlanta and Memphis have little access to meetings in New Orleans.

Community-based organizations with the capacity to help create community participation did so. Older neighborhood associations, like the Broadmore Neighborhood Association, were well organized and better prepared for a planning process. Broadmore was an important resource for other neighborhood associations, like that of the Seventh Ward, struggling to form in light of the UNOP process. ACORN, with a long-term presence in the Lower Ninth Ward, was also able to hold meetings for members who were displaced.

There were also missed opportunities. For example, the People's Hurricane Relief Fund was working in Houston where 125,000 or more New Orleans residents were scattered. PHRF estimated that it needed at least five more organizers to hold meetings to give displaced people meaningful access to the meetings, given Houston's urban sprawl. Furthermore, with the exception of groups like ACORN, there were few groups with an office present where there were large numbers of displaced people.

At least one neighborhood, which did not have a neighborhood association prior to the destruction of the city, tried to form an association to participate in the planning process. The Seventh Ward received important support from the Broadmore Neighborhood Association. It did not receive support from other groups. Some neighborhood groups were actually competing with one another to claim areas as part of their territory, and many lacked support to link neighborhood needs to a regional approach to rebuilding.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

### Arkansas

- **Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation**
- **Boys, Girls and Adults Community Development Center, Marvell, AK**
- **Black Community Developers, Inc., Little Rock, AK**
- **Clark Family Citizens United**

### Georgia

- **New Town Florist Club, Gainesville, GA**

### Mississippi

- **HEGA**
- **Quitman County Development Organization, Inc. (QCDO)**

### Regional Community Development Organizations

- **Enterprise Corporation of the Delta**
- **The Southern Good Faith Fund (SGFF)**
- **Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund (FSC/LAF)**
- **Southern Rural Development Initiative**

**See Appendix C for a full list of interviewed groups.**

Importantly, the city recognized the need to have community planners assisting neighborhoods and districts. Planners were hired as a resource for communities, but many displaced people lacked a meaningful opportunity to vote in their selection. Many have complained that the planning process was complex and they were not given the tools to either understand or impact the process.

Despite these criticisms, it was an important effort and New Orleans had more community capacity than in other states for planning participation. In other cities, like Biloxi-Gulfport, communities have been excluded from the planning process. The differences are, in part, driven by the degree of political expediency of participation for those in elected office and the political economy (or lack thereof) of traditionally marginalized communities. In New Orleans, Mayor Nagin had to rely upon the return of Black New Orleanians for re-election as the business interests that supported him in his first mayoral campaign were less supportive after the levees failed. In Biloxi-Gulfport, however, Black, Latino and Korean community members have a weak political economy compared to the powerful interests of casinos, which are driving the planning process.

Another factor is the incorporated versus unincorporated status of areas hit directly by the 2005 hurricane season. Coden, Alabama is an unincorporated community located directly on the Alabama Gulf Coast. Because it is unincorporated, it was excluded from planning and direct resource allocation. It is also predominantly poor, Black and Vietnamese. Coden neighbors Bayou LaBatre. Bayou LaBatre, which is incorporated and thus both the recipient of major rebuilding dollars and has the political structure to engage in planning

which impacts Coden. Coden residents also had little organizational capacity to intervene, with the exception of Boat People, SOS. There was little resource support for Coden residents' participation in planning and technical assistance around the questions of incorporation, or other strategies to increase their influence over decisions regarding their future.

## LEADERSHIP



**"I'm never going to do it all –it's a process and when I'm no longer able to do the work others will take it to the next level; others will be prepared to carry on the work."**

**Onie Norman, African American Women's Network,  
Dumas, AR**

Leadership is central to community building. The vision, strategy, passion and mobilizing capacity for transformation requires individuals who have these capacities and inspire them in others. There is no shortage of impressive leadership in the region. Importantly, this leadership is both organizationally-based and independent of or unfunded by nonprofit organizations. Both are required and often must be in relationship for community building work to happen effectively.

This report presents four key findings on leadership capacity across the region:

- 1) Organizations need more resources to create positions and train staff in order to build leadership depth and succession plans;
- 2) Existing local and regional leadership training capacity must be expanded and new

types of training, such as building networks and collaborations and organizational development, must be built;

- 3) Emergent leaders, often women of color in their thirties, need more support. They are often too old to benefit from youth training support and too young to benefit from senior leadership investments; and
- 4) Organizations need resources to build the capacity to identify and partner with individual leaders in communities whose leadership should be supported, but not necessarily incorporated into the organization.

Almost all the leaders interviewed for this report stated that there was not a sufficient pool of emerging leaders to replace them or fill other key positions in their organizations. Many leaders who were organizationally affiliated were founding directors. Some organizations have become dormant or closed when the leader becomes ill or has to take time off for other reasons.

Many leaders interviewed believe low pay was one explanation for a lack of a ready pool of community-builders seeking nonprofit employment and leadership positions. Also, organizations have few resources to create entry-level positions for those interested in nonprofit work, but who need training and support to develop their capacity to one day lead. For example, Rebecca Jackson, a Montgomery, AL native and recent graduate of the University of Alabama, is volunteering with the Alabama Constitution Reform coalition. She explained that most nonprofits lack entry-level positions for people like her who have just graduated from college and need to be trained.

Important leadership training institutes exist: Highlander Research and Education Center, Southern Echo, Southern Empowerment

Project and Project South, to name a few. These institutions and new ones need to be supported to create additional kinds of training to support leadership. For example, Southern Echo is one of the few training groups which includes electoral participation training – voting rights, how to run for a school board position and how to run for Planning Commissions. In addition to expanding the number and depth of these types of trainings, additional types of trainings are necessary: idea and vision generation for new strategies; organizational development, including strategies for effective resource development; and how to form and support networks, alliances and collaborations.

The South, particularly the Black-Belt South, presents unique opportunities and challenges for local leadership that requires an approach sensitive to the regional context. Many leaders interviewed described the need to help communities confront their fear of challenging policies, practices and decisions which harm them, given the violently repressive history of the region, the concentration of wealth and political power and the resulting vulnerability to economic retaliation. This requires building organizations up by strengthening their resource base, helping them stabilize and aiding in their financial independence from local power brokers. These forms of support would enable them to take advantage of the training programs described earlier.

An important observation from the interviews is the impressive emergent leadership, usually female, Black or Latino and in their early thirties, that has surfaced since the 2005 storm season, despite the lack of structure or leadership development support. There appears to be less room for these emerging leaders to move into leadership positions in existing organizations.

This may, in part, be due to both traditional gender roles and less access to resources. These leaders may also lack access to those who invest in new leadership (e.g., business leaders, elected officials, other nonprofit organizational leaders). Many emerging Black women leaders attempted to or created new nonprofits. Examples include Saving Our Selves, Ninth Ward's Neighbors Empowerment Network Association (NENA), New Orleans Network and Moving Forward. They have all struggled to attract the resources necessary to build and sustain their organizations.

There do not appear to be sufficient investments in this leadership, their new organizations or their development. Financial support, programs and relationship development opportunities geared toward leadership development for these new leaders who are ready and willing to lead in various capacities will be central to the rebuilding of the region, the development and testing of new strategies and greater local and regional collaboration.

These new leaders present an opportunity for more collaborative leadership and developing new paradigms for the work. They are much more likely to identify and seek to work on the intersection of issues and to find non-traditional partners. By and large, these leaders come with a vision of collaboration and relationship-building – something sorely needed, particularly in the Greater-New Orleans area.

Two of the consultants for this report are examples of this phenomenon: Colette Pichon-Battle, a thirty-one year old attorney from Slidell, LA, who moved back home from Washington, DC to help her family rebuild; and Jessica

Norwood, a Mobile Alabama native with a Masters degree in Public Administration from Northern Illinois University, who helped lead the Alabama chapter of Saving Ourselves. Jessica identified a community building leadership asset in a resource starved region in the form of Ms. Jesse. Ms. Jesse is a community leader because she makes sure children do not go hungry and organizes the community to support each other when members are in need. There are Ms. Jesses all over the South. Within the research project, the consultants began to refer to this category of individual leaders generically as *Ms. Mary*: an individual who works and exists outside of an organization. She is the person who sees a problem in the community and, although she is not formally obligated to do so, decides to step up and do something about it. Within this research project, the consultants began to ask: "What makes a *Ms. Mary* and how do we find and support them?" The objective, we have come to believe, is to help the social justice community identify, partner and produce future *Ms. Marys*.

Organizations need to partner more effectively with *Ms. Mary* to be more effective in building and transforming communities. *Ms. Mary* catalyzes and mobilizes a community's responsibility for its own health and well-being. *Ms. Mary* needs to partner with organizations to support and expand her ability. This requires building organizational capacity to: 1) seek and help develop an emerging population of leaders, professional and non-professional; 2) to work with them to contextualize their lives and work in a social justice frame; and 3) to incorporate them as staff, consultants, members or resources



for ideas and community mobilization. It is also critical to consider communications mechanisms to link unaffiliated community leadership with each other and to important opportunities for impacting community building.

Several *Ms. Marys* were interviewed for this report. Onie Norman, founder and leader of the African American Women's Network, and Damita Marks, the catalyst behind Clark County Citizens United, are two good examples. Both seek to solve community problems while building engagement by other community members. For example, Ms. Marks fought for health care and justice for her son who is living with AIDS in the Arkansas criminal justice system. She quickly connected her personal experience with the injustices of the system as a whole and organized the volunteer-run organization Clark County Citizens United to fight for criminal justice reform. These women are contributing enormous amounts of time and resources to their community work. They are not receiving any funding through an organization so their work is under-resourced. They also have more flexibility and autonomy in doing advocacy work and responding to community needs, as well as have a high level of trust with community members because they do not work for money.

In New Orleans many of the reoccurring community leaders emerge as the base for forward movement on any one issue. Leaders like Reverend Lois Dejean, LeKedra Roberson and Patricia Jones, command a loyalty and respect that cross organizational and church lines. When they identify a need or a solution and outline a direction, an entire community is sure to follow. These three women are engrained in the institutions, families and churches of the city.

Arkansas has a unique opportunity to provide philanthropic innovation and community leadership to the field. Freddy Webb Petett, formerly with the Kellogg Foundation, is building the Center for Community Philanthropy. It sees community philanthropy as a decentralized way of developing engagement of the community and creating ownership in philanthropic endeavors. It convenes community members and provides scholarships and training to promote community-based philanthropy. The Center for Community Philanthropy intends to partner with other organizations, including Arkansas Coalition for Excellence, Good Faith Fund and others, to identify the policies that impact the public and provide analysis on these issues.

## NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

**“Teach us how to fish; don’t fish for us.”**

**Tracie Washington,  
formerly with the NAACP Gulf Coast Alliance**

**“Local nonprofits have to compete with salaries of the national and regional groups who are taking up residence locally. Local leaders with any skills to assist in organizational capacity in various settings are a ‘hot commodity’ which is good in one sense, but it strains the capacity of local nonprofits.”**

**Cassandra Welchlin, Consultant,  
Jackson, Mississippi**

Local groups, particularly in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi all expressed a need for resource support from national groups in the form of technical assistance and partnerships on local, state and national policy; economic development strategies; and particular types of issues (e.g., insurance reform). Few national groups had relationships with local groups in hard hit areas or in areas receiving large numbers of displaced people. As a result, when national groups received funding for local relief or rebuilding work, they were not always well-situated to advance their goals. Furthermore, many local groups complained that national groups did not always ask them what their needs were to try and meet them. National groups may have had funding parameters for their work that may not have enabled them to meet these needs.

In many instances, local needs require national groups to resource-share, which is not a common mode of operation for many national groups.

Good examples exist of national groups supporting local groups and having their own work strengthened as a result. The Advancement Project is a national community-lawyering advocacy organization based in Washington, DC. When New Orleans’ levees broke, the group hired Ishmael Muhammad, a New Orleans resident. They did not hire Ishmael to do their bidding, but rather resourced him to organize public housing residents. At the same time, the organization deployed their legal capacity to provide advocacy support for public housing residents and local legal partners to fight for the rights of public housing residents to return to their homes and participate in rebuilding.

The Praxis Project hired Corlita Mahr, a member of the People’s Hurricane Relief Fund, to support its work and has also offered media training in response to community requests. The organization also created the Katrina Information Network (KIN) to garner support for locally driven policy campaigns that would make HUD, FEMA and other national government agencies more responsive to rebuilding needs of the community. The National Immigration Law Center also helped to launch the Workers Center for Racial Justice in New Orleans.

In Mississippi, Oxfam USA, a national relief organization, quickly recognized that traditional relief work was not enough and became a re-grantor, coalition organizer/supporter and a resource for existing work in the Gulf Coast. Oxfam’s work to bring together several organizations in the form of the Steps Coalition, was unparalleled. However, it is not clear

whether and to what extent Oxfam will continue to support the coalition, which is now struggling with significantly less national support and through tensions of race and class.

Other national groups, like Neighbor Works and the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies supported some of the new generation of leaders by including them in meetings, which helped them gain more recognition. Hearing needs identified by emergent leaders in the region, including the Initiative for Regional and Community Transformation (IRCT), other national groups helped support the convening of emergent leaders in the region, such as an Alabama-wide emergent leaders meeting. These meetings provided critical opportunities for emerging leaders to network, identify needs and develop strategies to support their leadership. This included ideas for a continued network, how to further support each other, how to develop mentors and how best to organize an elected-candidates forum in Alabama.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS



**“Collaborations are most favorable when organizations come together because of a shared interest. The collaborative must set a tone and atmosphere which demonstrates an appreciation for power sharing, respect and honor for what people bring to the table.”**

**Janet Perkins, Consultant,  
Little Rock, AR**

Community building requires collaboration. Collaboration can come in many forms, from informal networks, to joint projects, to formal coalitions. The form is less important than the fact that the relationships exist across communities, organizations and bodies of work. A clear picture of what makes collaboration successful emerged from the interviews for this report. Successful collaborations:

- Are democratic
- Are based on shared principles of engagement
- Value all partners in the collaboration
- Are visible to decision-makers
- Have resources to sustain collaboration without draining or rendering ineffective its partners.

The reality of collaboration among Gulf Coast groups is very different across the states examined. For example, in Arkansas there is The Citizens First Congress, a statewide coalition of over forty groups representing all corners of the state and which work on a variety of issues including education, civil rights, labor, the environment, sustainable family agriculture, and government and corporate accountability. The Congress works together on issues they agree upon to build the strength needed to win long overdue reforms at state level. This is an important vehicle for collaboration for community building groups in the state. The Arkansas Public Policy Panel helps to maintain and continue the Congress. Yet, the Arkansas Public Policy Panel receives a significant amount of its budget from one funder, suggesting that resources for civic engagement work are lacking in Arkansas.

In Atlanta, there is positive coalitional work on living wage and other economic justice issues, but there do not appear to be many state-level collaboratives or networks, particularly

containing strong rural representation. Similarly, in Alabama, there are important collaborations in the form of Alabama Arise, Alabama Citizens for Constitutional Reform, as well as leadership development collaboration amongst a handful of groups. Most of the organizations involved in these collaboratives are directly engaged in policy advocacy, either through organizing or lobbying. Outside of these groups, there is not a strong representation of organizational collaborations in the state. Most of the collaboration outside of these groups involves shared relationships from shared board members or foundation relationships, which lends itself to a willingness to support each other's convenings.

Mississippi has a newly formed Steps Coalition, focused on rebuilding post-hurricane Katrina, but with a variety of groups and leadership and the ability to work overtime on a broad range of issues. The Steps Coalition is a formal structure with a staff, but exists because of the resource support of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Foundation. The foundation provides seed money and organizational support to those coming together to discuss the possibility of a coalition, as well as resources to support the decisions made by the group. While nascent and facing challenges of developing relationships, resources and a shared agenda, it is an important example of a state-wide, formal, post-Katrina coalition. Importantly, this coalition was created partly because 21<sup>st</sup> Century Foundation was informed by local leaders and offered support for 1) a convening to discuss possible collaboration on rebuilding; and 2) next steps determined by the group. This is an important example of a foundation effectively incentivizing collaboration rather than trying to drive it. This model allowed

local leaders to determine whether and how they should collaborate allowing for buy-in and follow-through that was more robust.

In New Orleans, the strongest collaborations are those among churches. They are the most highly resourced, least dependant on government regulations and best prepared, often with in-house "ministries" that are sometimes more efficient than any government regulated agency. There are strong relationships among groups working on criminal justice issues, including Critical Resistance, Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children, Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana, Safe Streets Safe Communities and others. That is not necessarily true, however, across other sectors of work.

There are a number of leaders of new and smaller organizations with a vision for and desire to collaborate more often and more effectively. These include groups like Safe Streets Safe Communities, New Orleans Network, Neighbors Empowering Neighbors Association and Moving Forward Gulf Coast. These groups, however, have received few resources to sustain their work and build partnerships.

There is notable collaboration outside of the city between the Houma Nation and Zion Travelers, important rural groups. Also, within the city, there are organizations which represent associations across institutions, neighborhoods and people. Groups like Jeremiah (Industrial Areas Foundation) and PICO are examples of institutions which are made up of churches. Jeremiah and PICO do not necessarily work collaboratively with one another, although they and ACORN are in conversation about doing so. ACORN collaborates with the major unions in

the area, but does not appear to collaborate with organizations with different organizing models or with organizations that are smaller than itself.

The People's Organizing Committee and Worker Center for Racial Justice both organize undocumented immigrants (largely Latino) and documented workers, as well as Black workers to address employment abuses, which are legion in New Orleans today. This is an important example of the critical work of relationship building in the face of tremendous racial tensions between Latinos and Blacks.

The Neighborhood Planning Network is just over one-year-old and is made up of sixty-five neighborhood groups, which includes most neighborhood associations in New Orleans, giving it city-wide coverage. NPN has become one of the most diverse (in every way) gatherings in the city able to assert a steady attendance by its members. With limited resources NPN is not able to have an on-going membership campaign with paid staff.

**"We're starving people fighting for crumbs."**

**William Quigley, Loyola Law School,  
New Orleans, LA**

Despite these important collaborative examples, there has generally been a lack of coordination and collaboration between organizations and tremendous tension between some individual leaders, sometimes based on rivalries or insults that are several years old. For many, the hard work in New Orleans in particular, and Louisiana in general, is building collaborations. Some interviewed suggested that lack of coordination and collaboration result from resource competition and the need to get "credit" for work in order to generate

more financial support. One organization in Arkansas recounted a funder telling the group that Arkansas was a small state, and therefore, the funder would only fund one organization in Arkansas. The funder therefore suggested that if the organization wanted to be funded, they should become a part of the group that the funder was providing resources to. Although this type of funder decision may make sense for the funder, it can breed competition between groups.

Related to this is the fact that, relative to the region, New Orleans groups have not had to work together much prior to the 2005 hurricane season. Coordination and collaboration is more difficult without the relationships and infrastructure for collaboration. It is also clear that groups are overwhelmed by the trauma and demands of a destroyed city and displaced people. Finally, not all leaders have the appetite and skills for collaboration. One leader of a prominent and relatively well-resourced group made clear that the group would not work with groups which had different organizational structures and methodologies, excluding natural allies from collaboration. Other leaders, who do have the appetite and skills for collaboration, are not necessarily well-resourced.

Funders have made the mistake of trying to force collaborations or choosing a single group as the driver behind efforts to collaborate. These strategies have not had a very strong record in the region. The recognition of the need for collaboration and leaders with the skill and vision for collaboration is growing. Therefore, this is an opportune moment for well-placed support to catalyze more and better relationships between groups and communities.

**T**here are many similarities across the states examined for this report.

1. They have large populations of Blacks, Latinos, Asians and Native Americans that are disproportionately poor and experience economic, political and social exclusion by power-brokers.
2. The nonprofit capacity and charitable giving for these populations were grossly under-resourced, as compared to the size of their poor populations.
3. All states have vibrant, impressive and effective leaders and organizations, despite these challenges.
4. Leaders in these states share very similar priority issues, including affordable housing, public transit, expanded economic opportunities, better educational systems and a healthier environment.
5. Emerging leaders in their thirties are ready to take on leadership, but are often not recognized or supported, particularly Black women.
6. Gaps in coverage of necessary issues or important community building capacities exist in each state.

Despite these similarities, the political, social and associational context of these states differs in important ways and requires specialized approaches to support local leadership and equitable rebuilding.

- In Arkansas, the range and relationships of groups are impressive despite shockingly low public and philanthropic investments in them. This is a strong base for building the existing work and, over-time, the capacity for that work to be connected regionally outside of the state.
- In Alabama, community building efforts are structurally difficult to achieve because the current state constitution requires

constitutional amendments for local decisions and makes public revenue generation at the local level difficult. Good existing work on state constitutional reform must be expanded. There is also a tremendous opportunity and need to support leadership networks between individuals in nonprofits, as well as among the organizations themselves. Specifically, policy advocacy capacity and community organizing is weak in the Gulf Coast section of the state. While direct service groups exist, there are few indigenous ones with the resource support to strengthen and develop their case management and strategic analysis capacities.

- In Georgia, civic engagement, innovative economic development and state-wide policy work can and should be a primary source for investment. While strong groups exist in Atlanta, including important alliance work on issues like living wages, there appears to be a need for capacity outside of Atlanta. Organizing and advocacy are particularly weak outside of Atlanta.
- In Louisiana it is critical to support new resource generation possibilities for rural, as well as New Orleans, communities that will promote greater independence politically, economically and socially. There is a critical need for more nonprofit community building organizations outside of New Orleans. Investment in both the capacity of the emerging groups and leaderships and stabilizing all existing groups is critical, as is developing a greater set of state-wide relationships between New Orleans and the rest of the state.
- In Mississippi, one of the most notorious states in the South for its racist and oppressive history, there are strong and notable groups.

There is capacity in this Gulf Coast state for civic engagement and community building, but it is small compared to its needs. More support for advocacy capacity on housing and transit issues, as well as for relationships and connections across the state and region (with Louisiana groups, in particular) is critical.

A strong, equitable, sustainable Gulf Coast is possible with thoughtful, patient and determined steps to support local leaders and communities to shape their futures. There are many things that foundations, individual donors and national organizations are doing and can do.

Foundations and individual donors should consider multi-year core support grants, ensuring that they 1) are made to new, emerging organizations; and 2) invest in leadership and collaboration among groups. It is critical that foundations and donors identify emerging women of color leaders, in particular, and support the stabilization of their organizations.

In order to fill gaps in work and capacities, foundations and donors should consider investing in the stabilization and capacity building of existing groups with an interest in gap areas, and not simply the creation of new organizations. Foundations and donors should also identify and support regionally-based intermediaries and organizations that can provide technical assistance, support collaboration and offer other forms of capacity building support to local nonprofits and emerging leaders.

In order to support more effective rebuilding efforts, donors must fund the capacity of groups to collaborate. Funder-driven collaborations rarely work, but funder-incentivized

collaborations can. This requires gathering information from those active in the area to identify the leaders who have a vision and desire for collaboration. Supporting these leaders to develop and execute a strategy for collaborative work, even between organizations not currently funded by the foundation, can be a constructive starting point. It is also critical that donors provide resources for convening those who might collaborate, as well as the ongoing and collaborative efforts born from those convenings. This may be in the form of stipends or out-right grants. What is most critical is that funders not privilege one particular organization, unless it is seen as neutral, trusted and, preferably, not primarily responsible for driving collaboration.

Finally, foundations should invest in national and regional intermediaries and organizations which have methodological approaches to their work and who support and empower local leaders and their capacities.

National and intermediary organizations should actively engage in resource-sharing and other in-kind assistance and support. This should include direct resource sharing, such as including local groups into grant proposals and sharing a portion of received grants with those partners for their priorities. When asking for support, advice or other assistance from local groups, national groups should bring resource information to the table, as well. Finally, national organizations should 1) publicly acknowledge the work of local groups and leaders who have enabled their work and success; 2) include local groups and leaders as partners in work; and 3) invite them to meetings with funders, donors and policy-makers whenever discussing the needs of the region.

## APPENDIX A: CONSULTANT BIOGRAPHIES

### **Cassandra Welchlin**

#### ***Mississippi Delta Region Consultant***

A native Mississippian now living in Jackson, Mississippi, Cassandra Welchlin brings leadership and advocacy experience to this dynamic group of consultants. She is currently working as a legislative advocate at Congregations for Children, where she is developing legislative and lobbying strategies and tracking legislative and policy proposals that impact poor children in Mississippi. Cassandra is also doing consulting work with the Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative: CDF, where she is providing programmatic support and organizing SRBWI and women in rural areas of the south to participate in the US Social Forum. She has previously consulted with Oxfam America, specifically working on the strategic planning for the Mississippi NAACP during their Gulf Coast Reconstruction efforts. Previously, Cassandra worked at Southern Echo as the Resource Developer. Through this work, she developed fundraising plans to build capacity for black-led, black-based grassroots organizations in the MS Delta who engage in community organizing work. Cassandra holds her Masters in Sustainable International Development from Brandeis University and her Bachelors from Jackson State University.

### **Colette Pichon-Battle**

#### ***Louisiana Consultant, Biloxi-Gulfport Mississippi Consultant***

A native of Slidell, Louisiana (located north of New Orleans across Lake Pontchartrain), Colette Pichon-Battle is a dedicated and driven leader in her home region. She is the co-founder and Executive Director of Moving Forward Gulf Coast, Inc., a Louisiana-based

nonprofit that has provided direct disaster assistance, community development programs and community advocacy training in Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina. Colette's demonstrated leadership after Hurricane Katrina impacted communities throughout the Gulf Coast region: she developed direct assistance projects for Katrina survivors, partnered with and supported numerous organizations, and co-convened Operation Gulf Coast, a national coalition of private companies, concerned individuals, faith-based organizations and national nonprofit organizations, all dedicated to identifying the needs of the people of the Gulf Coast and developed programs that matched needs to available responses. Colette obtained her law degree from Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge and has worked in immigration law in Louisiana, Florida, and Washington D.C.

### **Denise Jennings**

#### ***Georgia Consultant***

Denise Jennings brings over thirty years of experience in nonprofit strategic development to this project consulting team. Based in Atlanta, Georgia, she has shown a deep commitment to working with communities in the South and supporting the sustainability of community-based organizations throughout the region. From 2004 to 2006, she worked as the Development Director and Operations Manager of the Southern Partners Fund. Through these positions, she developed and executed the grant-making foundation's strategic fundraising plan. Prior to her time at Southern Partners Fund, Denise worked as the Director of Training and External Affairs at the Mississippi Action for Community Education in Greenville, Mississippi. Denise has also worked as the Executive



Director of Arkansas Clean and Beautiful Commission and as a Program Coordinator at the Foundation for the Mid South. Through her experiences at these organizations and institutions, Denise developed her expertise in strategic development for national and local nonprofit organizations. Denise sits on the board of the Volunteers of America and holds a Bachelor of Arts from Clark Atlanta University.

**Janet Perkins**

***Arkansas Consultant***

Janet Perkins has lived in Arkansas for over 50 years and has long been committed to social justice work in her state. Her leadership experience and dedication to communities in Arkansas is immediately evident in her work experience. For 11 years, Janet served as the Director of the Women's Project, a nonprofit organization based in Little Rock, Arkansas that provides community education and empowers women to find their voices and strengthen their communities; she served as the organization's director from 1991-1998. Janet oversaw and coordinated numerous projects at the Women's Project and coordinated their grant cycles and fundraising. Janet also worked extensively at the Southern Partners Fund, working from 1999 to 2006 as the Program Director and the Interim Executive Director. Through these positions of leadership, she has demonstrated her commitment to supporting community-based organizations and building their capacity. Janet completed the Next Generation Leadership Program through the Rockefeller Foundation. She holds her BA in Sociology from the University of Arkansas and her Masters in Counseling Psychology at the University of Arkansas-Central Arkansas.

**Jessica Norwood**

***Alabama Consultant***

Having grown up in Mobile, Alabama, Jessica Norwood is a committed leader in her state. She is currently the President and Chief Operating Officer of Jubilee Marketing and Distribution, a Mobile-based customized bottled water company, bottled water manager, and clean water advocacy business. Since early 2006, Jessica has also been working as the Mobile Area Director of Saving Our Selves (SOS), a community-based coalition of over 117 groups with historical ties, contacts and interests to low and moderate-income rural communities in the Gulf Coast. Since Hurricane Katrina, SOS has been responsible for repairing over 200 homes, distributing three tons of food, and housing and managing over 2000 volunteers. Jessica was previously named a Community Leadership Fellow from the Center for Healthy Communities at the University of South Alabama, as well as a Social Justice and Politics Fellow from the Hip Hop Archive out of Stanford University. She brings management experience from nonprofits working to increase civic engagement, such as 'The League' organizations in New York. She obtained her Masters in Public Administration from Northern Illinois University.

## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

- 1) Interview and Project Introduction
  - a. Introduction of interviewer, his/her ties to community and role as consultant, CSI, purpose and goals of this project, overview of interview questions
- 2) Interviewee Background and Organization Background
  - a. Background information about interviewee
    - i. ties to community/work
    - ii. position/role in organization
    - iii. history at organization
  - b. Background information about organization
    - i. What kind of organization is it (501c3, 501c4, neither, etc)? What is the organizational structure?
    - ii. When was the organization founded? How has it grown over time?
    - iii. What is the organization's mission statement?
    - iv. What work was the organization doing prior to Hurricane Katrina (if any)?
    - v. Did Katrina affect the organization's mission and work? How so?
    - vi. What work is the organization doing now around rebuilding/responding to the 2005 hurricane season?
- 3) Broad Organizational Capacity Questions
  - a. What does the organization do well? (examples)
  - b. How does the organization measure success?
  - c. What challenges does the organization face to doing its work effectively? (examples)
  - d. Are there specific or general ways in which the organization seeks to develop leadership among its staff/members? What types of opportunities would enable that to happen?
- 4) Basic Capacity Questions
  - a. Does the organization have adequate office space?
  - b. Do the organization lease/share/own its office space? Is it affordable?
  - c. What is the organization's budget?
  - d. Where does the organization get its money (how is it funded)?
  - e. What is the staff size?
  - f. How is the staff organized? What types of positions and supervision categories exist in the staff structure?
  - g. What is the division of labor among staff members? What functions/responsibilities are covered by the different positions? (how this question is asked depends on the overall size/structure of the organization)
  - h. Does the organization use consultants? If so, how are they used?
- 5) Community/Local Collaborations
  - i. What does the interviewee think the staff size and capacity should be?
  - j. What would additional staff enable the organization to do/what role would additional staff have?
  - k. If there were resources to hire additional staff, would the organization be able to find the right people with the needed skills? (i.e. are the right people out there and looking for this work?)
- 6) Regional/National Collaborations
  - a. Who does the organization work/collaborate with on a local/community level?
  - b. How does the organization work with these groups?
  - c. Are these collaborations effective? Why or why not? (examples)
  - d. How could these collaborations be more effective?
  - e. Who doesn't the organization work with that the interviewee thinks they should be working with on a local/community level?
  - f. Why isn't the organization working with these folks?
  - g. What would help make these collaborations happen?
  - h. What would be beneficial about these collaborations?
  - i. What would be challenging about these collaborations?
- 7) Organization's Community-Building Work
  - a. Does the interviewee/organization see itself as an advocate for building a healthier, stronger community? If so, how?
    - i. Probes: community organizing, community development work, policy research analysis, legal advocacy, public education, building community participation, unincorporated work done by community leaders...

- b. Why is the interviewee/organization doing this work?
  - c. What makes it difficult for the organization to be able to do this kind of work?
  - d. What needs to happen to make this work go further? What resources/support would help the organization do this work more effectively?
  - e. Does the organization want to do more of this work?
  - f. How does the interviewee/organization define success in this community-building work?
- 8) Organization's Policy Advocacy Work
- a. Does the organization do policy advocacy work? If yes, what type of work?
  - b. Why is the interviewee/organization doing this work?
  - c. What makes it difficult for the organization to be able to do this kind of work?
  - d. What needs to happen to make this work go further? What resources/support would help the organization do this work more effectively?
  - e. Does the organization want to do more of this work?
  - f. How does the interviewee/organization define success in this policy-advocacy work?
- 9) Overall Vision for Community-Building/Policy Advocacy Work
- a. What does the interviewee/organization see as important policy reform work and structural changes that needs to be made to build stronger communities in the region?
  - b. Who, if anyone, is doing this work?
  - c. What are the gaps in this work right now?
  - d. Does the organization want to do this work?
  - e. Does the organization have the potential to do this work? If so, what could the organization do?
  - f. What would it take for the organization to be able to do this?
  - g. What role should local/community groups have in advocating for these changes?
  - h. What role should regional/national groups have in advocating for these changes?
- 10) Players in Community Transformation Work
- a. Who does the interviewee see as the most significant players in transforming communities? (e.g. individuals, organizations, businesses, foundations/ funders, media, etc)
    - i. local/community level
    - ii. regional level
    - iii. national level

- b. Why are they significant players?
  - c. Does the organization/interviewee work with those organizations/people?
  - d. If yes:
    - i. How do they work together?
    - ii. Is it effective? Why or why not?
    - iii. Does the organization want to deepen this work/ collaboration with these groups?
    - iv. How can this happen?
    - v. What are challenges to working with these significant players?
    - vi. How can these 'significant players' help make the organization's policy work more effective?
  - e. If no:
    - i. Why not?
    - ii. Does the organization/interviewee want to work with these organizations/people?
    - iii. Why or why not?
    - iv. If the organization/interviewee does want to work with these groups/people, what would enable that to happen?
  - f. Does the organization/interviewee have political allies with whom it/s/he collaborates? If yes:
    - i. Who are the political allies?
    - ii. How do they work together as allies?
    - iii. Does the interviewee see these collaborations as important/necessary? Why or why not?
    - iv. What is challenging about these collaborations?
- 11) Community Leadership
- a. Who is seen as an 'anchor' organization or individual leader in the community?
  - b. If an individual:
    - i. What is his/her race (how does s/he racially identify)?
    - ii. What is his/her leadership experience in the area?
    - iii. How does s/he lead the community?
  - c. If an organization:
    - i. What is the race of the leadership (ie is it POC-led)? Who is its leadership?
  - d. What makes these organizations/leaders anchors in the community?
  - e. If they are organizations, are the volunteer based or do they receive funding? How does this affect their ability to be an anchor organization/leader in the community?
  - f. Who else should be interviewed for this project?
  - g. Why?

## APPENDIX C: LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED

### **Alabama**

#### **Alabama Arise**

A statewide coalition of 150 organizations, Alabama Arise consists of religious, community, and civic groups committed to improving the lives of low income individuals. Alabama Arise analyzes policies, assembles annual meetings and listening sessions, and engages in lobbying.  
207 Montgomery St. #900  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
(334) 832-9060  
Kimble Forrister, State Coordinator

#### **Alabama Citizens for Constitutional Reform (ACCR)**

ACCR is committed to reforming Alabama's Constitution. It has been advocating for a Constitutional Convention. It works with Alabama Arise, as well as some legislators and other groups and individuals.  
P. O. Box 10746  
Birmingham, AL 35202-0746  
(205) 540-7501  
Pat Siano and Rebecca Jackson of the Foley, AL chapter

#### **Alabama Civil Justice Foundation (ACJF)**

Created by the Alabama Trial Lawyers Association in 1992, ACJF financially supports charitable organizations which remove barriers to a civil and just society for Alabama families and children. It provides financial assistance to charitable organizations serving disadvantaged, disabled, and at risk families and children and provides information and instruction beneficial to individual consumers and the larger community.  
P.O. Box 1549  
Montgomery, AL 36102  
(334) 263-3003  
Sue H. McInnish, Executive Director

#### **Alabama Watch**

Established by Alabama Civil Justice Foundation, it closed its doors on March 2007. Alabama Watch conducted consumer research and education. It also worked on landlord-tenant issues.  
278 Harriet Tubman Road  
Lowndesboro, AL 36752  
(334) 284-0555  
Barbara Evans, Executive Director

#### **Bay Area Women's Coalition (BAWC)**

BAWC serves the Trinity Gardens Community and other communities in Mobile. It provides decent, affordable housing and works for a safer community through community support and services. Through their "Young Nehemiah" program, the Coalition works with 3-19 year-olds on youth leadership.  
1700 Jessie Street  
Mobile, AL 36617  
(251) 457-6867  
Leevones Dubose, Founder

#### **Beloved Community Church**

The Birmingham Beloved Community Church provides support to poor families and hurricane Katrina survivors.  
131 41st Street South  
Birmingham, AL 35222  
(205) 595-6080  
Reverend Angie Wright

#### **Birmingham Urban League (BUL)**

BUL is an affiliate of the National Urban League. It focuses on empowering all racial and ethnic groups, especially African Americans. Its programs include youth development focused on crime reduction and opportunity expansion. BUL also provides housing counseling and workforce development training for youth.  
1229 Third Avenue North  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
(205) 326-0162  
Elaine Jackson, President and CEO

#### **Boat People SOS**

Based in Bayou LaBatre, this organization was founded immediately after Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Its goal is to become a community center. It provides Katrina crisis consulting, English classes and other education programs, job training, financial help, and food distribution. It also work on issues dealing with immigration and education.  
13869 S. Wintzell Avenue  
Bayou La Batre, AL 36509  
(251) 824-7004

#### **Center for Healthy Communities, University of South Alabama (CHC)**

CHC works closely with churches, community groups, schools and health practitioners to eliminate health disparities, help marginalized communities access health care and support individuals to participate in decision making of their health. CHC also seeks to enhance indigenous capacity around issues of race, class, culture and political links with a social justice frame.  
University of South Alabama,  
College of Medicine  
CSAB 104  
307 University Blvd., N.  
Mobile, AL 36688-0002  
(251) 414-8001  
Dr. Harvey White, Director

#### **Democracy Project**

Based in Demopolis and Selma, this organization's mission is to educate and mentor young men from the age of 14 to understand democracy in their own communities. Its programs include trainings in social responsibilities, economic development and entrepreneurship.  
PO Box 2575  
Selma, AL 36702  
(334) 875-5340  
Reverend Lawrence Wofford

#### **Equal Justice Initiative of Alabama (EJI)**

EJI provides legal representation to indigent defendants and prisoners who have been denied fair and just treatment in the legal system. It advocates on race and poverty issues, holds community education events and provides training for attorneys.  
122 Commerce St.  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
(334) 269-1803  
Bryan Stevenson, Executive Director

**Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama (FOCAL)**

FOCAL is a statewide organization whose members are child care providers, parents and individuals interested in child care issues in the state of Alabama. FOCAL provides programs that include leadership development, education and advocacy designed to improve the quality of child care and to develop leadership among parents and child care providers in low-income communities.

3703 Rosa Parks Avenue  
Montgomery, AL 36101-0214  
(334) 262-3456  
Sophia Bracy-Harris, Executive Director

**Greater Birmingham Ministries (GBM)**

GBM is a multi-faith and multi-racial organization that works in solidarity with low-income communities and advocates for healthcare, public transportation, affordable housing, and public education. It also provides direct services to communities and works within an economic justice and social change framework.

2304 12th Avenue North  
Birmingham, AL 35234  
(205) 326-6821  
Scott Douglas, Executive Director

**The Hispanic Interest Coalition of Alabama (HICA!)**

Formed in 1999 by immigrant groups, HICA! provides the Latino community with programs to improve interpretation skills. HICA! created a resource guide and an interpreter network. It also advocates for comprehensive immigration reform at a national level, as well as a local level.

260 F West Valley Avenue  
Birmingham, AL 35219  
(205) 942-5505  
Isabel Rubio, Executive Director

**Lowndes Citizens United for Action (LCUA)**

LCUA is a volunteer organization that organizes Lowndes County residents. Its mission is to improve the quality of life of Lowndes county residents and also it promotes self-determination and environmental justice.

P.O. Box 472  
Hayneville, AL 36040  
(334) 613-7891  
Debra Harris, President

**Mobile Fair Housing Center, Inc. (MFHC)**

Based in Mobile, MFHC advocates for affordable housing in eight counties throughout Alabama. The organization educates the public on fair housing, as well as investigates and enforces fair housing laws in the region. It also provides housing and counseling services.

600 Bel Air Blvd., #112  
Mobile, AL 36606  
(251) 479-1532  
Teresa Foxx Bettis, Executive Director

**Portersville Revival Group (PRG)**

Based in Coden, Alabama, PRG is dedicated to the preservation of the environment in Coden and preserving the culture and history of the area.

955 Downtowner Blvd., Suite 111  
Mobile, AL 36609-5462  
(251) 377-4383  
Barbara Reid, Director

**The Quest for Social Justice (QSJ)**

QSJ works to educate the public on social justice concepts in the Mobile, Alabama area. Its programs are developed under Christian social justice doctrine. It has worked to reform the Alabama Constitution, death penalty laws, and the closing of the US Army School of Americas.

263 Demetropolis Road, Suite 5  
Mobile, AL 36693  
(251) 643-7734  
Dr. Mark Moberg, President

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Youth Leadership Movement**

A volunteer organization, 21<sup>st</sup> Century develops programs to increase leadership in young people. Its mission is to inspire, assist, and empower young people to be strong, skilled, and focused community leaders. Programs include confronting teen pregnancy, drug abuse, unemployment, low self-esteem and crime.

P.O. Box 2516  
Selma, AL 36702  
(334) 874-0065  
Malika Sanders, Director

**UAB Center for Urban Affairs**

Based out of the University of Alabama in Birmingham, the Center for Urban Affairs conducts applied research for foundations and state, local, and federal government to improve the living conditions in Birmingham and the metropolitan area.

1530 3rd Avenue South  
Birmingham AL 35294  
(205) 934-3500  
Dr. Robert Corley, Director

**Arkansas****Advocates for Community and Rural Education (ACRE)**

ACRE's mission is to find solutions to problems facing rural schools in Arkansas. Its programs include leadership training, public education, community development, and issues of justice.

4408 Blankenship Road  
Everton, AR 72633  
(870) 429-6543  
Lavina Grandison, President  
Dorothy Singleton, Vice-President

**African-American Women's Network**

Founded in 2002, this network engages African-American women from the Delta Region in community leadership. Members hold regular meetings, conferences, banquets, discussions groups, and create projects to uplift the community.

108 Palmetto Street  
Dumas, AR 71639  
(870) 382-7913  
Onie Norman

**Arkansas Coalition for Excellence (ACE)**

ACE is a membership organization which works to build capacity of Arkansan nonprofits and improve the quality of life of Arkansans through training, technical assistance and information.

516 W. Pershing Blvd.  
North Little Rock, AR 72114  
(501) 376-4567  
Hunter Phillips Goodman,  
Executive Director

**Arkansas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (ACADP)**

ACADP is a 25-year-old organization composed of individuals, churches, and other working to abolish the death penalty in Arkansas. In 2005, they won a campaign to exempt youth from the death penalty.

29 Westchester Court  
Little Rock, AR 72203  
(501) 868-6480  
David Rickard, Chairman

**Arkansas Hunger Coalition (AHC)**

AHC works to reduce hunger and end malnutrition in Arkansas through advocacy, education and by publicizing successful hunger relief programs.

P.O. Box 451  
Little Rock, AR 72203  
Hope Coulter, Executive Director

**Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation (ALFDC)**

ALFDC is a land-based community economic development organization in Fargo, Arkansas that works to stop land loss through advocacy, education, and development capacity. ALFDC seeks to turn rural communities into growing, safe and economically sustainable places to live.

484 Floyd Brown Drive  
Brinkley, AR 72021  
(870) 734-1140  
Calvin R. King, Sr. Executive Director

**Arkansas Public Policy Panel (APPP)**

Since 1989, APPP has worked on citizen involvement in public policy to improve their lives. APPP helps community members develop an annual legislative agenda affecting low-income Little Rock residents.

1308 West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Little Rock, AR 72201  
(501) 376-7913  
Bill Kopsky, Executive Director

**Black Community Developers (BCD)**

Based in Little Rock, BCD's mission is to improve the quality of life for low income, disadvantaged and at-risk children, youth and families. Programs include youth development, substance abuse prevention, HIV/AIDS prevention, job training, domestic violence prevention, and homelessness and homeownership.

4000 West 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
Little Rock, AR 72204  
(501) 663-9621  
Deborah Bell, Director

**Boys, Girls, Adult Community Development Center (BGACDC)**

Formed by Marvell community members in 1978, BGACDC provides Marvell with social, recreational, educational, health, and housing opportunities.

P.O. Box 1356  
Marvell, AR 72366  
(870) 829-3274  
Beatrice Shelby, Executive Director

**Clark County Citizens United (CCCU)**

CCCU was founded two years ago to help Clark County citizens understand their rights and monitor unfair criminal justice practices.

(501) 442-4785  
Damita Marks, Founder  
David McClelland, Founder

**College of Public Health Community Based Health Programs-University of Arkansas Medical Sciences (CBHP)**

CBHP works to improve the health and well-being of individuals through rural and urban programs to reduce and eliminate health issues. It does so by working to demonstrate a community health model that others can replicate through education, services and community partners.

4301 West Markham Street  
Little Rock, AR 72205  
Freeman McKindra, Instructor  
Carla Sparks, Instructor

**La Casa Health Network**

Latino health professionals and community advocates founded La Casa to improve the health, social conditions, education and the well-being of Latinos in Arkansas. Programs focus on teen pregnancy prevention, English as a second language, tobacco prevention, leadership development and employment assistance.

6911 Geyer Springs Road  
Little Rock, AR 72209  
(501) 664-3500  
Dr. Cesar Compadre,  
President of the Board of Directors

**Promise Land Development Corporation (PLDC)**

An extension of the Promise Land Church Ministries in Little Rock, PLDC focuses on housing, child care, family and individual counseling, literacy, small business development, employment and youth development. Programs focus on education, homeownership, credit repair, job training and placement and after-school programs.

8923 Sunset Lane  
Little Rock, AR 72209  
(501) 570-0048  
Antoine Scruggs, Senior Pastor

**Southern Good Faith Fund (SGFF)**

An affiliate of South Bancorp, SGFF advocates for the asset development of low-income families in the Pine Bluff region. It works for community and economic development in Southern and Eastern Arkansas and the Mississippi Delta. Programs consist of community asset-building, a business development center, job and career training and public policy.

2304 West 29<sup>th</sup> Street  
Pine Bluff, AR 71603  
(807) 535-6233  
Angela Duran, President

**University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service, Center on Community Philanthropy (CCP)**

CCP engages those in public service to define common causes, create inclusive solutions, and build on existing community assets. It organizes convenings, provides scholastic research and conducts workshops on community philanthropy.

1200 President Clinton Avenue  
Little Rock, AR 72201  
(501) 683-5215  
Freddie Webb Petett,  
Founding Director

**Women of Color Lobbying for Social Justice**

Located in the Little Rock region, this volunteer-based grassroots organization provides a safe space for community members and develops the leadership capacity of women of color. It also advocates on behalf of HIV/AIDS prevention and domestic violence.

1923 South Summit Street  
Little Rock, AR 72202  
(501) 372-5113  
Damita Marks, Founder

## **Georgia**

### **Atlanta Living Wage Coalition**

Formed by community and faith-based organizations striving to increase the minimum wage in Georgia through town hall meetings and press conferences, the coalition encourages community empowerment and education.

9 Gammon Avenue  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
(404) 222-0037  
Cindia Cameron,  
Founder and Co-Chair

### **Center for Democratic Renewal (CDR)**

CDR strives to advance a more democratic, diverse and just society that is free of racism and bigotry. This multi-racial organization has assisted community-based initiatives respond to hate by collecting data, documenting incidents, and serving as a catalyst for public policy initiatives. It also established the National Southern Coalition Against Racism and Bigotry.

P.O. Box 50469  
Atlanta, GA 30302  
(404) 221-0025  
Beni Ivy, Executive Director

### **The Esther Project**

The project is a grassroots community-based organization that addressed the needs of women in poverty, it is no longer in operation.

210 Monroe Street  
Darien, GA 31305  
Lauretta Sams, Executive Director

### **Faith in the City at the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC)**

Serving the Atlanta metropolitan region, ITC encourages communities to bring moral dimensions to community conversations. It offers youth guidance and leadership skills training. ITC also engages in policy advocacy by partnering with Georgia State University Young School of Public Policy to counsel community leaders on policies affecting them.

100 Edgwood Avenue, Suite 812  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
(404) 523-5554  
Dr. Marion Burnett, M.D., Director

### **Federation of Southern Cooperatives**

A 30-year-old association serving predominantly African American family farmers, the Federation provides programs that increase income and enhance opportunities. Programs include leadership development through organizing self-help community groups, education on issues and policies, and technical support to farmers. It also advocates for change in public policy affecting family farmers and rural poor by increasing housing opportunities and environmental justice.

2769 Church Street  
East Point, GA 30316  
(404) 765-0991  
Ralph Paige, Executive Director  
Jackie Ward, Program Manager

### **Fund for Southern Communities (FSC)**

FSC is a public foundation that supports organizations and donors working towards sustainable communities in Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina. It directs funds and provides technical assistance to community-based groups working in environmental justice, racial justice, women's rights, civil rights and disability rights.

315 Ponce de Leon, Suite 1061  
Atlanta, GA 30314  
(404) 371-8404  
Alice Jenkins, Executive Director

### **Georgia Citizens Coalition on Hunger (GCCH)**

A statewide network of grassroots organizations, GCCH works with urban and rural communities in Georgia on nutritious and affordable food, safe and affordable housing, affordable healthcare and a quality education. It engages in economic and political education, leadership development, legislative advocacy and community organizing support. It has also created an outdoor farmers' market, organic gardens, a hunger hotline and a thrift shop.

9 Gammon Avenue  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
(404) 622-7778  
Sandra Robinson, Executive Director

### **Georgia Stand Up (Stand Up)**

An alliance formed by labor, community, and faith organizations, Stand Up is a "Policy Think and Act tank for working communities."

It promotes economic justice by organizing impacted communities, providing grassroots leadership training, engaging in community participatory research and policy analysis, and creating campaigns around economic development projects.

501 Pulliam Street, SW #500  
Atlanta, Georgia 30312  
Deborah Scott, Executive Director

### **JD Lewis, Community Activist**

Joe "Seyoum" Lewis is affiliated with J.D. Lewis and Associates and the Peoples Institute for Survival and Beyond. He promotes and facilitates the creation of new community leaders with programs that focus on undoing racism, strategic planning, board development for affiliated groups and financial planning. Mr. Lewis is also involved in post hurricane Katrina policy advocacy.

2712 Neptune Place  
Decatur, GA 30034  
(404) 247-2872

### **New Town Florist Club**

Founded by African American housewives in Gainesville, Georgia as a social service club, the Club is an environmental and racial justice organization. Activities include lobbying, public education, and toxicity testing. It is also developing a land trust to buy homes for low-income residents.

P.O. Box 3457  
Gainesville, GA 30358  
(770) 718-0343  
Faye Bush, Executive Director

### **Political Action Committee (PAC)**

Based in Sylvania, PAC is a policy advocacy organization ensuring civic engagement in the public decision making process. Programs include leadership development, civic education on local, regional, and national issues and public school reform.

(912) 829-4785  
Karen Watson, Executive Director

**Project South (PS)**

PS is a community-driven organization that develops and conducts popular political and economic education and organizing. Its work includes leadership development, youth leadership, economic justice and public education.  
9 Gammon Avenue  
Atlanta, GA 30315  
(404) 622-0602  
Jerome Scott, Founder and Director

**Saving Our Selves (SOS)**

SOS is a coalition formed to provide relief, restoration and community rebuilding support to the Gulf Coast region. It focuses on leadership and capacity development on health care, affordable housing, education, sustainable jobs and a safe environment.  
501 Pulliam Avenue, Suite 545  
Atlanta, GA 30312  
(404) 586-9860  
LaTosha Brown, Executive Director

**Southern Education Foundation, Inc. (SEF)**

SEF is a public foundation that develops, promotes and implements policy practices that use education to combat poverty and inequality. Its engages in research, analysis, advocacy, technical assistance and outreach. SEF also provides grants to small community organizations and projects that empower people to participate in education reform in the south.  
135 Auburn Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
(404) 523-0001  
Steve Suitts, Program Coordinator  
Lauren Veasey,  
Associate Program Officer

**Louisiana****Advocates for Environmental Human Rights (AEHR)**

AEHR works to defend and advance the human right to a healthy environment by providing legal services, community organizing support, public education and advocacy leadership.  
650 Poydras Street, Suite 2523  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
(504) 799-3060  
Monique Harden and Nathalie Walker,  
Co-Directors

**Agenda for Children (AGC)**

A statewide advocacy organization, AGC tracks laws and policies affecting children and families, and provides information, training, resources and technical assistance to organizations working to meet basic needs of children and families. Its' focus is on childcare and early education advocacy.  
1720 St. Charles Avenue  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
1-800-486-1712  
Judy Watts, President and CEO

**African American Leadership Project (AALP)**

AALP is an all-volunteer organization that brings together organizations and leaders to build a political agenda in the interest of the African-American community. It organizes convenings and engages in research, information gathering and policy development.  
(713) 376-3364  
Mtangulizi Sanyika, Project Manager

**All Congregations Together (ACT)**

A New Orleans PICO affiliate, ACT is a faith-based community organization. ACT organizes individuals and families through congregations in New Orleans on housing, education, crime and environmental issues.  
2301 Gallier Street  
New Orleans, LA 70117  
(504) 495-5338  
Mary Croom-Fontenot, Executive Director  
Interviewed: Jacquie Jones-Soule

**Ashé Cultural Arts Center**

Ashé is a community-based center that advocates for culture, community and justice. It presents multi-disciplinary cultural art throughout New Orleans to inform community members, policy makers, and business leaders. The Center also supports and assists New Orleans' artists to rebuild their careers and lives.

1712 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd  
New Orleans, LA 70113  
(504) 569-9070  
Carol Bebelles,  
Owner and Executive Director

**Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)**

ACORN is a membership-based organization that organizes New Orleans residents, particularly in the Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward, to fight for their right to return to their communities. They work to preserve housing by advocating for residents' housing rights and just rebuilding policies.  
1024 Elysian Fields Ave.  
New Orleans, LA 70117  
(504) 943-0044  
Beth Butler, Director

**Critical Resistance New Orleans (CR)**

CR provides direct support and communication to prisoners and their family members in New Orleans. It also works to rebuild and reunite neighborhoods, initiate media strategy to deconstruct the Prison Industrial Complex, and publicize the current state of prisoners and policing in New Orleans.  
930 N. Broad St.  
New Orleans, LA 70119  
(504) 304-3784  
Robert Horton,  
Louisiana Lead Organizer

**Common Ground Collective (CGC)**

A volunteer-run organization established in 2005, CGC provides direct assistance to residents in house gutting, food distribution, bioremediation of toxic soil, medical service provision and the development of environmentally sustainable and affordable temporary housing.  
215 Jefferson Davis Parkway  
New Orleans, LA 70119  
(504) 483-2145  
Sakura Kone, Media Coordinator

**Common Ground Health Clinic (CGHC)**

CGHC handles many of the day-to-day health issues faced by residents of Algiers and the surrounding communities. CGHC is almost entirely volunteer run and focuses particularly on community outreach in its health care work.  
1400 Teche St.  
New Orleans, LA 70114  
(504) 361-9800  
Greg Griffin, Legal Liaison, Organizer  
Ravi Vadlamudi, M.D., Medical Director



**Deep South Center for Environmental Justice**

The Center provides community, worker and teacher trainings on environmental justice education. It also provides technical assistance for community residents and organizations along the Gulf Coast to address environmental justice.  
2601 Gentilly Blvd.  
New Orleans, LA 70122  
(504) 816-4005  
Dr. Beverly Wright,  
Founder and Director

**Families and Friends of Louisiana's Incarcerated Children (FFLIC)**

FFLIC is a statewide membership-based organization dedicated to creating a better life for all of Louisiana's youth. It advocates for an increase in community-based services, calls for a new juvenile and adult indigent defense office and fights to close several youth detention centers.  
1600 Oretha C. Haley Blvd.  
New Orleans, LA 70113  
(504) 522-5437  
Gina Womack,  
Co-Director and Co-Founder  
Interviewed: Xochitl Bervera,  
Co-Director

**Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center (GNOFHAC)**

GNOFHAC is a civil rights organization that works to eradicate housing discrimination in the New Orleans area. It investigates discrimination claims, insurance adjuster discrimination and rental, purchase and lending discrimination and litigates discrimination cases.  
228 St. Charles Avenue, Suite 1035  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
(504) 596-2100  
James Perry, Executive Director

**Greater New Orleans Foundation (GNOF)**

GNOF is a community foundation governed by citizens that brings resources to organizations addressing important community needs. Its focus areas include community revitalization and housing, education, and workforce development.  
1055 St. Charles Ave, Suite 100  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
(504) 598-4663  
Gregory Ben Johnson, President and CEO

**Hands Off Iberville Coalition (HOIC)**

A public housing coalition in New Orleans, HOIC organizes and advocates for the return of public housing residents to their homes. It also organizes eviction protection for renters.  
(504) 520-9521  
Delena Moss,  
Iberville Resident and Leader

**Jeremiah Group (of the Louisiana Industrial Areas Foundation)**

A consortium of local churches that has been organizing and advocating for housing, education, voting and employment in New Orleans for 12 years, Jeremiah has expanded its work post-Katrina to also address the homebuilding and homeownership needs of its members.  
2028 Paxton St.  
Harvey, LA 70058  
(504) 328-1784  
Jacquelyn Jones, Lead Organizer

**Louisiana Bucket Brigade (LBB)**

LBB works for environmental health and justice for communities that neighbor Louisiana's oil refineries and chemical plants. LBB calls for an accurate account of released toxins by industries and toxin monitoring from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.  
4226 Canal St.  
New Orleans, LA 70119  
(504) 484-3433  
Anne Rolfe, Executive Director  
Interviewed: Elodia Blanco,  
Lead Community Organizer

**Louisiana Environmental Action Network (LEAN)**

LEAN is a statewide network of organizations and individuals working for a cleaner and healthier environment. It supports grassroots organizations statewide that are engaged in environmental issues.  
P.O. Box 66323  
Baton Rouge, LA 70896  
(225) 928-1315  
Marylee Orr, Executive Director

**Lower Ninth Ward Neighborhood Empowerment Network Association (NENA)**

NENA is a resident organized and controlled community assembly that gives residents of the Lower Ninth Ward a role in the neighborhood's redevelopment. Programs include financial planning and housing assistance, workforce development, and

a Neighborhood Captain Program to help residents return and rebuild.  
1120 Lamanche St.  
New Orleans, LA 70117  
(504) 373-6483  
Patricia Jones, Executive Director

**Mary Queen of Vietnam Community Development Corporation (MQVN CDC)**

Launched after Hurricane Katrina, MQVN CDC engages in community development in the Vietnamese community of New Orleans East. With support from the National Alliance of Vietnamese-American Service Agencies, it organizes planning sessions, clean-ups, social groups and community dialogues to develop a long-term vision for the Vietnamese community.  
4626 Alcee Fortier Blvd.,  
New Orleans, LA 70129  
(504) 255-9170  
Mary Tran, Executive Director

**Matchmakers for Justice/Student Hurricane Network**

This is a pilot project of the Student Hurricane Network (a national association of law students and administrators dedicated to providing long-term assistance to hurricane-affected communities). It connects displaced residents with legal resources by pairing law students with displaced residents and providing ongoing legal support to secure jobs, education, health care, and housing.  
(202) 486-2776  
Morgan Williams,  
Co-Founder and Lead Organizer

**Moving Forward Gulf Coast (MFGC)**

Based in Slidell, MFGC provides volunteer-based relief to residents throughout the Gulf Coast and is developing a video advocacy project.  
P. O. Box 3245  
Slidell, LA 70459-3245  
(985) 643-6186  
Trupania Bonner, Executive Director

**NAACP, East St. Tammany Chapter**

The NAACP is a national organization that works for the political, educational, social and economic rights of all persons through community initiatives, research and public education. The East St. Tammany Chapter is one of its local affiliates and meets monthly at various community churches.  
(228) 533-9976  
Rev. Frederick Fields, President

**NAACP Gulf Coast Advocacy Center**

The Advocacy Center provided legal assistance and representation and hosted community forums. The Center is no longer in operation.

Tracie Washington, Former Director of the NAACP Gulf Coast Advocacy Center can be reached at:

The Louisiana Justice Institute  
1631 Elysian Fields Ave.  
New Orleans, LA 70117  
(504) 304-7947

**National Immigration Law Center (NILC)**

NILC is a national organization with a field coordinator in New Orleans who collaborated closely with the New Orleans Worker Center for Racial Justice and other organizing groups. NILC provided groups with policy advocacy support and technical assistance on immigration issues.

3435 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 2850  
Los Angeles, CA 90010  
(213) 639-3900

Linton Joaquin, Executive Director  
Interviewed: Rosana Cruz,  
Field Organizer

**Neighborhood Development Foundation (NDF)**

NDF promotes homeownership in New Orleans by conducting homebuyer education trainings, facilitating mortgage acquisition, developing curriculum for landlords and providing finance counseling.

220 Camps Street, Suite 532  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
(504) 592-8740

Rosalyn Peychaud, Director

**Neighborhood Empowerment Network Association (NENA)**

A community-based organization working in the Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward, NENA is led by Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward residents to provide direct assistance to community residents rebuilding their lives after the hurricanes.

P.O. Box 771039  
New Orleans, LA 70177-1039  
(504) 319-9666

Patricia Jones, Executive Director

**Neighborhood Housing Services of New Orleans (NHS)**

NHS supports low-income homeowners by providing technical assistance on construction, insurance and construction management. NHS also provides technical assistance to Louisiana homeowners with FEMA-related claims and insurance claims and problems with mortgage lenders and general contractors.

4700 Freret Street  
New Orleans, LA 70115  
(504) 899-5900

Ron Usner,

Homeownership Center Manager

**Neighborhoods' Planning Network (NPN)**

NPN provides an inclusive and collaborative city-wide framework to empower neighborhood groups in the New Orleans planning process. It does this through organizing meetings and events and leveraging expertise for community use.

Nathan Shroyer, Interim Executive Director

**New Orleans Food and Farm Network (NOFFN)**

NOFFN works with individuals, growers and communities to support sustainable growth practices and ensure equal access to safe, nutritious and enjoyable food. NOFFN works to help returning residents, particularly in hard-hit areas, find food in their neighborhoods.

P.O. Box 13185  
New Orleans, LA 70185-3185  
(504) 864-2009  
Marilyn Yank, Executive Director

**New Orleans Legal Assistance Corporation (NOLAC)**

NOLAC provides free legal aid to low-income people facing civil legal issues and predatory home loans. They also provide legal assistance to ensure the preservation of New Orleans' affordable housing and prevent rental unit evictions by private landlords.

1010 Common Street  
Annex Building, Suite 1400A  
New Orleans, LA 70112  
(504) 529-1000

Laura Tuggle, Managing Attorney for Housing Law Project

Interviewed: Morgan Williams,  
Law Clerk

**New Orleans Neighborhood Development Collaborative (NONDC)**

NONDC is a coalition of organizations that provides information updates on policy proposals to rebuild housing in New Orleans. It also supports first-time homebuyers and develops models for homeownership-based asset building.

1055 St. Charles Ave, Suite 120  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
(504) 524-3919

Lucinda Flowers, Public Policy and Advocacy

**New Orleans Network (NON)**

NON maintains [www.neworleansnetwork.org](http://www.neworleansnetwork.org),

a community website that contains information about organizations, a community calendar, and community announcements in order to facilitate communication and network building among groups.

(504) 473-9515  
Aesha Rasheed

**New Orleans Worker Center for Racial Justice (NOWCRJ)**

Recognizing the connection of African-Americans exclusion and immigrant exploitation, NOWCRJ organizes residents in FEMA parks in Baker and Baton Rouge, immigrant day laborers and H2B temporary visa workers in Louisiana to fight for racial justice.

(504) 363-1108  
Saket Soni, Executive Director  
Interviewed: Rosana Cruz

**New Orleans Worker Resource Center (WRC)**

WRC provides workers with training and placement in the construction and healthcare sectors so that workers earn a living wage, gain access to health benefits and form a vital base for comprehensive, community informed rebuilding.

3500 Canal Street  
New Orleans, LA 70119  
(504) 309-1776  
Jeffrey Lerner, Director

**Operation Reach**

Operation Reach works to improve the academic performance of students in grades K-12 in New Orleans by providing technical knowledge and resources to community organizations that run youth programs. One such program is the Gulf South Summer Youth Action Corps—a national network of college students dedicated to inspiring and educating New Orleans' children.

1600 Constance St., Suite G-209  
New Orleans, LA 70130

(504) 529-1922

Dr. Kyshun Webster, President and CEO

**People's Hurricane Relief Fund and Oversight Coalition (PHRF)**

PHRF organizes residents in New Orleans and in diaspora to build political coalitions aimed at winning the demands of Katrina survivors, specifically around the survivors' right to return home. PHRF also calls for an International Tribunal to address the human rights violations committed against Hurricane Katrina survivors.

1418 N. Claiborne Ave.

New Orleans, LA 70116

(504) 301-0215

Kali Akuno, Executive Director

Interviewed: Malcolm Suber,  
National Organizing Coordinator

**People's Institute for Survival and Beyond**

The People's Institute does anti-racist grassroots organizing and education. It provides "Undoing Racism" and Community Organizing workshops for other groups. It also provides technical assistance and consultation to groups interested in addressing root causes of racism.

601 N. Carrollton

New Orleans, LA 70119

(504) 301-9292

Ron Chisom, Executive Director

**People's Organizing Committee (POC)**

POC organizes and supports Survivors Councils that are made up of displaced or disenfranchised residents of New Orleans. It organizes individuals to advocate for the right to return home and against the destruction of public housing units.

2226 Ursulines

New Orleans, LA 70119

(504) 872-9591

Ishmael Muhammad, Staff Attorney

**PICO Louisiana Inter-Faiths Together (PICO LIFT)**

Along with churches across the state, PICO LIFT advocates for policies that support displaced residents. It lobbies for funds to restore levees and housing and encourages members to participate in legislative hearings.

4550 North Blvd.

Baton Rouge, LA 70806

(225) 248-9595

Jennifer Jones-Bridgett, Executive

Director of PICO LIFT

Mary Fontenot, member and Executive

Director of All Congregations Together (ACT)

**Safe Streets Strong Communities (SSSC)**

SSSC is a community-driven organization working to transform the criminal justice system by reducing police brutality, eliminating unconstitutional and inhumane conditions in prisons, promoting transparency and improving the indigent defense system in New Orleans.

1600 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd.

New Orleans, LA 70113

(504) 522-3949

Norris Henderson, Co-Director

**Southern Mutual Help Association (SMHA)**

SMHA is a rural development organization working primarily with agricultural and poor communities, women and people of color. Through its Rural Recovery Response program, SMHA provides direct relief and trainings to hurricane-affected communities. It also identifies policies that facilitate just rebuilding and advocates for housing and CDBG funding on behalf of rural businesses and families.

3602 Old Jeanerette Road

New Iberia, LA 70563

(337) 367-3277

Lorna Bourg, President and Executive Director

Interviewed: Kate Barron, Community Outreach

**Survivors Village**

Public housing residents affected by hurricanes in New Orleans formed the Village to fight for federal approaches to rebuilding and housing policy to reopen public housing complexes in their communities.

(504) 239-2907

Sharon Jasper, Lead Organizer

**United Houma National Relief Fund**

The Houma Nation created the Fund to provide direct relief to people of the Houma Nation, who were especially hard-hit by the storms. One program trains women in non-traditional work roles to rebuild structures affected by the hurricanes.

20986 Highway 1

Golden Meadow, LA 70357

(985) 537-8867

Brenda Dar Dar Robichaux,

Principal Chief

**UNITY of Greater New Orleans (UNITY)**

A collaborative of 60 nonprofits and governmental agencies, UNITY works to end homelessness and bring displaced residents home. They provide services to homeless families and individuals, advocate for public policies that allow residents to rebuild their lives, and work to prevent new homelessness.

2475 Canal Street, Suite 300

New Orleans, LA 70119

(504) 821-4496

Martha Kegel, Executive Director

## **Mississippi**

### **Action Communication & Education Reform (ACER)**

ACER was formed in 1997 to engage parents, students and the community in the fight for a better quality of education for poor and African American families. It works to support an intergenerational model that engages civic participation, develops youth leadership and creates intergenerational programs in cultural arts and multi-media justice.

306 Main Street  
Duck Hill, MS 38925  
(662) 565-7004

Al White,  
Co-Founder and Executive Director

### **An Outreach of Love**

An Outreach of Love is a grassroots organization formed after Hurricane Katrina. It started by serving areas like Moss Point and Escatawpa, MS that were devastated by the hurricane but not receiving funds to serve those in need.

P.O. Box 1292  
Ocean Springs, MS 39566  
(248) 390-3392  
Cynthia Seawright Wright, Founder

### **Back Bay Mission**

Founded in 1922 as an outreach effort of the First Evangelical Church of Biloxi, the Mission responds to the needs of marginalized communities. With work teams from across the country, it provides services such as legal aid, health care and family counseling to poor families in the area.

1012 Division Street  
Biloxi, MS 39530  
(228) 432-0301  
Sharon Kay Prestemon,  
Executive Director

### **Boat People S.O.S.**

A national organization with a branch in Biloxi, Boat People SOS assists Vietnamese refugees and immigrants by empowering, equipping and organizing them. Some of their programs include community organizing, disaster relief and recovery, and youth empowerment.

833 Vieux Marche Mall  
Biloxi, MS 395530  
(228) 436-9999  
Thou Vu, Branch Manager

### **Coastal Women for Change**

Created after Hurricane Katrina, this East Biloxi-based organization fights for issues that affect the elderly and youth by providing awareness and organizing the community. It is a multi-racial organization.

336 Rodenburg Avenue  
Biloxi, MS 39531  
(228) 297-4849  
Sharon Hanshaw, Executive Director

### **Concerned Citizens for A Better Tunica County, Inc.**

Concerned Citizens empowers disadvantaged, low-income community members in Tunica County. It uses an intergenerational model of grassroots leadership and organizational development that affect decisions in the educational, economic, political, environmental, and social change systems of the county.

1028 Prichard Road  
Tunica, MS 38676  
(662) 363-6059  
Marilyn L. Young, Youth Director

### **Delta Citizens Alliance (DCA)**

Formed in 2006, DCA is a network of citizens and organizations in three states in the Delta region formed to improve the quality of life in these communities. It builds leadership capacity for sustainable communities.

P.O. Box 5335  
Greenville, MS 38704-5335  
(662) 334-9940  
Larry Williams,  
Co-Founder and Executive Director

### **Delta State Institute for Community-Based Research (ICBR)**

ICBR is an applied research institute in partnership with the Division of Social Science and the Center for Community and Economic Development at the Delta State University. Its focuses disaster relief; environmental, health and food security; underemployment and persistent poverty. ICBR's partners with community groups to meet their research needs, develop their capacity, link them with other organizations or institutions and to develop and strengthen research.

Delta State University  
P.O. Box 3264  
Cleveland, MS 38733  
(662) 846-4069  
John Green, Co-Founder and Director  
Al Edwards, Co-Founder

### **Enterprise Corporation for the Delta (ECD)**

ECD is an intermediary organization that works to bring resources to low income communities in the Mid South region by providing grants and loans to community organizations. It has also established the Hope Credit Union. By providing direct services and financial products, ECD aims to build assets in the region it serves.

4 Old River Place  
Jackson, MS 39202  
(601) 944-1100  
Ed Sivak, Director of Mississippi  
Economic Policy Center

### **Greater Mt. Olive AME Church**

The AME Church's mission is to minister to spiritual, intellectual, physical, and emotional needs through gospel and deed.

16223 3rd St.  
Pearlington, MS 39572  
(228) 533-9976  
Rev. Frederick Fields

### **Gulf Coast Fair Housing Action Center (GCFHA)**

Formed by The National Fair Housing Alliance and concerned Gulf Coast citizens, GCFHAC works to eliminate housing discrimination and promote equal housing opportunities. It engages in education, advocacy and enforcement of fair housing laws.

15105 Lemoyne Blvd., Suite A-1  
Biloxi, MS 39532  
(228) 396-4008  
James Perry, Executive Director

### **Gulf Coast Latin American Association (LAL)**

LAL facilitates the integration of Latinos into the local community. It also promotes cultural diversity in the Biloxi area.

983 Howard Avenue  
Biloxi, MS 39530  
(228) 374-2379  
Andy Guerra, President

### **HEGA**

HEGA stands for three small towns in the Mississippi Delta: Hollandale, Elizabeth & Glenn Allen. HEGA works with the Mississippi Department and Transportation and others to provide "community transportation," that also builds internal capacity and creates jobs for residents.

81317 East Avenue North  
Hollandale, MS 38748  
(662) 827-0777  
Lucius McRunnels, Executive Director

**Legislative Black Caucus**

The caucus consists of African American state legislators drafting and fighting for legislation that will improve and provide resources to under-represented communities. Past programs for the community include a scholarship fund and a tutorial program.

P.O. Box 1018  
Jackson, MS 39215  
(601) 359-2422  
Representative Reecy Dickson,  
Chairperson

**Mississippi Center for Justice (MCJ)**

MCJ is a public interest law firm committed to advancing racial and economic justice by re-establishing in-state advocacy on behalf of low-income people and communities of color. MCJ combats discrimination and poverty in the state through the work of civil rights advocates, attorneys, and social service advocates.

P. O. Box 1023  
Jackson, MS 39215-1023  
(601) 352-2269  
Martha Bergmark, President & CEO  
Reilly Morse, Lawyer to Katrina  
Recovery Office

**Mississippi Coast Interfaith Disaster Task Force (IDTF)**

Established in 1980 in response to hurricanes affecting the state, IDTF works to provide information, capacity building, material and financial support to organizations involved in disaster relief and recovery.

610 Water Street  
Biloxi, MS 39530  
(228) 432-9310  
Roberta Avila, Executive Director

**Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance (MIRA)**

MIRA is a coalition of over 350 immigrant and non-immigrant groups dedicated to immigrant rights in the state. It advocates for legislation and policy change at all levels of government and aggressively defends the rights of all immigrants who seek justice and dignity where they work and where they live.

178 Main Street,  
Biloxi, MS 29530  
(228) 386-5164  
Victoria Cintra,  
Organizing Coordinator

**Mississippi Low-Income Childcare Initiative (MLICCI)**

MLICCI is a statewide organization of parents, providers and community leaders dedicated to improved child care policies for low income families. It provides technical assistance and resources for low-income child care providers, research on child care policy and advocacy.

P.O. Box 204  
Biloxi, MS 39533-0204  
(228) 669-4827  
Carol Burnett, Executive Director

**Mississippi State Conference NAACP**

This state chapter of the NAACP advocates for affordable housing and public education for people of color and low-income people.

1072 W. Lynch Street  
Jackson, MS 39203  
(601) 353-6906  
Derrick Johnson, President

**Mississippi Youth Justice Project (MYJP)**

Based in Jackson, MYJP promotes community organizing to ensure youth justice and improve the education system in Mississippi. It engages in legal representation and advocacy.

753 N. Congress Street  
Jackson, MS 39286  
(601) 948-8882  
Sheila Bedi, Co-Founder

**Parents for Public Schools of Jackson (PPSJ)**

PPSJ strives to strengthen public schools through broad-based enrollment. It believes that a quality education is vital to the future of American democracy and works towards that at a local, district level.

3252 North State Street  
Jackson, MS 39216  
(601) 713-1633  
Susan Womack, Executive Director

**Quitman County Development Organization (QCDO)**

QCDO has provided social, economic, and financial services to low income communities in the state for the past 30 years. Programs include housing assistance, micro-enterprise development and loans, youth programs and child care.

201 Humphrey Street  
Marks, MS 38646  
(662) 326-4000  
Senator Robert Jackson,  
Executive Director

**STEPS Coalition**

This is a coalition of over 25 groups fighting for the just allocation of resources in rebuilding South Mississippi. It advocates for the development of fair and affordable housing, community continuity, economic redevelopment, the balance of growth with environmental justice, and the humane treatment of all south Mississippi residents.

P.O. Box 2361  
Gulfport, MS 39505  
(228) 596-7438  
Melinda Harthcock, Executive Director

**Saving Our Selves (SOS), Mississippi**

SOS is a coalition formed to provide relief, restoration and community rebuilding support to the Gulf Coast region in response to needs of Black hurricane survivors. It focuses on leadership and capacity development on health care, affordable housing, education, sustainable jobs and a safe environment.

LaTosha Brown, Executive Director

**Southern Echo, Inc.**

This organization empowers low-income African American families in Mississippi and the southeast region by providing community organizing skills and tools. Its activities include training, technical assistance and legal assistance to affect public education, community planning and environmental justice, among other issues.

P.O. Box 9306  
Jackson, MS 39286  
(601) 982-6400  
Leroy Johnson, Executive Director  
Brenda Hyde, Assistant Director  
Hollis Watkins, Founder and President

**Turkey Creek Community Initiative (TCCI)**

TCCI is a community development corporation engaged in the comprehensive revitalization of coastal Mississippi's low-income, historic, and environmentally challenged Turkey Creek community and watershed. It aims to do this by modeling sustainable coastal and urban development that integrates preservation and restoration with environmental justice for all-regardless of race or class.

14439 Libby Rd  
Gulfport, MS 39503  
(228) 863-0099  
Derrick Evans, Founder and Director

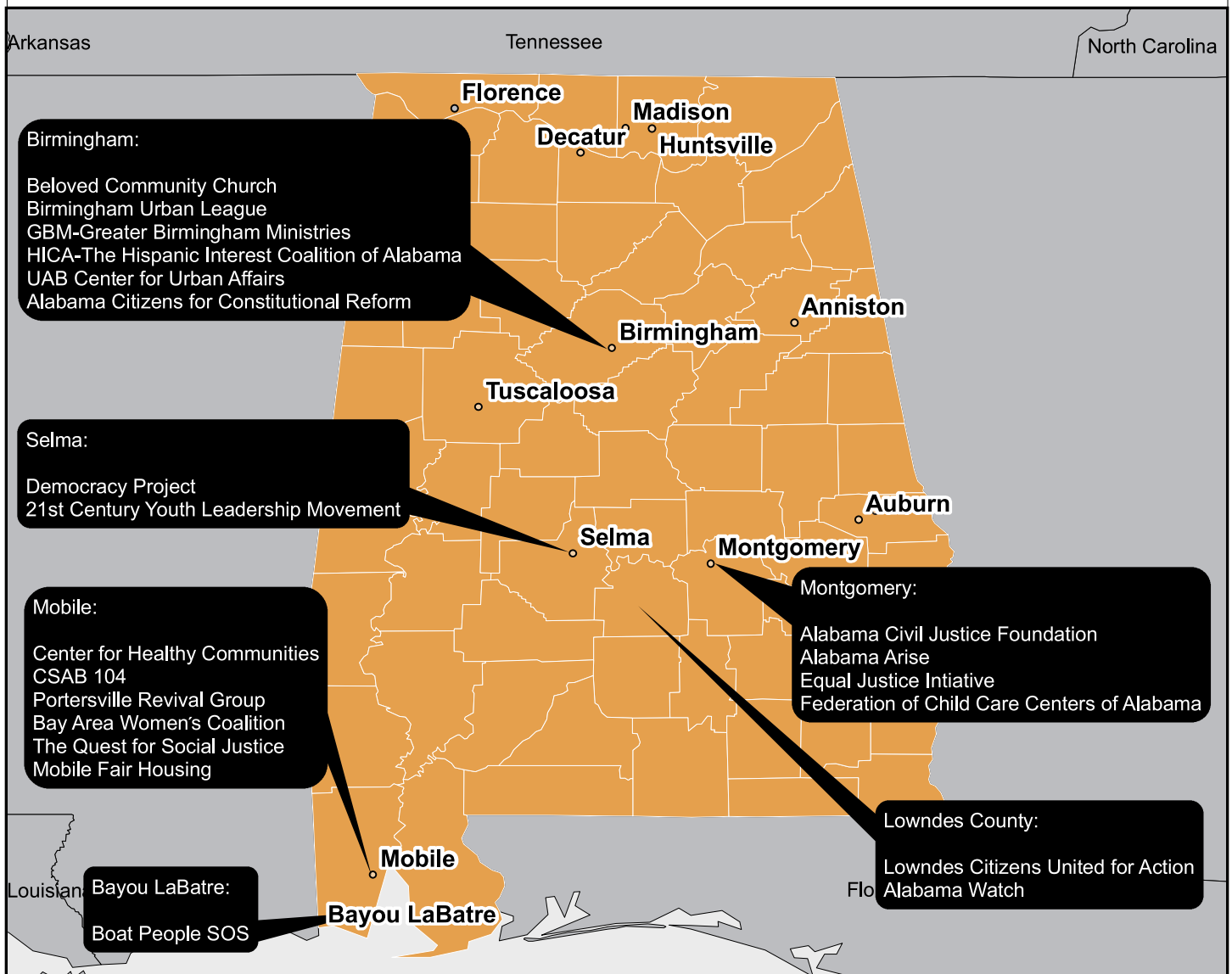
**Young People's Project (YPPA)**

YPPA connects Katrina survivors with youth through education, expression, and interaction. It hosted high school and college students who visited cities where Hurricane Katrina survivors were living. In partnership with local and national community based organizations and learning institutions, students identified evacuees and the cities in which they were, developed curriculum, conducted workshops for other young people and documented their experience.

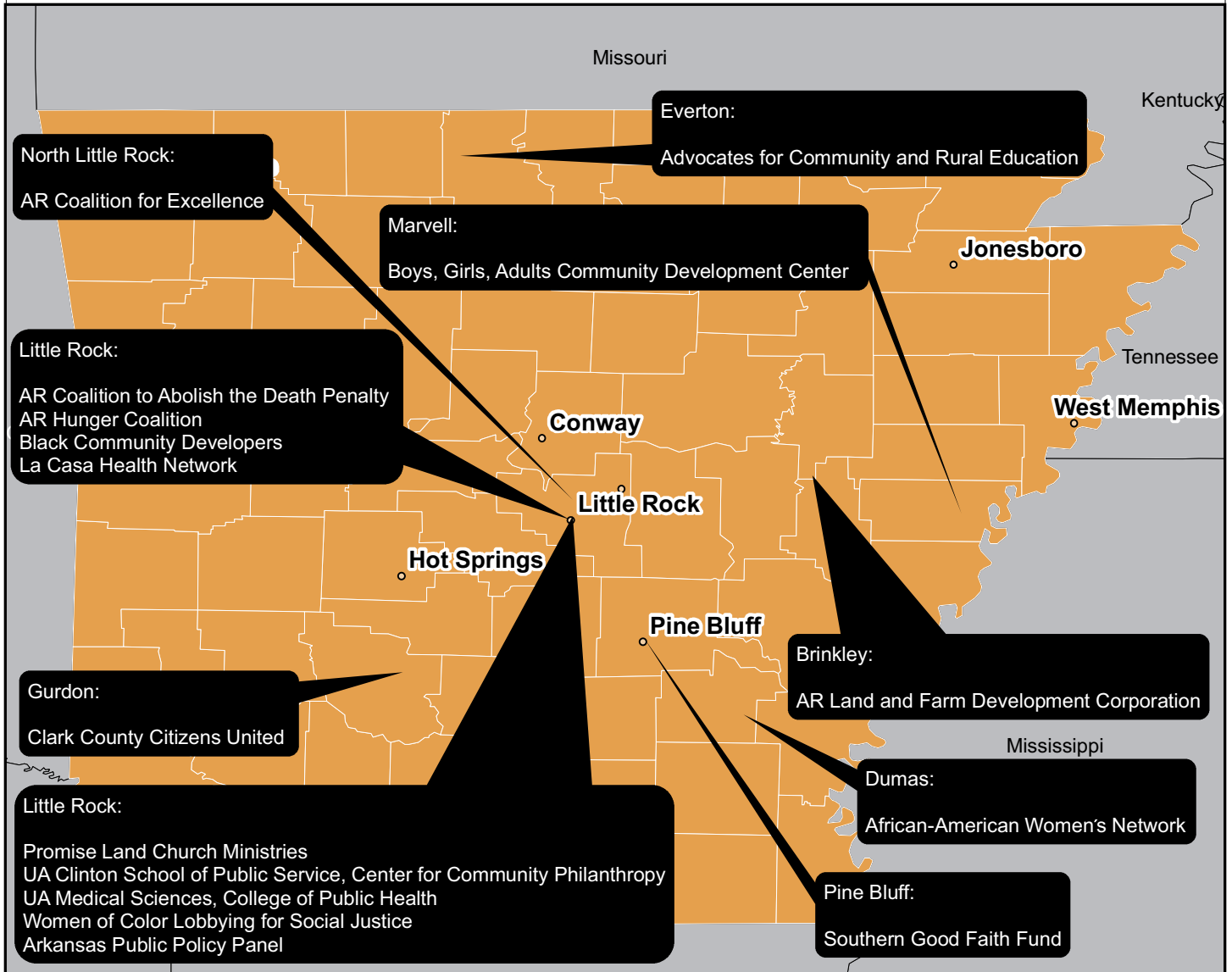
3565 Wheatley St  
Jackson, MS 39212  
(601) 346-5995

## APPENDIX D: STATE MAPS WITH ORGANIZATIONS INTERVIEWED

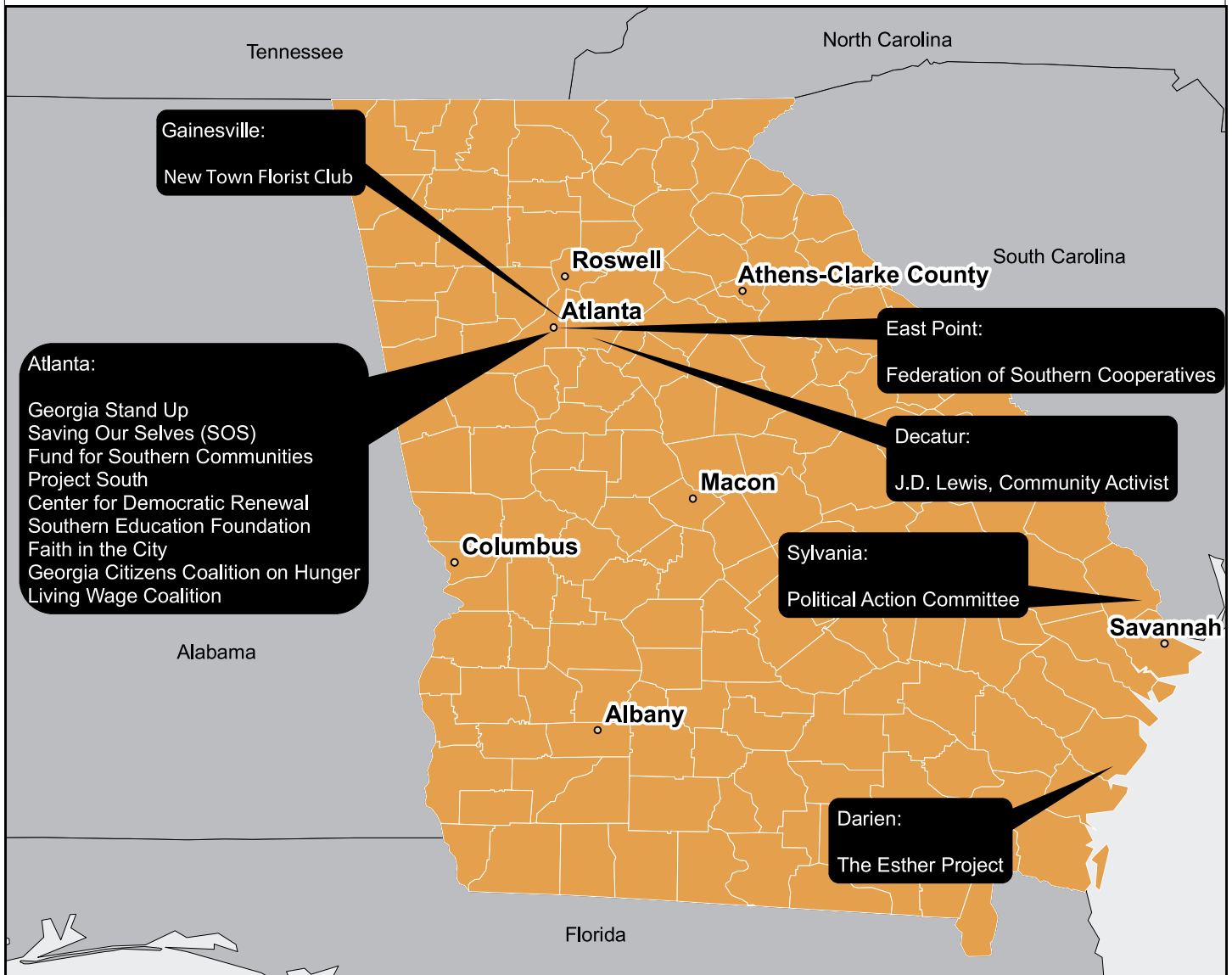
### ALABAMA



# ARKANSAS

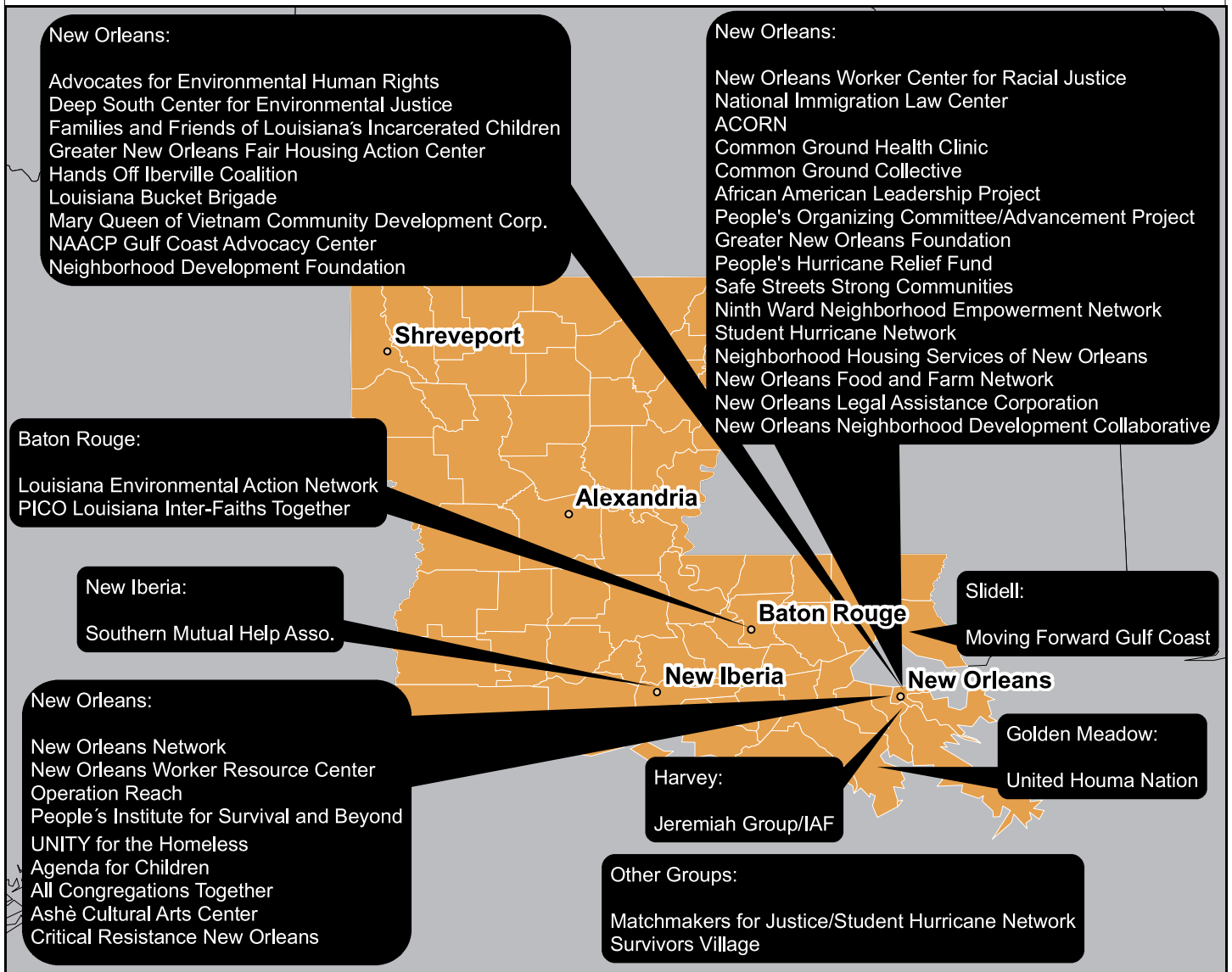


# GEORGIA

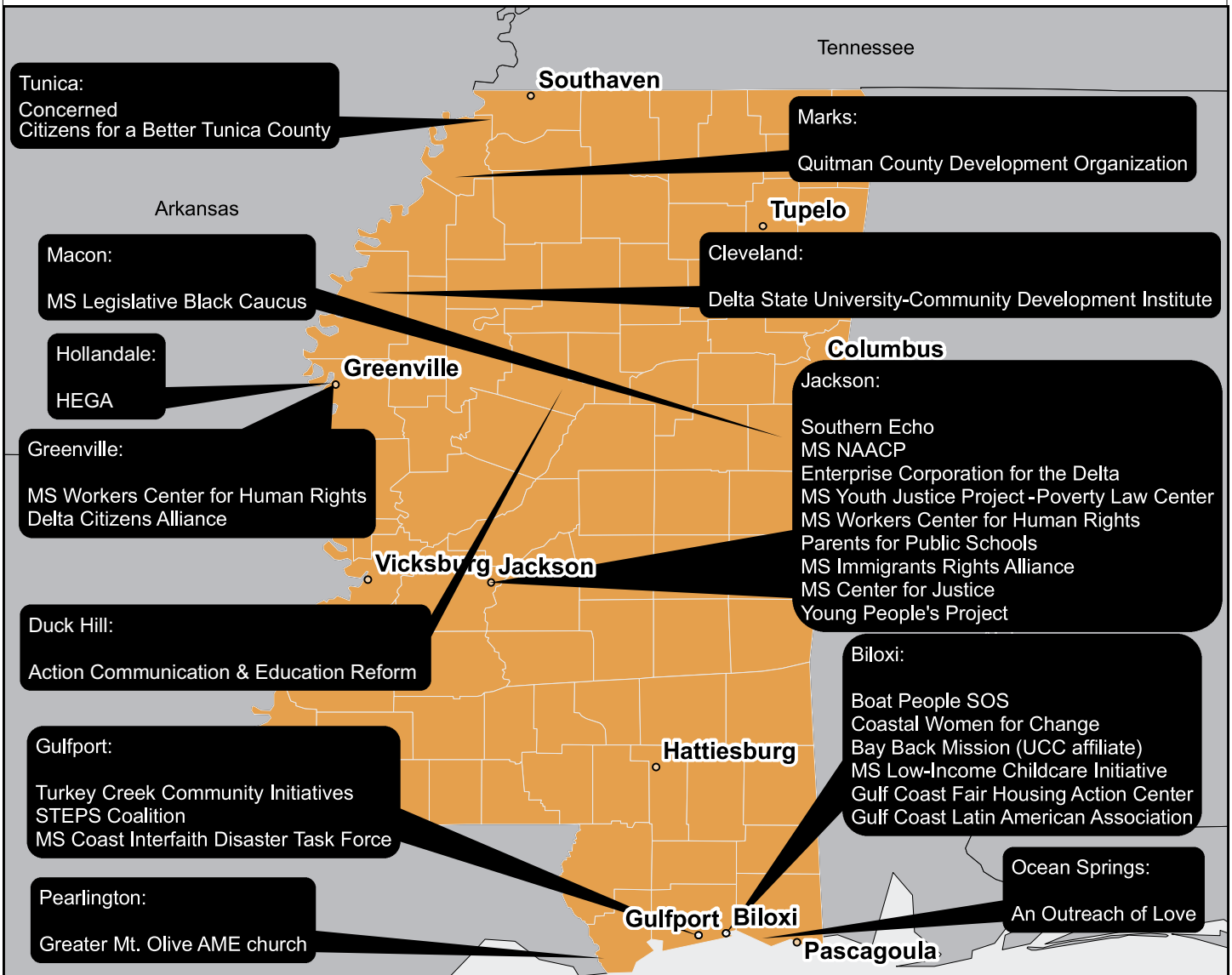




# LOUISIANA



# MISSISSIPPI







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