

In January 2010, the Equity and Inclusion Campaign and Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation convened community leaders and advocates from across the Gulf Coast together with members of the Obama Administration to provide input and inform President Obama's Long Term Disaster Recovery Working Group.

The convening, held January 7th, 2010 in New Orleans, brought together over 100 community activists, faith based leaders, small business owners and advocates from Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

Participants worked together in small groups to identify a diverse set of policy recommendations, priorities and issues facing communities during intermediate and long-term disaster recovery. Each participant then reviewed the collective output of all of the groups and voted to determine the select the top three priorities in each of the four recovery categories: Recovery Defined; The Role of Federal Government; Holistic Recovery & the Role of Community Based Organizations. These selected priorities, along with all of the raw data collected at the convening, was then submitted to President Obama's Long Term Recovery Working Group.

Below you will find the full set of notes collected during the day's meeting. Collective definitions and points in the three categories listed above are below, followed by detailed responses, example and comments in Appendix I; full notes from each small group in Appendix II.

The recovery priorities and points determined by the community leaders in attendance to be presented to the Long Term Recovery Working Group are as follows, organized by category:

Defining Recovery:

- Recovery can best be achieved by establishing a long-term recovery office that is focused on the affected area/ region and integrates agency responsibilities and programs. The office should aim to create viable, sustainable, resilient and well-protected communities while being transparent and responsive.
- Recovery is not a return to conditions present before a disaster. Instead, the federal government should define recovery as creation of conditions for equitable, sustainable, self-sufficient, vibrant, safe, clean, healthy societies and economies, resident participation and opportunities for displaced persons to return. Recovery policies and practices should provide more accurate communication regarding available resources and should avoid dissemination of conflicting information.
- Recovery should include reform of predatory home insurance policies (e.g. vastly increased deductibles and less coverage).

The Federal Role:

- The federal government should reform the Stafford Act to mandate optimal recovery informed by community input. More specifically,
 - The current reimbursement system should be changed to provide direct grants to nonprofits from both federal and local government.
 - The federal government should allow for more flexibility in addressing community needs.
 - Communication and dissemination of information could be improved through development of a database that interfaces with government agencies and nonprofit service providers.
- The federal government should fully fund a program to rebuild and repair all homes of those impacted by hurricanes Katrina and Rita across the Gulf Coast.
- The federal government should hold itself to the same human rights standards domestically as it does internationally, and should uphold the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.
- The Gulf Coast Civic Works Act should serve as a model for funds to reach the ground, and involve nonprofits in planning and implementation.

Maximizing the Strengths of Nonprofit Organizations

- Federal dollars need to reach nonprofits immediately and throughout the course of recovery. Funding mechanisms must be developed to ensure efficient and effective delivery through nonprofit networks. This should entail state and local coordination and aggregation of nonprofit service providers.
- Help nonprofits build and sustain their own infrastructure by providing resources for training and technical assistance (e.g. tools, training and capacity).
- The federal government should guarantee a loan pool to extend lines of credit to nonprofits after disaster so they can ramp up quickly to respond to community needs.
- Nonprofits should be able to prequalify for funding based on the magnitude of the disaster. Funding should be released with declaration of disaster. The federal government should make long term funding commitments that promote nonprofit sustainability.

Holistic Recovery

- Create effective pathways for local businesses to access recovery-related contracts and improve methods and opportunities to put local people back to work in their own communities.
- Rewrite, redevelop, restructure and re-define FEMA, HUD and CDBG policies and programs to address real needs of people in under-served communities.
- Provide better definition of “green” energy efficiency as well as timely waste removal, access to food and safety.
- The Gulf Coast Civic Works Act should serve as a model program to support affected cities, providing for living wages, job creation and environmental sustainability, as well as safe building and coastal restoration.

APPENDIX I – ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES COLLECTED FROM ONLINE SURVEY AFTER IN-PERSON MEETING

1. DEFINING RECOVERY- Establish a long term recovery office that is focused in the affected area/region and that integrates and coordinates agency responsibilities and programs and creates viable, sustainable, resilient and well-protected communities while being transparent and responsive.

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| 1. | It's extremely important to establish a long term recovery office that aspires to do all the above. That office could oversee the all the rebuilding and recovery efforts in the Gulf Coast Region. |
| 2. | The Unified Nonprofits of Greater New Orleans has evolved from a disaster-related coalition to an ongoing source of information and collaboration for nonprofit organizations. Currently, 880 people are on a daily list-serve, and regular Monday Morning meetings are held for networking, training and information exchange. |
| 3. | Best practice would be an office that interacts with ALL organizations, especially those smaller organizations that are doing hands-on work at the grassroots level and not leave them out when creating a viable program to help communities. It would also be good to have a grassroots leadership advocacy education program that would educate, train and mentor to those key stakeholders in each area. |
| 4. | Lower 9th Ward NENA established a hub to address this very issue. NENA first began as an information hub and then grew its capacity to engage and coordinate agency resources at the neighborhood, city, state and national level. It's now focused on housing and economic development. Should another disaster threaten, NENA has the capacity to shift and address the need. Depending on the scale of the disaster, we could easily move from disaster response, to recovery and then redevelopment. |
| 5. | Recovery is a well-coordinated regional approach to improve the quality of community life. The coordinated approach must take into consideration the capacity of communities to solve their own challenges when support is available, in an equitable and inclusive way. The Human Services Response Institute (HSRI) assumed an effective and efficient coordinating role in SWLA after the storms of 2005. |
| 6. | This office should be accessible to average citizens and community-based organizations. |
| 7. | agreed completely |

2. DEFINING RECOVERY- Recovery is not a return to where individuals, communities and the region were before the disaster. Instead, the federal government should define recovery as creation of the conditions for a more equitable, sustainable, self-sufficient, vibrant, safe, clean, healthy, efficient society and economy that ensures resident participation and opportunities for displaced persons to return.

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| 1. | Yes, this is critically important. A different model should be developed, a "social model" where all residents and communities have input in the rebuilding & recovery process. The design and implementation of housing programs that are truly assisting the less fortunate and the equitable allocation of resources all are very important. |
| 2. | Best practice for recovery is to educate individuals in each community about becoming more self-sufficient in helping to take care of them. However, the organization and its stakeholders and volunteers should 'walk the talk' and be self-sufficient and make sure that they are prepared to be self-sufficient and not rely on help from the organizations where they volunteer. Too often volunteers who are victims of a disaster think that they need to have all the help because they volunteer and not have to follow rules and guidelines set for others. Theft among volunteers is a major concern after any crisis, even taking office supplies or food or items they think they are entitled to have just because they volunteer. |
| 3. | We found that one-on-one counseling built the kind of trust necessary to move a family to think beyond the crisis of today. Because NENA's counselors were from the community, they could readily connect with their |

neighbors. This atmosphere allowed us to open discussions about better financial management and building standards. In addition, because we had a team of resource specialists whose job was just to find resources and report to the counselors, we were able to assist more people faster than larger government run centers. Our recovery center created opportunities for displaced persons to return because people were willing to help their neighbors. This empowered the whole team who then found more resources and came up with creative solutions to house families. For example, we didn't mind assisting someone with a rental unit if they were willing to house some family members while the family members' home was in disrepair. Having people present created a safer environment for all to work in. In addition, people hired their neighbors to do some of the work. We found that those who spent just a few hours contributing to another's recovery helped them significantly manage the stress of the tragedy. People shared ideas on what worked and what didn't. Those who were good at cooking/grilling did that. Those who could use a power drill did that. The right to return was never questioned. The federal government can do wonders by validating all of its soil and prohibiting any agency from withholding or limiting resources to any American affected by a disaster.

3. DEFINING RECOVERY - Provide more accurate communication of available resources and avoid the dissemination of conflicting information.

1. We greatly need improvement in this area. An entity, such as a state VOAD or creation of an entity that serves as a "central database" could help disseminate information on available federal, state and local resources.
2. There is need for a one-stop shop for information -- ideally 211 could be beefed up to provide this service. It is a recognizable number.
3. All forms of mass communications need to have the same information - use of web, trained spokespersons for agencies, one organization taking the lead in providing communications as long as they understand the dynamics of an integrated marketing communications plan that targets a multi-cultural community in written form by having it in multiple languages.
4. I think the government should look into how Craig's List and Google organizes information. The owner/provider of the information should be given a passcode to communicate when a resource has reached its maximum.
5. FEMA staff should be trained and aware of available recovery programs. There should be case management staff in the disaster area to provide information and help affected residents apply for assistance. Assistance, if in the form of cash benefits should not be subject to recapture if applicants did not commit fraud in order to obtain benefits.
6. Make the communications system accessible to average citizens and community based organizations
7. agreed completely

4. DEFINING RECOVERY Reform predatory homeowner insurance policies (e.g. higher deductibles and less coverage)

1. This is a key, problematic issue, particularly in MS. Insurance in MS is extremely expensive and is creating a barrier for rebuilding efforts and is an obstacle for affordable housing. We truly need some insurance reform / caps on increased premiums and policies that are more affordable.
2. Providing education programs on homeowner insurance policies in various languages and mentoring them through the process.
3. The government should heavily tax and then remove prior year tax incentives from insurers who raise premiums.
4. The federal government should enact regulation of the property insurance industry and create comprehensive disaster insurance to be included with NFIP policies for homeowners in flood-prone areas of the Gulf Coast and other disaster-prone areas. This will make insurance more accessible to homeowners on the Gulf Coast, where

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| | there is almost no private insurance market and homeowners are forced to purchase unaffordable coverage through state wind pools and fair plans. The coverage limits for NFIP policies should also be increased to reflect the actual cost to replace flood-damaged homes. Current limits are not enough to replace a home at current costs. |
| 5. | agreed completely |
| <p>1. THE FEDERAL ROLE - Reforming the Stafford Act to mandate optimal recovery with community input as a priority. Also, -Change the reimbursement system, to provide direct grants to nonprofits from federal and local government. - Create flexibility in addressing community needs - Improve communication and information dissemination through the development of a database that can interface between agencies as well as with nonprofits. *Reforming the Stafford Act received the largest amount of votes of any other recommendation.</p> | |
| 1. | Reforming the Stafford Act that does all the above is the most vital policy change issue. |
| 2. | Create a web-based knowledge management system to identify and update organizations and the services they provide. |
| 3. | The duplication of benefits regulation is severely flawed. Why is a loan from the SBA viewed as a duplication of benefits? It's taxpayers' money being paid back with interest. Several middle-class people were unfairly impacted by this rule with Road Home. People were told to apply to SBA. The out of pocket closing fees were ridiculous. The formula to decide how much you qualified to borrow was not applied across the board. The amount you could borrow if your house wasn't totally demolished was not based on the actual costs to bring the home to a livable condition. FEMA took forever to release the flood maps. After people began paying the loan, Road Home finally came in. Then Road Home was required, without the owner's consent to pay down the SBA loan. Many people still have second mortgages with SBA because the loan wasn't paid off. In addition, because of the Road Home policies, middle-class received less money. Thus, many were left with unfinished homes. I believe it should be up to the borrower to decide if he/she wants to pay down/off the loan. The borrower went through a long process to qualify. The taxpayer is getting a return on the investment. The Stafford Act's structure doesn't make anyone whole. In many of FEMA's publications, it states that the intent is not to make you whole. What type of sick position is that to take on Americans? The American tax dollar is funding FEMA. As an American, I don't want my tax dollar to give someone just enough rope to touch, but ensure he drowns immediately afterwards. I will also state that in this time of technology, a database that nonprofits and other government agencies interface between has to be a priority. We need a portal like this immediately. |
| 4. | Any replacement of the Stafford Act should explicitly require that FEMA adhere to all federal fair housing and civil rights laws in the implementation of disaster housing assistance programs, and that a process be set up to resolve any housing discrimination complaints in a timely manner to provide adequate housing to disaster victims. After Katrina, FEMA posted discriminatory housing advertisements on a website it set up to house disaster victims, and has never submitted to resolve these issues. |
| 4. | The "duplication of benefits" rule should also be removed as part of any reform of the Stafford Act. This rule has had terrible effects on the ability of Gulf Coast disaster victims to recover from Hurricane Katrina. This rule has no basis in reality during a disaster situation, because victims are forced to use whatever resources they have to survive. It is impossible to ensure that money is used for a specific purpose when people have no place to live. This has been a huge problem with homeowners who received FEMA replacement housing grants, which they used to survive after Katrina, and then were penalized later for receiving this money, even though they could not have possibly used the money to replace their destroyed homes. |
| 5. | Homeowners who received a SBA loan to repair their home, although at the time of closing the loan appears to be recorded as a mortgage, it shows up as an installment loan on your credit report. This negatively impacts the family based on the size of the loan because now your debt to income ratio is skewed, which in turn lowers their credit score. This prevents the homeowner from being eligible for other credit based purchases necessary for their family's recovery. Unfortunately, the homeowner is not made aware of this situation until applying for a |

credit increase or a new line of credit, and it is denied.

2. THE FEDERAL ROLE- Fully fund a program to rebuild and repair all homes of Katrina victims in Alabama and across the Gulf Coast.

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| 1. | Yes, this is critically important. For example, numerous homeowners in MS sustained significant wind damage to their homes. The state has never designed and implemented a housing program to address those needs. For example, the creation of such a program to assist lower income households would be greatly beneficial. |
| 2. | Comment: we should not identify just one state. |
| 3. | This does not have a best practice, as it is not up to the government to fully rebuild and repair all homes in Alabama and across the Gulf Coast. It is up to the homeowners and communities to take care of their own needs and to work together to rebuild. Relying on the Federal Government is not creating self-sufficiency. We might as well go to a more socialistic form of government if this were to happen. |
| 4. | How are you going to have stable communities with unstable programs? The Gulf Coast cannot recover with partial funds. While it may be a hard pill to swallow, it was wrong of the government to only fund the primary residences destroyed in the Gulf. All assets and people impacted should be addressed. |
| 5. | Ensure that any future use of disaster CDBG funds are used to benefit low and moderate income families as required, and to affirmatively further fair housing choice. For example, the Louisiana Road Home Program's design has had a discriminatory effect on African-Americans, leaving many unable to rebuild their homes. Both Louisiana and Mississippi have prioritized homeowners and done little to help support the construction of affordable rental housing for those most in need, especially low and moderate income families, the elderly and disabled. |

3. THE FEDERAL ROLE - The Federal government should hold itself to the same human rights standards domestically as it does internationally and uphold the UN guiding principles on Internal Displacement.

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| 1. | This is another important policy issue that needs immediate reform. It's vitally important that the federal government uphold the UN guiding principles on Internal Displacement. |
| 2. | By building relationship among national and international agencies that have offices in linked communities; by forming bonds with sister cities away from the area will help us to reach out and share across borders. We must break the bonds of North and South and skin pigment based attitudes that hinder us from working together today. A best practice would be for each person who attends a meeting and still thinks that someone owes them for the past needs to turn around and open his/her mind to the future and hug someone. |
| 3. | I agree. Isn't that what our military is trained to do? Why can't we establish centers across the country via public facilities that provide a bunk, food and shower for those displaced persons? Certainly shipping people across the country with no explanation of where they are being taken is a violation of human rights. |
| 4. | The United States has continued to be derided internationally for the inequitable recovery and discrimination present in the outcomes of the recovery. Holding ourselves to these higher standards would help to overcome these issues. |
| 5. | This too, should be of high priority. How dare we be part of the UN and demand this of other nations, when it is ignored here in the US? |

1. MAXIMIZING THE STRENGTH OF NONPROFITS - Federal dollars need to reach nonprofits immediately and throughout the course of recovery. Funding mechanisms must be developed to ensure efficient and effective delivery through nonprofit networks. This could entail state and local coordination and aggregation of nonprofits.

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| 1. | This is a great idea and truly needs to be implemented. Post- Katrina, many non-profits had to arduously serve communities with little capacity, resources, support and assistance from the federal government. |
| 2. | The Unified Nonprofits of Greater New Orleans, United Way and LANO has potential for this -- perhaps as a collaboration |
| 3. | NPOs in each community to act as funding agent need to be identified but need to have monitoring mechanisms in place so that the agencies of their choice are not always the ones to get funded. |
| 4. | Nonprofit organizations build networks throughout years. Many nonprofits have demonstrated the capacity to effectively and efficiently convene and assess needs in communities as well as receive and allocate funds to meet recovery needs at local levels. |
| 5. | During the long term recovery, the federal government should offer more federal grant opportunities to nonprofits and not make the application process so difficult and cumbersome. Most nonprofits need technical assistance to apply for federal grants, so provide needed assistance to help nonprofits effectively apply for federal grants and satisfy the reporting requirements. In addition, the federal government could partner with foundations when issuing these grants. |
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2. MAXIMIZING THE STRENGTH OF NONPROFITS - Help nonprofits build and sustain their own infrastructure by providing resources for training and technical assistance. (tools, training, capacity)

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| . | This is another good idea that needs implementation. |
| 2. | The Unified Nonprofits of Greater New Orleans, United Way and LANO have potential for this in Louisiana, |
| 3. | Influencing the state council on nonprofits to provide economical training for grassroots nonprofits would help. Many of them cannot join due to high membership fees, yet these are the groups that are out in the field working hands-on and yet need the resources for training to grow their nonprofits. |
| 4. | FEMA should have a professional development arm that is required via legislation to travel and train both state and local government agencies. Nonprofits who would like to provide resources during disasters, recovery, etc. should be allowed to participate. Resources to be directed to those who attend the trainings. |
| 5. | Family Foundation of SWLA established implemented an effective nonprofit sector development series to equip nonprofit organizations with the appropriate tool boxes for success during difficult times. Offerings included training, networking gatherings and funder convenings interested in recovery initiatives |
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3. MAXIMIZING THE STRENGTH OF NONPROFITS - The federal government should guarantee a loan pool to extend the lines of credit to nonprofits after disaster so they may ramp up quickly and respond to community needs.

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| 1. | This is a good idea, and it could be a low interest loan or partially forgivable loan. |
| 2. | Great idea. This was a problem. So many foundations took a "wait and see" attitude. |

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| 3. | Totally agree, but like any crisis it would be more advantageous to set up these relationships prior to the crisis. |
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4. MAXIMIZING THE STRENGTH OF NONPROFITS - Prequalify nonprofits for funding based upon the magnitude of the disaster. Funding should be released with disaster declaration. The federal government should make long term funding commitments that promote nonprofit sustainability.

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| 1. | This is another great idea. Long term funding commitments could have a mechanism in place to ensure outcomes and goals are met. |
| 2. | Yes....but....it would be a shame if only the mega organizations got funding. In fact, many small nonprofits and faith based organizations and churches are much "closer" to their constituencies, and have the ability to react much faster. Prequalification should be "basic" -- are they legit and are their services effective? (not things like their board composition, etc.) |
| 3. | NPOs who prequalify should have a strong mechanism for reporting and handling funds during a disaster. |
| 4. | Exactly. The government greatly benefits from nonprofits. Don't downplay the impact. |
| 5. | Family and Youth Counseling Agency was named as the human services coordinator for Lake Charles by the Mayor. As a result, the agency received funds to support crisis management, advocacy work, youth engagement, employee assistance and case management services inclusive of direct assistance money. |
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1. HOLISITIC RECOVERY - Give access to contracts to local businesses and improve methods and opportunities to put local people back to work in their own communities.

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| 1. | Another vital issue. This would greatly help local economies. |
| 2. | Great idea. It is my understanding that this is partially how Asian countries responded to the Tsunami. |
| 3. | Contracts should be given to qualified companies who can provide the services needed. Criteria and mechanisms for choosing companies have to be strengthened and monitored more thoroughly. |
| 4. | We hired people from the community first. We give preferential treatment and contracts to local contractors and even more favor to contractors who can demonstrate that they hire local people. We have an economic development department that focuses on vetting contractors and testing Section 3 Compliance. It's not hard. It's a policy decision. This policy decision strengthens the community base immediately. |
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2. HOLISTIC RECOVERY - Rewrite, redevelop, restructure and redefine FEMA and HUD CDBG policies and programs to address real needs of people in underserved communities impacted by disaster.

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| 1. | This is a critical and urgent issue that should be immediately addressed. FEMA and CDBG policies and guidelines absolutely must be redeveloped. |
| 2. | Policies for implementing programs belong at the local levels. |
| 3. | Why do we have only one set of guideline for CDBG funds? It's unrealistic to do a reimbursement structure in a crisis. Many good nonprofits have gone under waiting on reimbursements. There should be penalties imposed |

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| | on the agency for such poor contract management. |
| 4. | In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the National Disaster Response Framework was altered to identify additional challenges seen by vulnerable (low income, residents with disability, African American, immigrant, elderly, women) populations in the immediate aftermath of a disaster and efforts were made to improve how these vulnerable populations were dealt with. Similar efforts have not been made in regards to rebuilding and recovery. |
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3. HOLISTIC RECOVERY - Gulf Coast Civic Works Act should serve as a model program to support affected cities that pays living wages and incorporates job creation, environmental sustainability, safe building, and coastal restoration).

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| 1. | The Gulf Coast Civics Works Act would be a great model program to help residents and communities post-Katrina. |
| 2. | Hundreds of organizations across the Gulf Coast have supported this policy -- the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act. President Obama should adopt the principles of the legislation into a Presidential Directive, and request the reallocation of unused Katrina-Rita related budgetary authority to fund resident-led recovery projects tackling priority projects. |
| 3. | I strongly disagree with this and I think that there are many flaws with this proposed legislation and conflicts with earlier stated principles- it's just not able to be seen, and will only be visible after thorough evaluation and review. |
| 4. | agreed completely |

Other Highly Ranked Themes

1. DEFINING "RECOVERY" *Adopt the UN Guiding Principles for Internally Displaced Persons, which provide: Physical/mental health, safe & affordable housing, education and infrastructure. *Start 2 tracks- short term and long term that start immediately at the same time. Short term should be administered by FEMA and long term should be conducted by HUD and bring all federal agencies together to problem solve.

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| 1. | Wholeheartedly support this idea. |
| 2. | agreed completely |

2. THE FEDERAL ROLE *Provide seed funding for pilot programs for cooperative housing to serve owners and renters whose homes were destroyed, to maintain affordability long term. *Gulf Coast Civic Works Act as a model for funds reaching the ground, and involving nonprofits in planning and implementation. *Clear explanation of what assistance is available and how long it will be provided, especially as it pertains to housing (trailers inadequate/hotels for short term only) and health care.

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| 1. | Definitely believe this is important. |
| 2. | The federal government should contract with hotels/motels for short term housing. Time allowed to stay should be in tangent with access to resources. This accountability should include insurance companies as well. Insurers should be required to report to FEMA the total disbursement and the timeline. Insurers should have a portal as well. Such a structure would also discourage waste with policyholders and claims. |

- 3. Agreed completely - Housing availability and needs are not known in the beginning and should be provided as long as there is a need that pertains to the disaster, not some predetermined date of when they think it should be available.

3. MAXIMIZING STRENGTH of NONPROFITS *Ongoing effective communication and coordination among nonprofits and local, state and federal agencies. *Create a law that prohibits forced internal displacement of coastal communities. *Engage nonprofits in recovery planning. *Need to hold local, state, federal officials accountable to serve local communities especially rural-underserved minority communities.

- 1. This is vitally important as well.

- 2. When the government attempts to handle place-based programs, there is much waste. The delay in roll-out puts undue strain on nonprofits. If agencies were already engaged with nonprofits prior to the crisis, there would be a more seamless approach to recovery. In addition, nonprofits need to have the kind of capacity that can retain the necessary talent to accomplish the job. Well-meaning people don't always have the skill-set necessary to accomplish more advanced tasks. Training is important. There have been so many non-professional people working in government agencies. Advanced skills in word processing, spreadsheets, verbal and written communication are so needed.

- 3. agreed completely

4. HOLISTIC RECOVERY PRIORITIES *Focus on building economic resiliency with local jobs, local contracting and include vulnerable communities such as immigrant, formerly incarcerated and low-income communities. *Adoption of local recovery plans and implementation with involvement of local stakeholders to deal with healthcare, mental health, housing and economic development. *Better definition of 'green' energy efficiency as well as, timely waste removal, safety and food access.

- 1. This is also very important.

- 2. agreed completely

Page: Additional Comments

- 1. There should be a recovery center ready to be setup within every 5 miles of a disaster.

2. What do you feel worked best?

- 1. Table discussions

- 2. Small group discussions

- 3. Working with diverse advocates from a range of experiences.

- 4. Having officials in the room and allowing community members to speak for themselves on issues that meant most to them.

- 5. I was unable to attend, but sent 7 staff members who felt the meeting was excellent.

APPENDIX II – FULL NOTES COLLECTED FROM ALL BREAKOUT SESSIONS

NOTES

In addition to these high priority recommendations, we wanted to also provide the notes as well as specific examples of how recommendations can inform best practices.

DEFINING “RECOVERY”

1. How would you define a successful disaster recovery for your clients? For the community? For the region?
2. What specific metrics should be considered as measures of a successful disaster recovery?
3. Which phases in the disaster recovery process are useful milestones or indications of progress?

Notes:

- Involve local businesses/contractors in physical recovery—higher on “food chain,” not subs for subs---pre-qualification and list pre-disaster
- Access to resources necessary; eliminate barriers to access (i.e.: title and successions)
- Good disaster case management to connect to resources with strong mental health aspect
- Think through needs for whole person to address barriers
- Free legal assistance
- Better temporary housing and transitions
- U.N. Guiding Principles for internally displaced people
- Disaster Mobilization: government/non profits/local businesses pre-planned that. That results in comprehensive list and function before disaster
- Successful Recovery for:
 - A. Clients
 1. Having all unmet needs addressed; jobs, housing, health and education.
 2. Coordination of services available
 - B. Community
 - C. Region
- Adaption of UN Guiding Principles for IDP
- People affected by disaster have:
 1. safe/affordable place to live
 2. education/health care/infrastructure restored
- Residents have moved beyond focus on the disaster
- Civic Engagement
- Community-defined recovery in place
- Future and hope- plan in place and plan will be executed
- Sense of security
 1. Insurance companies (Federal disaster insurance private industry reform, federal regulation, flood etc.)

- Access to all services people need (example: health, mental health services)
- Metrics: Blighted housing returns to pre-disaster rates, number of plans adopted with citizens input, number of voters in disaster affected area, payment on claims rate of return (for residents) to disaster area, accurate probable maximal loss (insurance claim calculation)
- Phases of Recovery: Prioritizing returning people to their homes (homeowners and renters)
- Clients:
 1. “Return to Normalcy” = out of “crisis mode”
 2. Accessibility of Resources
 - a. access to capital- a clear path
 - b. housing
 - c. food
 - d. medical care
- Community: “Return to Normalcy”
 1. Return of Infrastructure
 - a. utilities, transportation, schools, churches, medical
 2. Resource centers, clear communication of path
 - a. immediate and long term
 - b. block captains (established prior to event)

Regional: Direct connection to Resource Centers, status reports

- Milestones/Progress Indicators (assessment)
- Basic needs met
- Case management in place beforehand that operates holistically
- Qualified case managers
- Resettlement plan- ideal for refugees
- Build back smarter- no more flooding or blown off roofs
- Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs
- Organized residents; bring back sense of community
- Integration of new and old communities (“those people” vs. “my neighbors”)
- Businesses up and running
- Fair and equitable recovery across the Gulf Coast region: TX, LA, MS, AL, FL
- Rebuild and repair all homes and communities
- All families and communities affected to be served
- Restore businesses and jobs in impact area
- In Alabama (Mobile County) over 1,000 people applied for assistance; 4 ½ years later only 300 have been assisted. Many families still have not been served; unmet needs survey needed
- Many low income, rural, African-Americans, Asians and other minorities never served or served with limited assistance
- Many people not served with housing problems due
 - to: pre-existing conditions; deferred maintenance; codes and regulations, re-evaluation, sewage, etc

- Excuses used to deny most needy and underserved people and communities
- Metrics: A needs assessment showing unmet needs of houses, business, jobs, community facilities, re-built
- Successful recovery overall would include sound infrastructure, quick debris clean-up, accessible resources, better organization of volunteer efforts and more participation from stakeholders
- Measures or metrics are responsiveness to needs, Hardening and raising of buildings, insurance availability and affordability, Resurgence of economic activity (housing, jobs, businesses, construction)
- Milestones- what does the area of disaster look like a quarter after the disaster and every quarter after that?
- Survivors realize human dignity: participation, safety, return
- Clients: community recovers, made whole-back into homes; across incomes; home ownership and rentals
- Successful? Affordable and sustainable i.e.: insurance rate increase force people out of homes
- JOBS AND HOMES: Ask grassroots leaders/ensure all voices represented
- Training recovery = education, opportunity, health and housing
- Metrics: jobs and homes (suggestion: W.P.A)
- Is government aid equitable?
- Transparency and accountability (can't measure success without)
- Phase: Milestones based on measureable change vs. arbitrary timeline
- Measurements based on solid assessment

THE FEDERAL ROLE

4. What is the appropriate role of the federal government when the state, local and tribal roles are not functioning at capacity or in the best interests of vulnerable and marginalized communities?
5. What features of federal disaster recovery assistance should be altered to better serve the needs of impacted residents/community?
6. What are best practices for marshaling federal assistance -- both financial and professional support -- to support state and local efforts to recover from a disaster, and how can the different levels of government and nonprofit/private sector work together to better leverage existing federal grant dollars?

Notes:

FEDERAL ROLE

- Pre-disaster planning for resilient communities
- FEMA should keep all records and coordinate with other departments to provide the assistance needed as quickly as possible
- Federal government should play active oversight role and problem solving
- Better coordinate policy and programs; clear set of responsibility to chain of command. Long term assignments for staff to reduce learning curve

- Neighborhood associations are great way to get information to people and deliver information back to the federal government
- More forms of communication; door-to-door. Mandate local governments to have more comprehensive solution
- Case management system funded by federal government
- One-stop-shop for information and services
- Stafford Act- Do the work and we pay for you later. Have escrow account
- Go directly to regional and local government
- CDBG money need to be used for long-term preparedness
- Trauma-informed training for case managers and service providers
- Develop a corps of trained people in vulnerable areas. Using local people who are a part of the federal team.
- Don't give states money as a lump sum; stimulus delivery was preferable
- Direct funding feds to local NGO's to reduce delay, administration obstacles and layers that cost money. Per mobilization plan
- Capacity building around federal government app and compliance/reporting
- Stafford Act reform that allows optimal recovery that is responsive to community planning/input
- Accountability/compliance system for federal funds to increase economic impact and local hire and go beyond current federal requirements
- Teeth in DBE, local hire provisions, past history of contractors into account on contract award
- Mental health assistance and inspirational leadership and projects (cultural and artistic)
- Maintaining distribution of resources to ensure equitable access for all citizens
- Contract with liaisons in vulnerable communities in case of disaster (local plans should be in place)
- Federal government should be able to bypass the states and provide resources to local governments based on need
- Provide incentives to local social services organizations to proactively create disaster plans
- Revamp federal housing assistance completely
 1. No trailers and hotels - only for short-term
 2. Clear explanation of assistance should be available and include the time frame for how long support will be provided to citizens for recovery displacement
- Provide healthcare to the insured and uninsured
- Pick up the slack
- Disseminate accurate information
- Come into support the system in place but NOT take over
- Be flexible in regulations with the on-the-spot decision-making authority
- Clear organization structure
- Respect for established plan or structure created prior to disaster
- Adaptability in catastrophe setting
- Support of community organizations
- Communication of risk; planning guidance to individuals recovery

- Cultural understanding
- Streamlining bureaucracy and procedures
- Continuous process improvements
- Better inter-agency coordination
- More Feds out in the field (knowledgeable and have authority)
- Devolving of decision-making
- Being prepared before the disaster
- Have citizens to participate
- Know what grants and services are available
- Streamline application process
- QUIT CHANGING THE RULES
- Checks and balances
- Evaluation- on the ground assessment
- Best Practices- providing guidance, options, tools (simplicity, logical)
- “Push” system vs. “Pull” system
- Coordination: prior, during, ongoing. Federal Coordinator
- Individual- get everything lost (house, property)
- Measure rate of return of people, businesses, schools, tax base, employment rate, social services programs
- Community- recovers everything lost (businesses, schools, churches_
- Better able to resist future disasters, structure foundation, more green
- Lessons learned- what worked from before and what didn’t?
- Metrics-return of population, business, tax base
- Simplify federal application process
- Government dollars were spent necessary revenue
 1. Speed
 2. Where dollars were spent (did it reach the intended target?)
 3. Getting more dollars for nonprofits and faith-based organizations
 4. Getting money for expenditures instead of local government spending and then getting reimbursed
- Immediate phase
 1. Utility services
 2. Safety (police, hospitals, fire)
- Policies- moratoriums on lenders taking action against people
- Get federal government to set up programs (money to build houses, spend money on long-term solutions i.e.: build housing as opposed to use of hotels)
- Federal government needs to enforce laws on the books (i.e.: diversion of housing money for port)
- Once money goes from feds to state, feds need to make sure money is not diverted (i.e.: half of CDBG money must go to help low income people)
- Lack of corrective measures (accountability for failing to spend correctly)
- Do not grant waivers absent documented community input and support
- Permitting participation in multiple, complementary funding resources

- Federal legislation addressing long-term recovery as opposed to short-term disaster recovery (Stafford Act)
- Changing when funds are allocated (giving for money up front for expenses as opposed to reimbursement i.e.: streetlights in New Orleans)
- More federal money for recovery given to non-profits and faith based organizations that have a documented plan with community input
- Move money given directly from federal government to local governments (as opposed to going to state first)
- More enforceable timelines on expenditures
- Federal government hold itself to the same standard domestically as it does internationally when it comes to disaster and displacement (U.N. Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement)
- Ending displacement and disaster recovery under the Stafford Act
- Federal government programs aligned with community needs as defined by community organizations
- Local hiring for construction
- Deadlines for assistance program must be based on recovery outcome not arbitrary time frames
- Federal government must provide technical assistance to equip people who have been impacted with information and tools to participate in policy discussions and also to equip communities for fund development through non-federal sources
- Eliminate reimbursement model for catastrophic disasters
- Abolish shutting down of public schools/housing that prolongs displacement
- The Army Corps of Engineers should not have immunity substandard levees and other projects
- To provide support and relief and services that are missing in the disaster area
- Have a contingency plan of action just in case the local and state governments are incapacitated
- Streamline processes (reduce red tape) like the Stafford Act!!!
- Revise legislation
- Better communication from the top down and from the bottom up (well understood chain of command)
- Redesign legislation so that disaster funds go directly to the disaster areas and not to the heads of state.

MAXIMIZING THE STRENGTHS OF NONPROFITS

7. How can the nonprofit and private sectors be better integrated into local, state and federal recovery plans and activities pre-, during, and post-disasters?
8. What are best practices for community recovery planning to improve public input and/or integrate the voices of nonprofit leaders working with large segments of impacted citizens?
9. What are the greatest capacity challenges that local and state nonprofits and faith-based groups face in disaster recovery, and what are the best practices for increasing that capacity?

Notes:

- Communication and funding are the most important factors for better integrating the nonprofit and private sectors into recovery plans.
 - Provide stimulus money to nonprofits to enable them to be a part of disaster-recovery planning.
 - Encourage private sector businesses to participate in the planning process prior to a disaster.
- In order to improve public input and the voices of nonprofit leaders, it will be important to have regularly scheduled meetings with open and transparent communication.
 - Conduct organized trainings and provide technical assistance.
 - Provide funding, staffing and training
- Require federal government to listen to nonprofits and their prescription for impact, versus the federal government prescribing what nonprofits must do.
- The federal government must build strong relationships with nonprofits before disaster by reaching out to intermediaries and other groups that have capacity and knowledge about what is happening in communities.
- Look to the Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP) for best practices on:
 - Resident voices included in city plan to get help from the state
 - Database center that houses contacts on local levels and local intermediaries maintain it and communicate / disseminate information to the community
- Capacity challenges continue to be communication, information and resources
- No balance sheets or seed capital is available to nonprofits to expand capacity. A solution could be to extend lines of credit from the federal government.
- Federal regulations stifle nonprofits; a solution may be to use the Seedco (national intermediary) model by providing loan pools.
- Nonprofits should be able to work at all levels of government and be funded to do so
- Develop grant programs for pre-disaster planning
- Prompt reimbursement for local groups that have provided services, food, shelter etc. in times of disaster.
- Provide training and education to community members on important federal legislation and policies impacting recovery
- Create local councils of nonprofits that meet regularly (quarterly) to help develop recovery plans
- Federal government should monitor state regulation and attacks on local advocacy groups
- Provide funds for training for nonprofit groups on fiscal management, organizational development, capacity-building
- Create spaces to integrate nonprofit and private sector leaders to share information
- Continual funding to prepare for disaster recovery
- Hazard mitigation, emergency preparation, evacuation plan with comprehensive plan ensuring nonprofits included as a sector
- There should be a policy that includes a place at the table for the nonprofit sector
- Funding is the greatest capacity need

- Be at the table. Have list/database of all existing non-profits (constantly updated) integrated into the incident command structure. Make sure non-profits know how to contact
- Use existing capacity of existing NP and resource them appropriately
- Continue to build NP capacity, make them responsible for part of the plan
- Can never have enough communication
- Have networks in place before disaster
- Comprehensive outreach planning and implementation into the daily roles of the organizations
- Build inter-city capacity before disaster
- Power of Representation capacity/procedures in place
- Money: short and long term, qualified staff, housing for staff, access to government, access to information, shared visions-streamline agendas
- Appropriate federal role for state/local/tribal failure
- “Ultimate guarantor”- mechanisms in place to provide capacity to ensure equity /human rights standards i.e.: for survivors
- Auditors, spot checking
- Require change in Stafford Act to ensure rights of survivors (current assumption that federal government is not ultimate responsible. Revising Stafford Act is only one part of policy solution
- Features needed to be altered to better serve
- Technical assistance (funds, manpower) to government workers responsible for distributing funds to the affected communities
- Training fro impacted communities/indigenous
- When the help comes, institutional racism, nepotism bars local access. Feature: require to give local community the contracts and provide capacity where there is none
- Best practices for marshalling federal assistance
 1. Re-evaluation of relationships
 2. Allow non-profits and consortiums to vie for federal funding
 - a. demonstrate capacity (board/staff) and experience
 3. NP’s involve in implementation and planning
 4. Re-evaluate relationships between nonprofits and local government and create opportunities for new ones with NP’s and local government working in partnership with the federal government to impact the region (i.e. HR 2269)

HOLISTIC RECOVERY

10. What are best practices for integrating economic and environmental sustainability into recovery?
11. What are best practices for integrating mitigation and resilience into recovery?
12. What unmet needs are common to most disasters that do not seem to be adequately addressed under the current systems and programs?

Notes:

- Green jobs program like the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act
- Remove barriers from hazard mitigation programs (ICC, HMGP, etc.)

- Provide incentives and additional training and education for builders and developers
- Strengthen landlord-tenant laws as they relates to environmental hazards
- Housing, healthcare and mental health continue to be unmet needs and should be a priority in any disaster.
- Provide specific attention and care for vulnerable populations
- Insurance companies should support mitigation costs
- Focus on building economic resiliency by providing job training and helping local businesses to receive recovery contracts to ensure recovery dollars stay in the community/county
- Ensure that vulnerable communities including immigrant, low-income, formerly and currently incarcerated have economic access and opportunity.
- EXAMPLE: Women in Construction Program (Biloxi) where women receive hands on experience rebuilding
- Environmental sustainability should be required as a part of funding from the federal government as a critical recovery duty and to create jobs.
- Mitigation dollars should be made available at the same time as recovery funding
- EXAMPLE: Employ equitable land use planning like Project Home Again where citizens engaged in a land swap with local community
- Insurance post disaster is an unmet need
- Prompt and sufficient processing of claims by insurance companies both private and commercial.
- Monthly meetings of nonprofit councils per parish/county that create local plans to be acted upon (501c3 registration is linked).
- Mandate that local businesses be able to develop and recover the local economy by utilizing local contractors for relief and recovery.
- Unmet needs: understanding financial management, local knowledge base
- Establish ongoing relationships
- Communications
- Results
- Food access is a big issue following a disaster because there is a lack of grocery stores (ties into economic development across communities). Lack of access to basic services like food, healthcare and gas stations deter people from moving back, especially into low-income areas.
- The current federal administration should use Katrina as a way to develop best practices for a holistic recovery.
- Enforce fair housing laws to deter NIMBY-ism
- Emphasize environmental and economic sustainability in the recovery process.
- Integrate a region's natural environmental strengths in creating a recovery plan.
- Hardening and raising buildings with federal dollars, grants and tax credits
- Providing citizens with financial education and energy efficiency
- Creation of a job training program that employs those who are affected by the storm engage in their own recovery process. Training for specific jobs needed to recover ongoing.
- Provide funding and training

- Focus on what needs to be in place and not so much on what was in place.
- Safety first!
- Address insurance problems
- Seek economic opportunities in recovery activities, i.e. incentivize businesses to promote environmental sustainability (green businesses) for issues like debris removal. If you use local businesses because they have an inherent stake in good environmental practices.
- Lost opportunities for long-term recovery include inadequate resources for children, mental health, medical, dental, long-term dollars, accountable flexibility in recovery funds to address building smarter, safer and stronger
- Minimal time in temporary housing
- Healthy temporary alternative housing
- Cost effective temporary housing-not trailers
- Access to basic services 6 or 7 mos.
- Building fall-out/all purpose emergency shelter with necessary services- 30 days
- Know percentage of population that may need shelter
- Metric -98% return to homes with power, services, school within one year to 18 months
- Build shelters all along evacuation path. Temporary staging (evacuation route needs shelters and temporary housing)
- Have a safeguard account, like an IDA, Escrow account immediately; within the first 30 days
- Keep files from previous disaster and keep track of who may be in need
- Shelter (30 days), Temporary Housing (6-12 months), Home (12 months)---(up to 18 months)
- Children must return to school within (30-60 days) ASAP
- Basic business return, support local small business, support people going back to work
- Contingency plan for education, don't just expect kids to get right back to standard routine
- Mental health counseling immediately post disaster. Part of the assessment team for other needs i.e.: financial, human rights
- Hospitals- are people talking?
- Pre-disaster planning to protect vulnerable people
- Disaster Mobilization Partnership Plan that includes nonprofits, federal government, local government and corporate/private sector
- Federal government encourage partnerships, non profits and private sector through grant requirements and incentives
- Formal citizen participation process in place pre-disaster. Not just post disaster with outreach by NGO's
- Capacity building through coalitions for information exchange
- Disaster plans in place for NGO's for internal functioning, connection to resources and proposed impact/activities post-disaster