

**LOUISIANA FEMA PARK SURVEY**

**Interim Report**

Submitted

**April 2007**

To

**Louisiana Family Recovery Corps  
Louisiana Department of Labor  
Louisiana Recovery Authority**

By

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This interim report provides a descriptive summary of the findings of the Louisiana FEMA Park Survey conducted in March and April 2007. The report provides a wealth of information about FEMA Park residents. In this executive summary we present selected findings of the survey.

### **Residence: Past, Present, and Future Plans:**

- The average length of time pre-hurricane residency was 14 years.
- Two in five respondents still living in FEMA parks had lived in their pre-hurricane residence for over 10 years.
- 92 of the 321 respondents (29%) had owned their pre-hurricane residences
- Over 40% of respondents had been living at current respondents for more than one year
- Nearly half the sample (154 respondents) were either unable or unwilling to speculate as to how much longer they would stay at their current location
- On average, about three people living in a typical FEMA mobile home or trailer
- 16% (1 in 6 females) respondents reported being a victim of domestic violence
- Half of the respondents said it was unsafe for children to play around their park

### **Education, Employment, and Income:**

- More than a third of the respondents left school before completing high school, more than one in ten left before completing eighth grade.
- On the other hand, 30% of respondents had acquired post-high school education
- 55% of respondents said they were employed full time before the hurricanes, another 15% said they had part time jobs
- More than two of three respondents we interviewed were not currently employed
- Most unemployed respondents (58%) were not looking for work
- Of those not seeking work, the majority (60%) said they were disabled or had major health limitations
- The majority of job-seekers have tried traditional, unstructured means for obtaining a job (asking family and friends, applying directly, and answering ads in the newspaper)
- Of the 321 respondents
  - 152 did not work at all in 2006
  - 58 worked all 12 months in 2006
- The majority of the rest were unemployed for six months or more in 2006
- Only 34 of the 321 respondents had been to an education or work training program while living in the FEMA park
- About two-thirds of the respondents said they would be willing to commute to work in New Orleans if transportation were provided:
  - Some also added a qualifier such as “if I can find the right opportunity”
- Over 80% of households currently earn less than \$15,000 per year
- 115 respondents (36%) report dropping to a lower income category

## **Health:**

- Almost one half of all respondents reported being in worse health today compared to the day before the hurricane
- An analysis of the seven items on the Ross-Morowsky depression scale shows a very high level of depression among the respondents
- Of the 321 households, 249 (78%) had at least some form of health coverage before the hurricane; but only 222 (69%) had at least some health coverage at the time of the survey.

## **Values and Attitudes**

- FEMA Park Respondents' values and attitudes with respect to the role of class and privilege are similar to the views of other low-income Louisianans

## **Acknowledgements**

- Eight outstanding students at Louisiana State University---2 graduate students and 6 undergraduates---made substantial contributions to this research. The graduate students were Ashley Barras and Aaryn Ward, both in the Department of Sociology. The undergraduates who helped administer the face-to-face surveys included Jan Vincent, Holly Callender, Summer Clark, Chinwe Onyenekwu, Julia Bent, Brooklyn Cole, and Elizabeth "Tuyl" Fletchinger.
- Kim Landry of the Louisiana Family Recovery Corps helped us gain entry into FEMA parks, and provided us with practical information about each of the parks
- The contracts personnel at the LSU AgCenter worked diligently to enable this research to get started and completed in a timely manner.
- We greatly appreciate the cooperation of the directors of the three FEMA parks, and the managers of the commercial park who assisted us in many ways with the research.
- Finally, we would like to thank security personnel at Crying Eagle, Diamond, and Mount Olive FEMA parks. In each location, security provided enough of a presence to enable us to feel secure when conducting our survey research. At the same time, all security demonstrated a respect for the research process, providing us the space to conduct interviews in private, and respecting respondents' anonymity.

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## RESEARCH LOCATIONS, SAMPLE STATISTICS, RESPONSE RATES

### Locations of Research

The Louisiana FEMA Park Survey was conducted in four regions of the state: Region 1 (Orleans Area), Region 2 (Baton Rouge Area), Region 4 (Lafayette Area), and Region 5 (Lake Charles Area). In total, 321 surveys were completed at ten FEMA and commercial parks housing FEMA mobile homes or trailers as follows:

Table 1: FEMA and Commercial Parks Included in Study

<u>Site Number</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Site Type</u>	<u>Type<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Number</u>
1 Diamond	Plaquemines	FEMA	TT	70
2 Convent MHP	St. James	Commercial	MH	36
3 Mt. Olive	Baton Rouge	FEMA	TT	23
4 Flares	Baton Rouge	Commercial	MH	39
5 Granberry	Baton Rouge	Commercial	MH	7
6 Chase RV	Lafayette	Commercial	TT	20
7 Belle Place	Lafayette	Commercial	MH	13
8 Bayou Wilderness	Lafayette	Commercial	TT	22
9 Countryside	Lafayette	Commercial	MH	10
10 Crying Eagle	Lake Charles	FEMA	MH/TT	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>Louisiana</b>			<b>321</b>

<sup>1</sup> TT=Travel Trailer, MH=Mobile Home

Figure 1 shows the 10 park locations on the Louisiana Map. The selection of sites came from discussions with personnel at funding agencies. Before entering FEMA parks to conduct surveys, we sought and received permission from park directors. Also, we informed commercial park managers or owners of our research in three instances when they were available. At the remaining commercial parks, we were unable to locate or contact any authority.

Satellite photographs of some research locations are included in the Appendix.

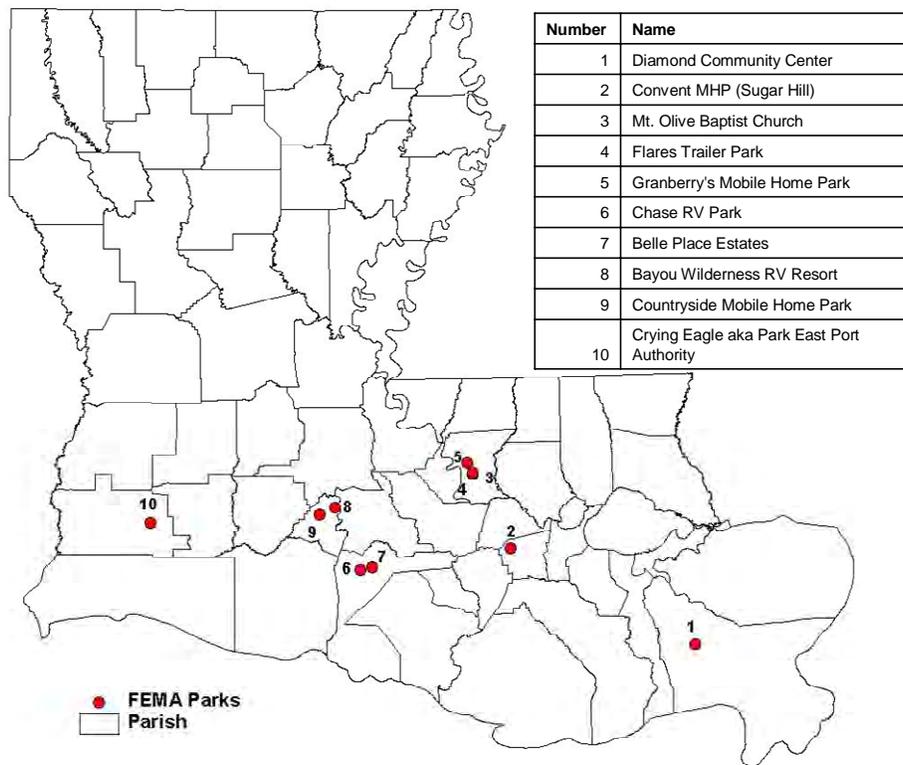
### Sample Information

Before initiating field research, we planned to collect lists and/or maps, either from park directors or on our own by doing a drive through, and use them to generate an approximate random sample. We abandoned this strategy once we realized how many residences would be unavailable during the times we selected for the interviews.

**Gross Response Rate = 26%** One in four residences approached resulted in survey

In most cases, we failed to conduct an interview because no one answered the door.

Figure 1: Locations of Sites for Louisiana FEMA Park Survey



**Answer Rate = 39%**      Of every five doors we knocked on, two were answered

Therefore, it quickly became clear that we would need to knock on just about every door to obtain the number of interviews we needed. Therefore, we changed our strategy to systematically knock on every door in the park, with three exceptions. In one large park we completed all needed surveys without having to knock on every door. In two smaller locations, one in Lafayette and one in Baton Rouge, we completed all the surveys we had before approaching every trailer or mobile home. Further, all our surveys were conducted in the late afternoon/early evening, or on weekends, enabling us to get the broadest possible sample, given the short time frame we had.

Of those who answered the door, most agreed to participate in the survey

**Participation Rate = 67%**      Two of three doors answered resulted in survey

Sometimes, the individual who answered the door was ineligible for the survey, either because they were children, other relatives, or friends of the person assigned the trailer by FEMA, or because they had lived in the park for less than one month.

**Eligibility Rate = 91%** In nine of ten cases, when the door was answered there was an person eligible to take the survey

So, if we only consider cases where an eligible person was available, the actual refusal rate was quite low

**Refusal Rate = 26%** One in four eligible respondents refused to take surveys

While we did experience outright refusals, the majority were “soft refusals”. Examples of soft refusals include (1) time constraints (just about to go to work, to visit a relative, to the store etc.); (2) illness and not feeling up to it at the moment; and (3) bad timing (busy cooking, watching children, doing laundry, etc.). In some cases, those who initially refused were later interviewed. Unfortunately, we failed to take detailed enough field notes to more precisely calculate refusal rates, but the one were used is the most conservative rate (it assumes none who refused were interviewed later).

**Net Response Rate = 74%** Three of four eligible respondents took the survey

My impression is that the appreciation (\$20 Wal-Mart Card) offered respondents significantly increased our acceptance rate. I conducted 63 interviews myself, and recall several instances where I received a lukewarm response to my initial introduction, then noticed interest increased when I mentioned the Wal-Mart card. Also, respondents sometimes visited neighbors after interviews to tell them about the survey (and Wal-Mart cards).

### **Combined Face-to-Face and Self-Administered Survey Strategies**

Before each survey, interviewers read a two-page informed consent statement, which was left with the respondent during and after the interview. After obtaining a verbal agreement of readiness to begin the survey, the main interviewer proceeded in two parts:

- First, interviewers conducted face-to-face surveys using a 13-page survey instrument. Interviewers recorded answers, and respondents were encouraged to read questions along with the interviewer, and to insure interviewer correctly recorded their responses.
- Second, interviewers gave respondents a self-administered portion of the survey to complete in private. In practice, the interviewer usually stepped far enough away from the respondent to allow them the privacy they needed to complete this portion
  - Respondents placed the self-administered portion in an envelope provided for this purpose, sealed the envelope, and returned it to the interviewer
  - Respondents were further asked NOT to discuss their answers with the interviewer
- This combined survey methodological protocol was established in an attempt to gain complete, honest, and accurate responses, while also providing some protection to the interviewers. Since interviewers would not know responses to sensitive questions

(e.g., whether they had been a victim of domestic violence, or whether they had contemplated taking their own life), they could not be required to report this information to any authority. Further, when the self-administered envelopes were opened in Baton Rouge they were matched to the remaining questions on the face-to-face portion of the survey, but neither portion contained names or trailer numbers. Therefore, individual respondents could not be identified.

- At the conclusion of the survey, each respondent was given (1) a \$20 Wal-Mart Card, (2) A brochure provided by the Department of Labor, and (3) a Contact Information sheet with relevant contact information about LSU, LRA, LFRC, LDOL, and various service-providers within the state and their particular region.

### **Data Entry, Coding, and Cleaning**

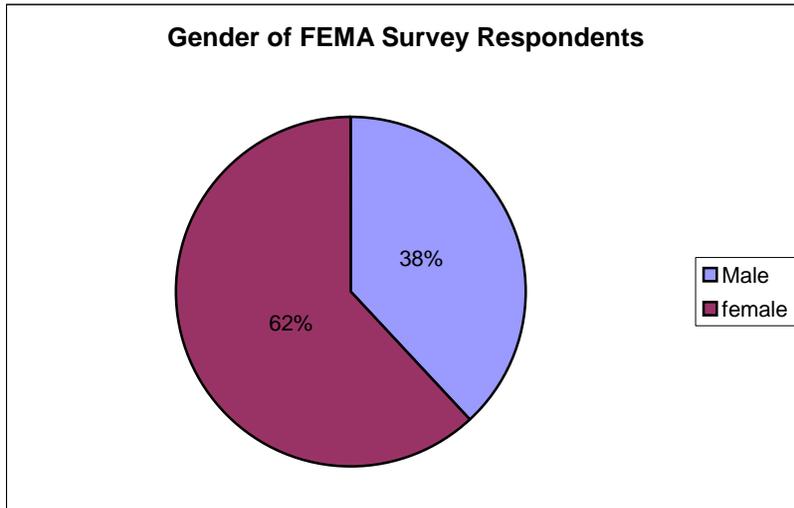
- An advanced graduate student in the Department of Sociology entered all the data from the surveys into an SPSS database
  - The PI and CO-PI performed spot checks for accuracy in coding during data entry
  - Future plans include additional checks on data entry and coding
- Once in the SPSS file, descriptive statistics were generated for all variables.
  - The data cleaning process included checks to insure summary information on all variables stayed within variable ranges
  - Again, additional checks are planned for the future
- The PI is satisfied with the quality of the data entry for this interim report, and for preparation and distribution of materials related to this research to policy makers.

## DESCRIPTIVE DEMOGRAPHICS ON RESPONDENTS

This section reports on basic demographic characteristics of the survey respondents.

### Gender

Figure 2:



- Figure 2 shows that 62% of the sample were women (N=199).
- The 122 male respondents comprised the remaining 38%.

### Age

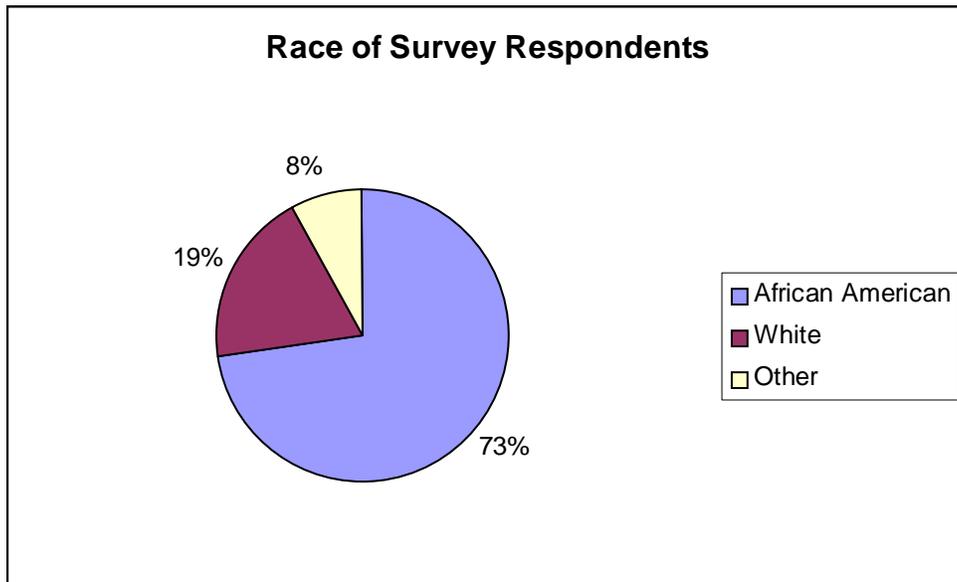
Table 2: Age of Survey Respondents

<u>Age</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
18-33	108	34
34-49	108	34
50-65	83	26
66-82	19	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100</b>

- Survey respondents ranged from 18 to 82 years old, with an average of 42 years.
- The mean age for males was 46 years, while the mean age for females was 40 years.
- Table 2 demonstrates that more than two-thirds of the respondents were under 50 years old, and only 6 percent were over age 65.

## Race

**Figure 3:**



- We interviewed
  - 233 Respondents (73%) who identified themselves as African American
  - 63 respondents (19%) who were white or Caucasian
  - 26 who identified with individuals identifying with another race or had multiracial identities
- Three interviews were conducted in Spanish

## Marital Status

**Table 3: Marital Status of Respondents, by Gender**

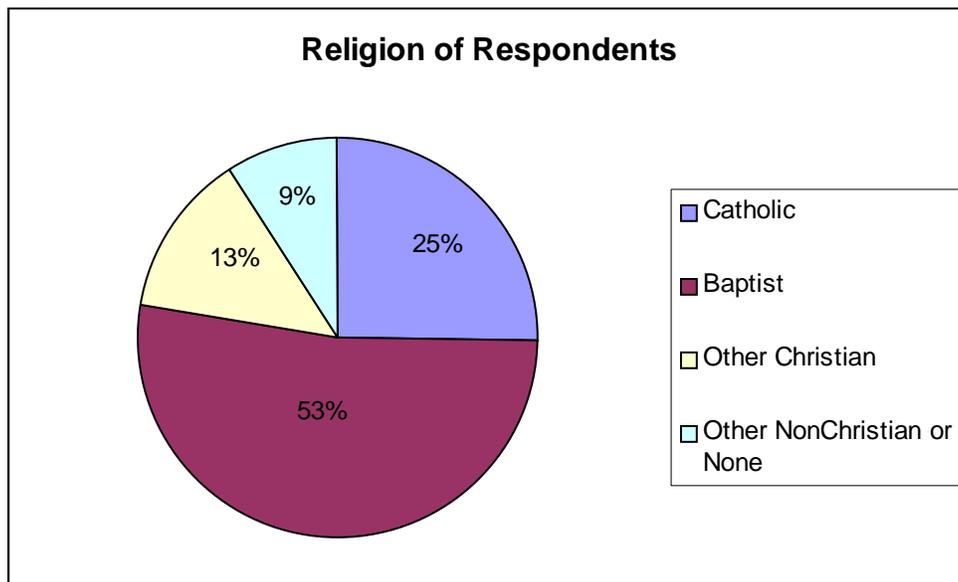
Marital Status	Full Sample		Male		Female	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Married	66	21	22	18	44	22
Living with Partner	33	10	13	11	20	10
Divorced or Separated	64	20	36	30	28	14
Widowed	24	7	7	6	17	9
Single	134	42	44	36	90	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100</b>

- Most respondents were single, about two fifths of the sample
  - A higher of percentage of women were single (45%) in comparison to men (36%)

- A fifth of the sample was married
  - Also, a higher percentage of women were married: 22% of women versus only 18% of men
- One in five respondents was divorced or separated
- About one in ten respondents was living with an unmarried partner
- Finally, about 7 percent of the respondents were widows or widowers.

## Religion

**Figure 4**



- The vast majority, 91%, of the respondents were Christian
  - Over half were Baptist (N=168)
  - Another fourth were Catholic (N=81)
- Only 9 percent were not Christian.
  - Most of these (17) identified with another religion
  - The remaining (12) stated they had no religious affiliation at all.

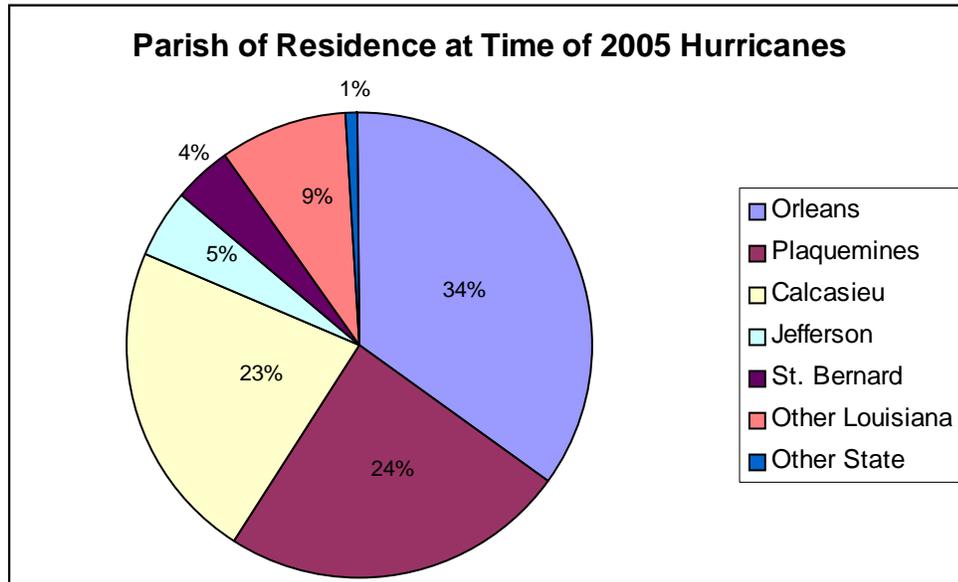
## RESIDENCE: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE PLANS

This section of the report describes respondents past and present residence situation, and future residency plans.

### Pre-Hurricane Location

Respondents came from 21 parishes in Louisiana and three other states as shown in Figure 5:

**Figure 5**



- Evacuees from Orleans Parish were among respondents in all five locations, and made up the majority in Convent, Baton Rouge, and Lafayette.
- Most of the respondents in Port Sulphur and Lake Charles FEMA parks were from Plaquemines Parish and Calcasieu Parish, respectively.
- Most of the Respondents from other regions were evacuees from Orleans Parish: 80% of Convent Respondents, 63% of Baton Rouge Respondents, and 55% of Lafayette Respondents.

### Pre-Hurricane Length of Residency

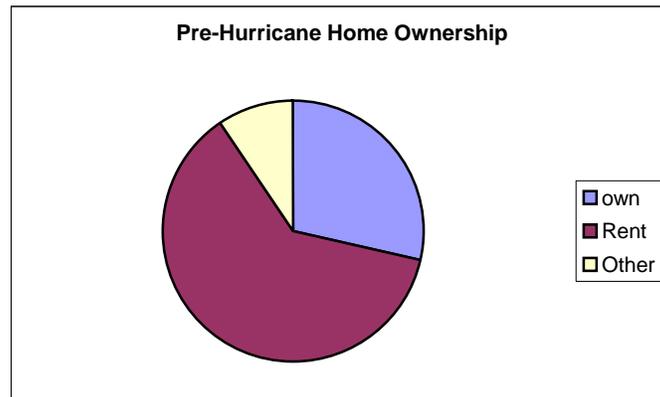
**Table 4: Number of Years Living in Pre-Hurricane Residence**

<u>Years</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cum. Percent</u>
<1	26	8	8
1-2 years	83	26	34
3-5 years	36	11	45
5-10 years	41	13	58
>10 years	138	42	100

- The length of pre-hurricane residency ranged from a few months to 82 years
- **The average length of time pre-hurricane residency was 14 years.**
- 16% had lived in their pre-hurricane residence less than 1 year.
- 34% had lived in their pre-hurricane residence less than 2 years.
- 45% had lived in their pre-hurricane residence less than 5 years.
- **Two in five respondents still living in FEMA parks had lived in their pre-hurricane residence for over 10 years.**

### Pre-Hurricane Home Ownership

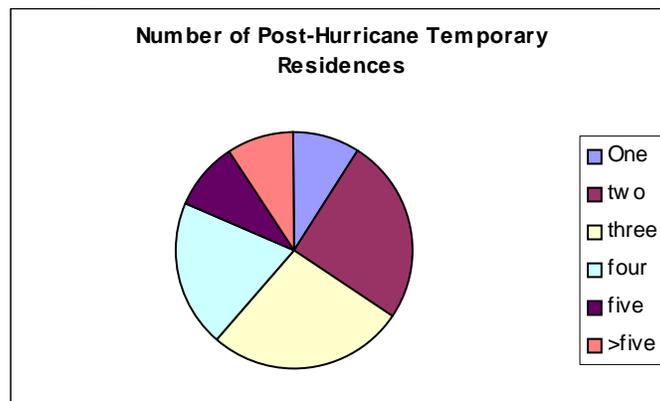
**Figure 6**



- Most respondents were renters (62%)
- **Yet, 92 of the 321 respondents (29%) had owned their pre-hurricane residences**
- 8% lived with family or friends, while 1% had some other living situation.

### Post-Hurricane Mobility

**Figure 7**



- Respondents had lived in an average of three other locations before moving to their current residence.
- 111 respondents (35%) were living in the first or second location since they evacuated their residence.
- Most, 181 respondents (56%) had lived in three to five locations since the hurricanes
- 29 (9%) had moved lived in more than five locations since the hurricanes.

**Length of stay in trailer park**

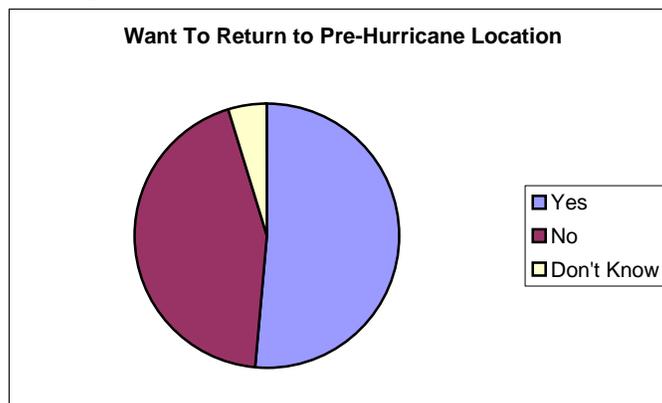
- The average length of stay at current location was 10 months
- The minimum length of stay at current location was one month (a requirement to be eligible for the survey, and less than 10% had been in current location less than three months
- **Over 40% of respondents had been living at current respondents for more than one year**
- The average length of stay varied somewhat across locations:
  - The shortest average length of stay was in Convent respondents (7.7 months)
  - The longest average length of stay was in Lafayette (13.8 months)

**Expected future Length of Stay**

- **Nearly half the sample (154 respondents) were either unable or unwilling to speculate as to how much longer they would stay at their current location**
  - Homeowners typically said they were “waiting on Road Home”.
  - Other common responses included “until they tell me I have to move somewhere else” and “as long as they let me”
- Of those who answered the questions, the average length of time respondents expected to remain at current residence was five months:
  - Five months is consistent with another common response, “they say we have until August”.

**Desire to Return to Pre-Hurricane Location**

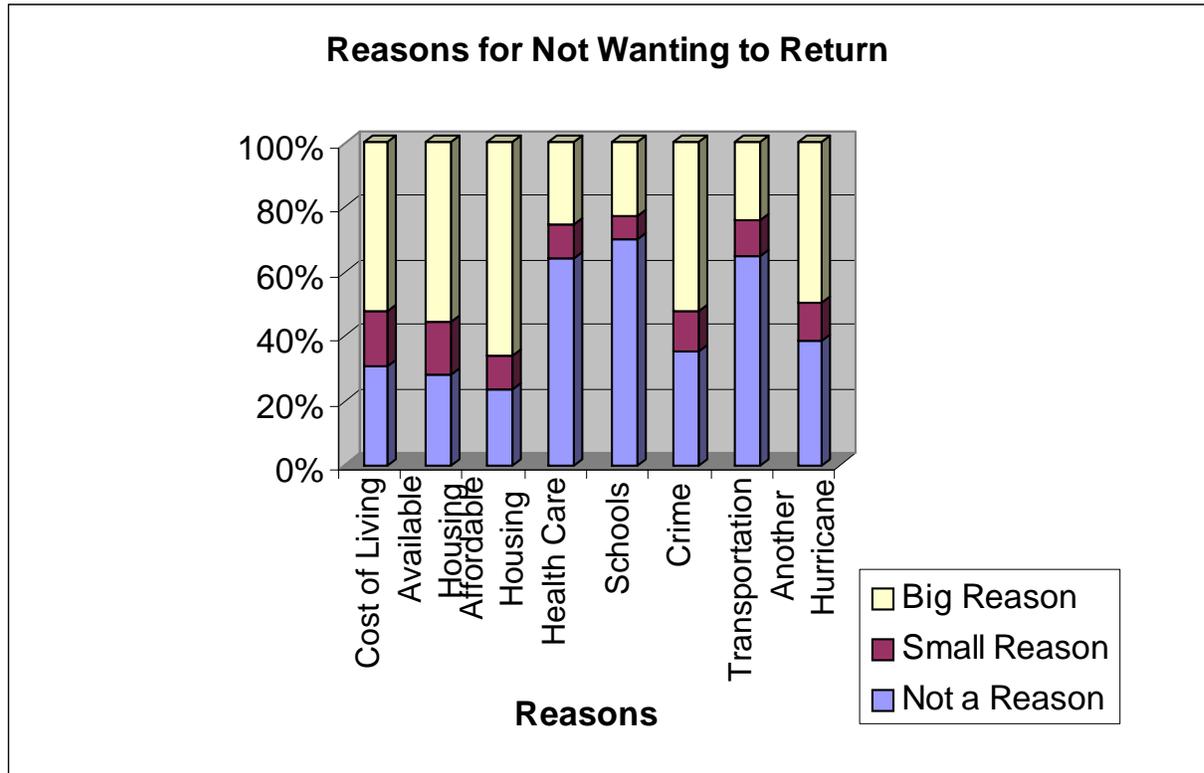
**Figure 8**



- Figure 8 demonstrates respondents were split about their desire to return to their pre-hurricane location, with slightly over half (51%) saying they would like to return, about 44% saying they did not want to return, and 5% uncertain
- Desire to return varied across the five locations:
  - More than 86% of Plaquemines respondents want to return to their pre-hurricane location
  - Only 37% of Lake Charles respondents want to return to their pre-hurricane location
  - About half the respondents in Convent, Baton Rouge, and Lafayette wanted to return

### Reasons Respondents Do Not Want to Return (N=123)

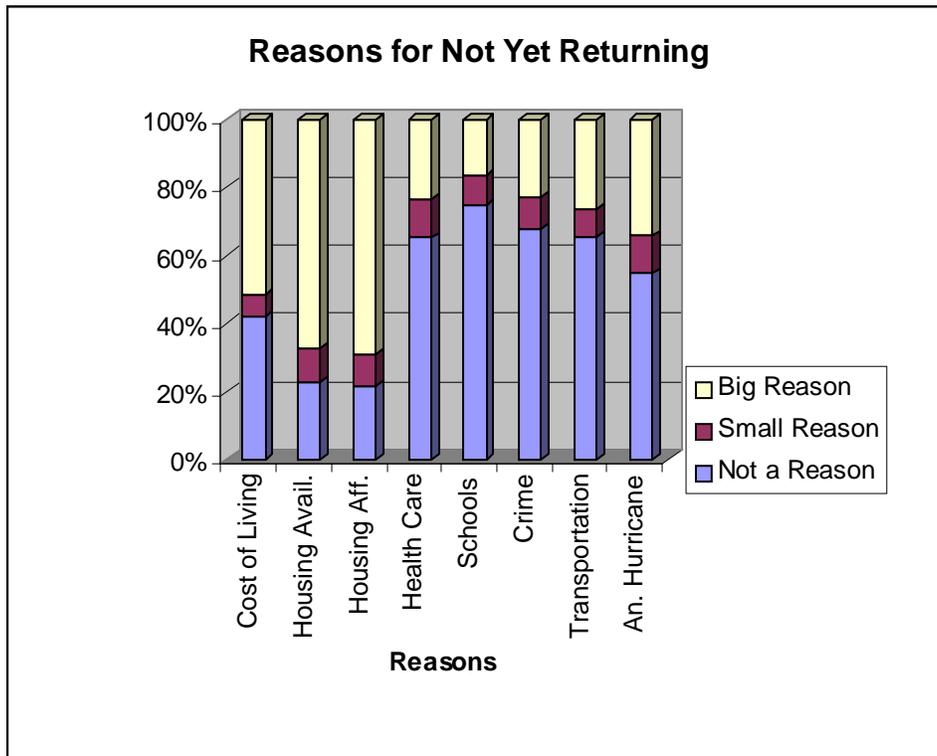
Figure 9



- Figure 9 shows most of those who do not want to return to their pre-hurricane location cited high cost of living (58%), lack of available housing (60%), and lack of affordable housing (65%) as “big” reasons
- Crime and Concern about another hurricane or disaster were also cited by more than half as reasons for not wanting to return
- Concerns about health care, schools, and transportation were not as prominent.

## Reasons Respondents Have Not Yet Returned (N=162)

Figure 10

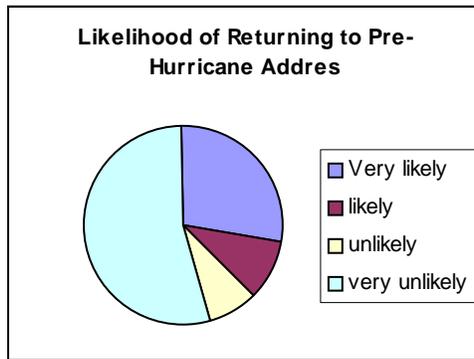


- Like those who do not want to return, Figure 10 indicates that FEMA park respondents wanting to return to their previous location also cite financial issues as the main reasons they have not yet done so.
- Still, about 1 in 4 respondents list health care, schools, crime, transportation issues, and concerns about other hurricanes as either small or big reasons they have yet to return.

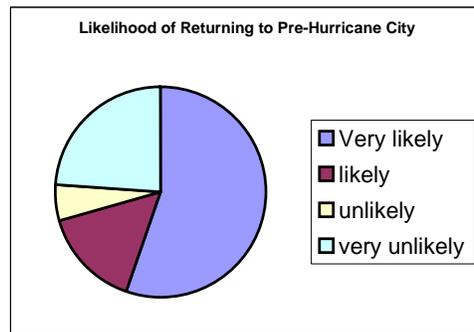
### Likelihood of Returning to Pre-Hurricane Location

In addition to asking about desire to return, we also asked respondents how likely it is that they will return (1) to their pre-hurricane residence and (2) in or near the same city they lived in before the hurricanes.

**Figure 11a**



**Figure 11b**



- Figures 11a and 11b above show only about two in five respondents thought it was likely they would be able to return to their pre-hurricane address.
- However, seven of ten thought it likely they would return in or near the same city they lived in before the hurricane.

**Household Characteristics**

**Table 5a: Average Household Size in FEMA Mobile Home or Trailer**

	<u>Average</u>	<u>Standard Dev.</u>	<u>Range</u>
Household Size	2.9	1.7	1 - 8

- **On average, about three people living in a typical FEMA mobile home or trailer**

Table 5b: Number of Occupants Residing in FEMA Mobile Homes and Trailers

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Cum Percent</u>
Single Occupant	80	25	25
Two Occupants	62	19	44
Three Occupants	67	21	65
Four Occupants	49	15	80
Five Occupants	37	12	92
More than Five	25	8	100

- A fourth of the respondents lived alone (these were primarily in travel trailers)
- A fifth lived in households of five or more people in one FEMA mobile home or trailers

Table 5c: Children and Other Adults in FEMA trailers

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Children	169	53
Preschool	80	25
School-Age	142	44
Other Adults <sup>1</sup>	100	31

<sup>1</sup> Adult children, or non-relative adults (does not include respondent, spouse, or partner)

- Table 5c shows that 53% of respondents had children 18 years old or younger residing in the FEMA unit
  - About 25% of households contained children aged 0 to 5 years
  - About 44% contained school-age children
  - Of the 142 households with school-age children, there were only two instances when children were not currently attending school (no explanations were given as to why the child/children in the two cases were not attending)
- Three in ten households contained adult children, adult relatives, or nonrelative adults
  - These figures do not include the respondent, spouse, or partner (in cases where respondent was unmarried, but living with partner).

## Experiences Living in FEMA Park

We asked a few questions aimed at discovering respondents' experiences living in the FEMA parks.

### Sense of Belonging

Table 6: Sense of Belonging

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Friends from Home	126	40
New Friends Made Here	193	61
People Living Nearby	199	62
Church	155	50
Park Administrators	184	59
None of the above	31	10

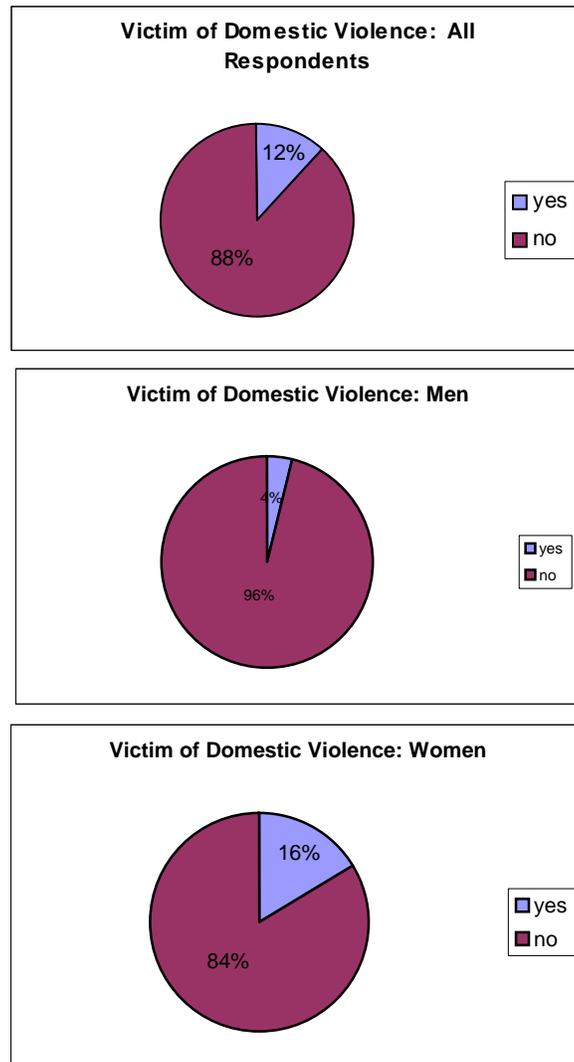
- Only one in ten respondents indicated that nothing gave them a sense of belonging at their current FEMA park residence
- The majority of respondents (three of five) stated that their new friends and neighbors gave them a sense of belonging
- About half the people stated their church gave them a sense of belonging
- The majority also stated the park administrators gave them a sense of belonging, but there was some significant variation by region:
  - The majority in all FEMA designated parks said administrators gave them a sense of belonging
  - In commercial parks, the majority in trailer parks and one mobile home parks said administrators gave them a sense of belonging
  - However, a majority in most mobile home parks had very limited contacts with landowners, and voiced more complaints about the property.

### Domestic Violence

Three questions were asked to assess the prevalence of domestic violence and the provision of services to prevent domestic violence

- The first question asked whether respondents themselves had been victims of domestic violence

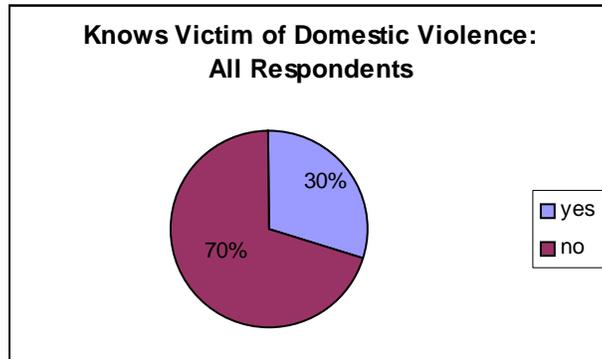
**Figure 12**



- Of the 294 respondents who chose to complete the self-administered portion of the questionnaire 35 Respondents (31 women and 4 men) said they had personally been victims of domestic violence while living in their FEMA location
- In other words **16% (1 in 6 females) respondents reported being a victim of domestic violence**, while 4% (1 in 20) males claimed to be domestic violence victims

- The second question asked whether respondent knew anyone living in his or her park who had been a victim of domestic violence, while living there.

**Figure 13**



- One third (88 of 204) said they knew a domestic violence victim living in the park.
- The third question asked whether domestic services were available

**Figure 14**



- The responses indicate that 40% (119) respondents had knowledge of services to help stop domestic violence, while
  - 27% (81) respondents said no services were available and
  - 33% (97) respondents did not know whether services to help stop domestic violence were available.

- **Security**

We asked a series of questions aimed at getting a sense of how secure residents felt in trailer parks.

Table 7: Security Risk at Park

<u>Risk Factor</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Feels unsafe	80	25
Unsafe for Children to Play	147	50
Afraid to Leave Home Unattended	136	46
Unsatisfied with Security	102	34
Had Property Stolen	93	31
Someone Broke into Trailer	56	19
Threatened with Physical Attack	56	19
Physically Attacked	24	8
Knew Someone Physically Attacked	96	33

- Although only one in four respondents did not feel safe living in their FEMA residence, more concerns were revealed by responses on the self-administered part of the survey
- **Half said it was unsafe for children to play around their park**
- Almost half were afraid to leave their trailer or mobile home unattended
- Over a third expressed dissatisfaction with security
- More than three out of ten respondents had property stolen from their trailer/mobile home
- Almost one in five had been threatened with physical violence, and a third knew someone who was physically assaulted in the FEMA park, although only 8 percent of respondent had actually been victims of an attack.
- Also, we did not ask specifically about drug-use, but respondents at every location expressed concerns related to drug use, drug trafficking, and violence associated with illegal drugs.
  - Security personnel assisting with our research in several locations also expressed a view that drug-use was a security problem.

## Social Services

Table 8: Respondents' Experiences with Case Management Services

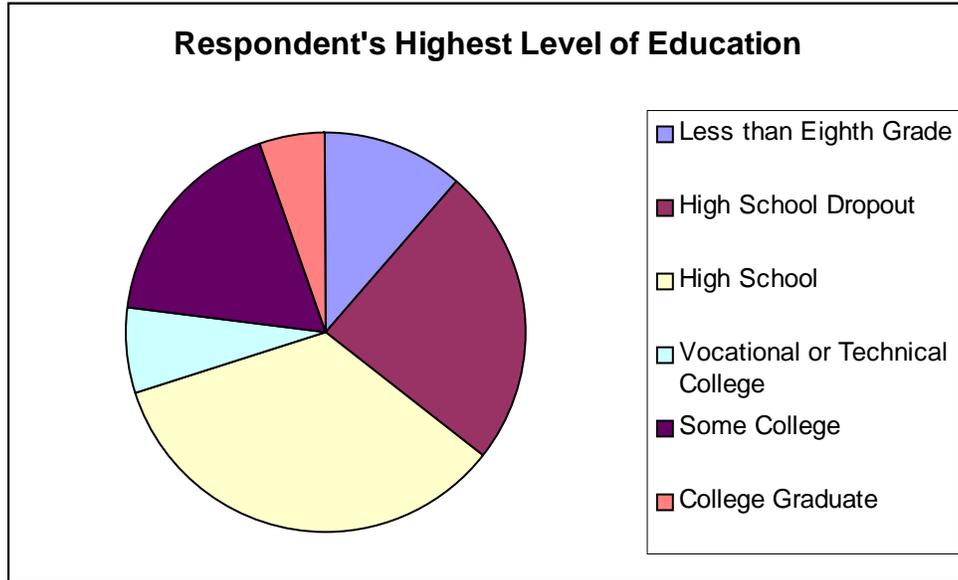
<u>Service</u>	<u>Number Receiving Before</u>	<u>Percent Receiving Before</u>	<u>Number Receiving Currently</u>	<u>Percent Receiving Currently</u>
Public Assistance	30	10	11	3
Alimony/ Child Support	28	9	28	9
Social Security, SSI, or SSDI	100	31	110	34
Food Stamps	163	51	169	53
<b>Any of the above</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>71</b>

- 229 respondents were receiving one or more public services at the time of the interview
- This represents an increase from the 212 who were receiving services before the hurricanes
- Over half the respondents received food stamps before the hurricanes, as well as at the time of the interview
- One third of the respondents received a social security benefit
- 10% or less received public assistance or child support, both before and after the hurricanes.
- Also, 43% of those receiving benefits before the hurricane received more than one of the benefits listed on the chart above (analysis not shown), but now only 33% are receiving two or more services
- 76% of respondents receiving services said they were “very” or “somewhat” satisfied with them; the remaining 24% expressed dissatisfaction with the service provision

## EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND INCOME

### Education

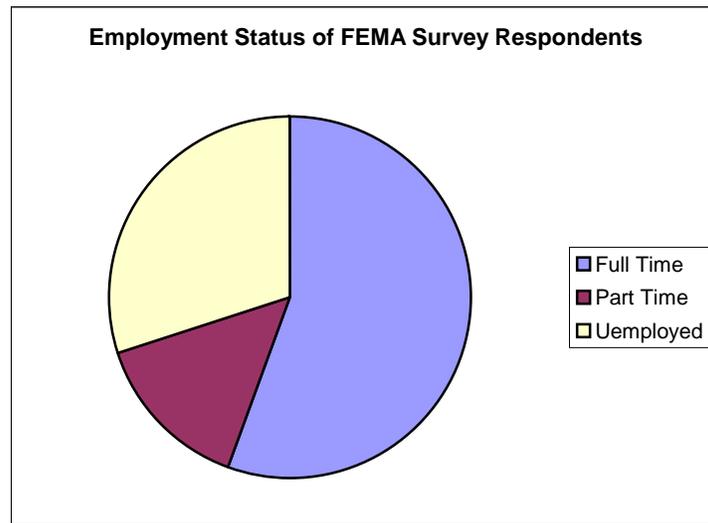
Figure 15



- **More than a third of the respondents left school before completing high school, more than one in ten left before completing eighth grade.**
- **On the other hand, 30% of respondents had acquired post-high school education**
- **Of the 73 respondents who went to college after high school, only 17 (23%) obtained a degree**

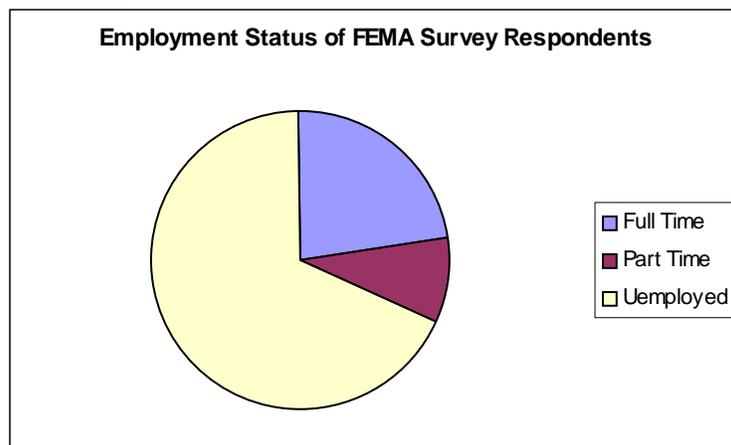
## Employment

**Figure 16a: Before Hurricane**



- **55% of respondents said they were employed full time before the hurricanes, another 15% said they had part time jobs, while 30% were not employed**
  - Of those not employed, most were retired, disabled, or homemakers.

**Figure 16b: Current**

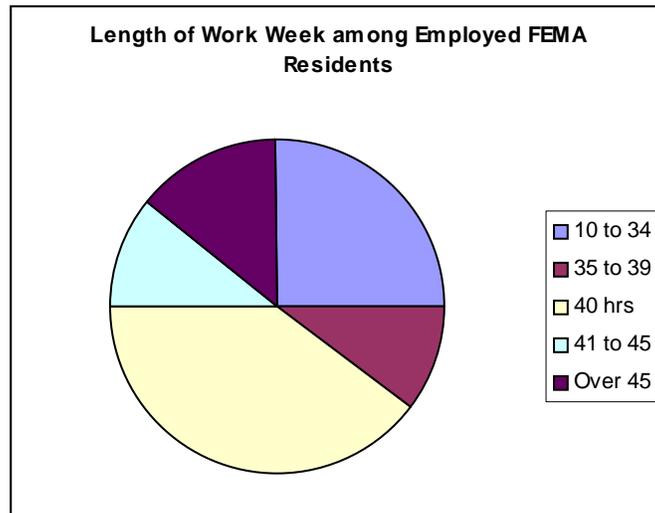


- **More than two of three respondents we interviewed were not currently employed**
- Of those employed, most were working full time
- Of the 23 respondents working part time, 75% said they would rather work full time
  - The reasons given for not working full time include child care obligations (6 respondents), health limitations (4 respondents), unable to find right situation (9 respondents), and others (4 respondents)

## Employed (N=98)

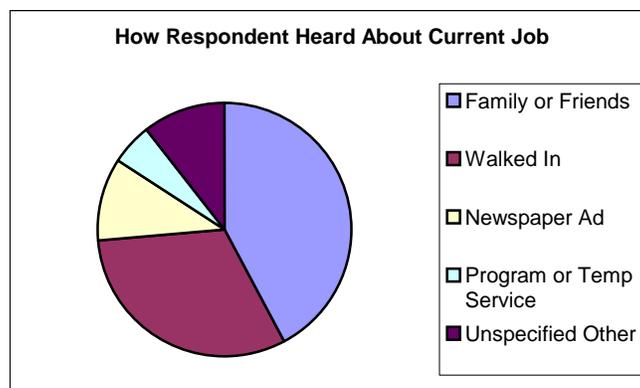
- Nine respondents (9%) stated they were self-employed, the remainder worked for someone else.

**Figure 17**



- The modal workweek for employed respondents was 40 hrs. About 14% worked over 45 hours per week.
- One in four employed respondents had been working at their current job for less than one month (4 weeks).
- About half had found their current job within the past year
- The other half of the employed were working at the same job they had before the hurricanes.
- One of three employed residents had health benefits through their employer

**Figure 18**



- Two fifths of employed respondents found their job through their family or friends.
- Three of ten applied directly to the company they worked for.

- Ten respondents (11%) got their job after responding to newspaper want-ads
- Only five respondents found jobs through a job placement program, job promotion program, or temporary service.

**Unemployed (N=217)**

**Figure 19**



- **Most unemployed respondents (58%) were not looking for work**

**Figure 20**



- **Of those not seeking work, the majority (60%) said they were disabled or had major health limitations**
  - Another 20% were retired
  - About 8% were caring for young children or disabled relatives
  - Twelve of the remaining 14 respondents (12%) stated some other, unspecified reason for not seeking work, the other two were in school.

Table 9: Job Searching Strategies: What Respondents Tried and Services to Which Respondent have Access (N=104)

<u>Job Search Strategy</u>	<u>Percent Tried</u>	<u>Percent with Access</u>
Ask Family/Friends	63	79
Go Apply Directly	70	73
Answer Newspaper Ads	52	75
School Job Placement	12	25
Government Job Placement	24	35
Job Promotion	11	25
Temporary Service	34	46

- **The majority of job-seekers have tried traditional, unstructured means for obtaining a job (asking family and friends, applying directly, and answering ads in the newspaper)**
- About one in three have tried a temporary service
- About one-fourth have been to a federal or state job placement program
- About one in ten have tried school-based job placement programs or job promotions
- Further, the majority of respondents are unaware of formal services to aid them in their job search
  - Only 46% are aware of temporary work services
  - On 35% know about state or federal job placement programs
  - Only 25% know about school job placement or job promotion services

### **2006 Employment**

- **Of the 321 respondents**
  - **152 did not work at all in 2006**
  - **58 worked all 12 months in 2006**
  - **The majority of the rest were unemployed for six months or more in 2006**
- About 20% of respondents had informal income sources (odd jobs, babysitting, pet sitting, braiding hair, caring for elderly, etc.)

### **Education or Work Training Program**

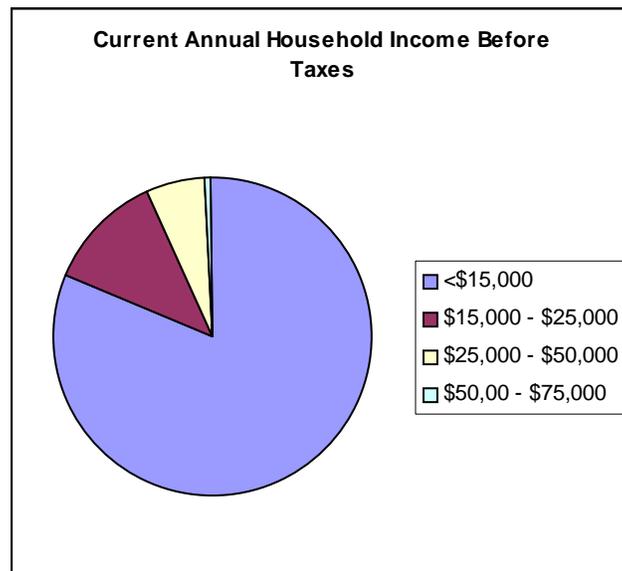
- **Only 34 of the 321 respondents had been to an education or work training program while living in the FEMA park**

### **Commuting Scenarios**

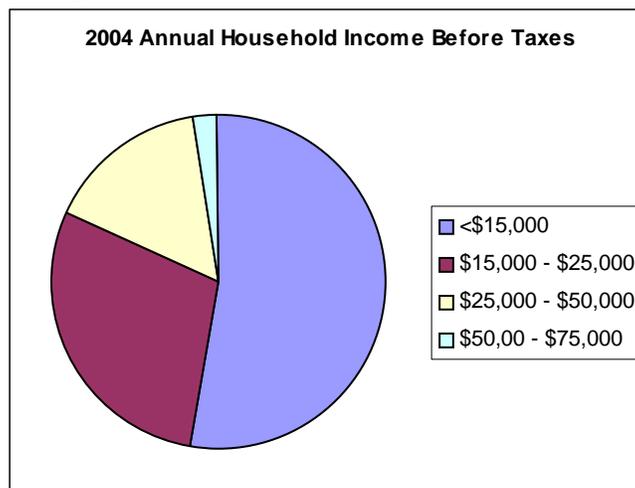
- **About two-thirds of the respondents said they would be willing to commute to work in New Orleans if transportation were provided:**
  - **Some also added a qualifier such as “if I can find the right opportunity”**
- About one-third of respondents said they would not commute to work in New Orleans, irrespective of state incentives to do so.

## Income

**Figure 21a**



**Figure 21b**



- The charts above show
  - **Over 80% of households currently earn less than \$15,000 per year**
  - Only 53% of these same households earned less than \$15,000 in 2004
- Over half (58%) of the respondents said they were in the same income category now than they were in 2004
- **115 respondents (36%) report dropping to a lower income category**
  - Most of these dropped from the \$15,000 - \$25,000 category to the under \$15,000 category
- Only 19 respondents (6%) report moving to a higher income bracket after the hurricanes.

## Health

**Table 10a: Current Health**

	Frequency	Percent
Excellent	55	17.1
Very Good	43	13.4
Good	87	27.1
Fair	82	25.5
Poor	54	16.8
Total	321	100.0

**Table 10b: Health Now Compared to Before the Hurricane**

	Frequency	Percent
Worse	155	48.3
Same	134	41.7
Better	32	10.0
Total	321	100.0

- More than 40 percent of all respondents assessed their health as fair or poor, with 30 percent saying their health is very good to excellent.
- **Almost one half of all respondents reported being in worse health today compared to the day before the hurricane,** with 42 percent reporting no change. Only 10 percent reported better current health than before the hurricane.

### Presence of Depressive Symptoms

To measure the extent of depressive symptoms among the respondents, we employed the reduced 7-item Ross-Morowsky scale of the larger standard 20-item CES-D depression scale. The scale items are as follows:

How many days during the past week would you say:

1. You felt you just couldn't get going
2. You felt sad
3. You had trouble getting or staying asleep
4. You felt that everything you did was an effort
5. You felt lonely;
6. You felt that you could not shake the blues;
7. You had trouble keeping your mind on what you were doing.

The scale ranges from 0 to 49, with 0 indicating complete absence of depressive symptoms and 49 signifying severe depression. A level of 12 and over is considered to be an indication of mild clinical depression.

**Table 11: Mean, Minimum, and Maximum of Single Items and Overall Depressive Symptoms**

	days couldn't get going	days felt sad	days had trouble with sleep	days felt everything was an effort	days felt lonely	days couldn't shake the blues	days couldn't keep mind on task	depression
N	321	321	321	321	321	321	321	321
Mean	3.6	3.7	3.8	4.8	3.4	3.4	3.4	26.0
Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Max	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	49

- **An analysis of the seven items shows a very high level of depression among the respondents.** For almost all items, the mean is close or above 3.5. This indicates that respondents reported feeling that particular symptom for half the days in a given week.
- The overall measure of depressive symptoms (depression) shows a high level of depression.
  - In general, an overall Mean of 12 corresponds to the onset of clinical depression
  - Our overall mean is 26, more than twice this level!
- Previous studies show that poor people have higher levels of depressive symptoms than more well-off people. The authors carried out a five-year panel study of TANF participants who, by definition, are among the poorest population group.
  - Their depression levels were about 18, almost one-third below that of the FEMA-trailer residents who, on average, are somewhat better off than TANF recipients.
  - This comparison shows the severity of depressive symptoms among the hurricane evacuees still living in trailer parks.
  - Another way of comparison is that to a more general population. In a study for the Louisiana Department of Labor, the authors reported depressive symptoms for metropolitan residents in Louisiana at a level of 10.

## Health Insurance

**Table 12: Health Insurance Plans Held by FEMA Park Residents**

<u>Plan Type</u>	<u>Number Before</u>	<u>Percent Before</u>	<u>Number Now</u>	<u>Percent Now</u>
Private	70	22	48	15
Medicare	59	18	66	21
Medicaid	148	46	142	44
Military	14	4	12	4
Government	19	6	11	3
Some	249	78	222	69
None	86	27	108	34

- **Of the 321 households, 249 (78%) had at least some form of health coverage before the hurricane; but only 222 (69%) had at least some health coverage at the time of the survey.**
- The survey findings indicate that the percentage of respondent with private, employer-based healthcare dropped from 70 before the hurricanes to 48 after the hurricanes, a decrease from 22% to 15%
- The percentage of households with at least one member having no insurance coverage at all (None Category) increased from 27% before to 34% after the hurricanes, respectively

### VALUES AND ATTITUDES

- The General Social Survey has regularly asked two questions about people’s values that are related to the belief that what one achieves in society is mostly based on individual efforts and less on social background.
- Many people buy into this individualistic orientation (although social science has clearly demonstrated a strong positive relationship between parental income and that of their offspring), and these values are seen as an indication for attachment to and success in the labor market.
- The two items read as follows:
  1. “A person from a wealthy family has a better chance of making a lot of money than a person whose parents are poor”
  2. “In America, what you achieve large depends on family background.”
- Respondents were asked their agreement/disagreement on a 5-point scale, with 1=agree strongly and 5= disagree strongly.

**Table 13: Wealthy Family vs. Poor Family Making Money**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Agree strongly	101	33.1
	Agree	49	16.1
	Neutral	44	14.4
	Disagree	68	22.3
	Disagree strongly	43	14.1
	Sub-Total	305	100.0
Missing		16	
Total		321	

- Almost one half of all respondents agree that persons whose parents are rich have a better chance of making a lot of money than those whose parents are poor. Slightly more than one third of all respondents disagree with that statement.
  - Those findings mirror the results that the authors obtained from their Louisiana Welfare Panel Study in 2000.

**Table 14: Achievement depends largely on family background**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid		
Agree strongly	66	21.6
Agree	67	22.0
Neutral	39	12.8
Disagree	91	29.8
Disagree strongly	42	13.8
Sub-Total	305	100.0
Missing	16	
Total	321	

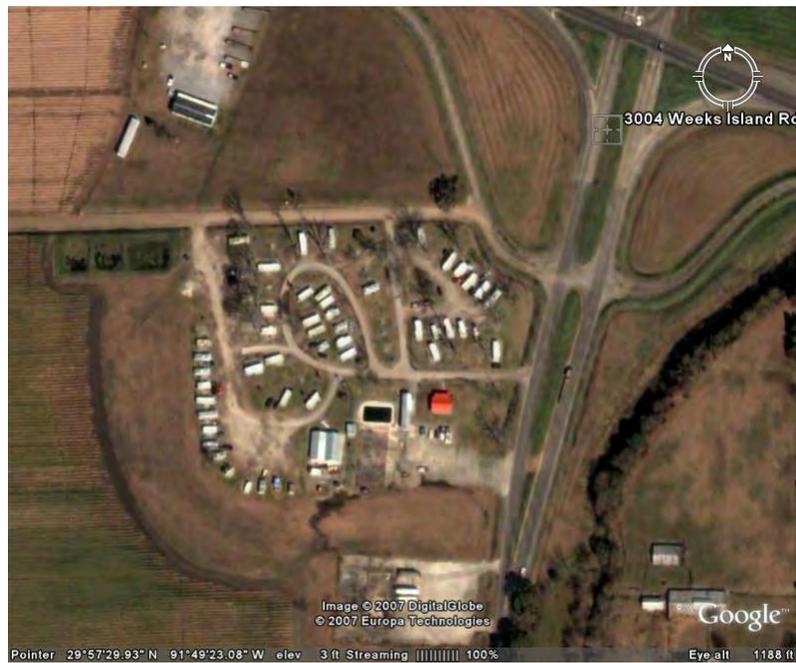
- The respondents were evenly split between agreeing and disagreeing with the statement that what one achieves largely depends on one's background:
  - 43.6 percent agreed with the statement and the same percentage disagreed with it.
- Again, the 2000 Louisiana Welfare Panel Survey showed a very similar result for this value statement.

## Appendix A

### Satellite Image of Diamond Park Port Sulphur, Louisiana



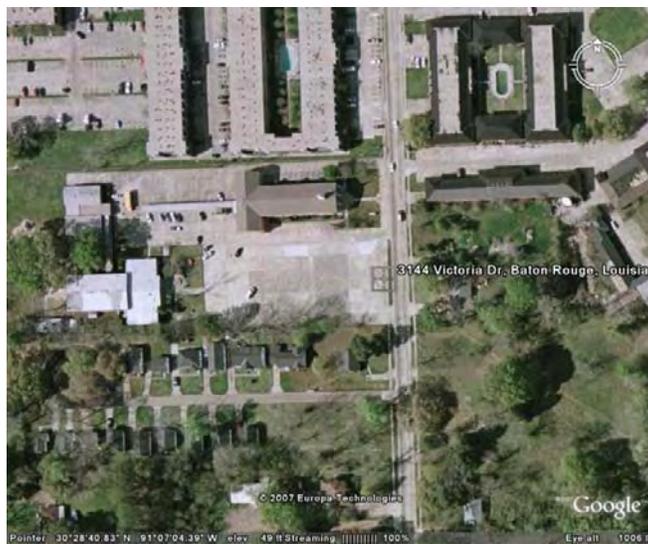
### Satellite Image of Countryside Mobile Home Scott, Louisiana



Satellite Image of Bayou Wilderness RV Resort  
Carencro, Louisiana



Satellite Image of Mt. Olive Baptist Church  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana



Note: Image shows parking area that now hosts  
120 FEMA Travel Trailers

Satellite Image of Flares Mobile Home Park  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana



Satellite Image of Granberry Mobile Home Park  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

