

I. Project Information*

Project Director	Michael Malcom
Project Title	From Resilience to Restoration: Leveraging Houses of Faith to Move the Gulf South
Project Location	<p>Our focus is the entire Gulf South, specifically, we have the goal to create faith-based From Resilience to Restoration Hubs in each Gulf South state, including a centralized, online database of resources geared toward adaptation and use by individual houses of faith. We have at least one partner organization in each Gulf South state, with whom we will be working closely to establish both the individual state hubs and the central resource database.* Texas - Texas Impact* Louisiana - Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy* Mississippi - Education, Economics, Environmental, Climate, and Health Organization (EEEECHO)* Alabama and Florida - Gulf Coast Creation Care (GCCC)(Alabama Interfaith Power & Light is a program of the grant lead organization, The People's Justice Council. The PJC operates nationally and internationally. We also will be coordinating efforts with Interfaith Power & Light chapters throughout the Southeast.)Our close existing relationships with the following networks will extend our reach throughout the Southeast and beyond:* Gulf South for a Green New Deal* Southeast Climate and Energy Network (SCEN)* Southeast Faith Leaders Network* Southern Communities for a Green New Deal</p>
Project Summary	<p>Archimedes once said, "Give me but a firm spot on which to stand, and I shall move the earth."</p> <p>Communities of faith are a firm spot from which to move the Gulf South--and the earth. We will work through existing networks and faith-based communities for a new, distinct activity: The creation of From Resilience to Restoration Hubs in each Gulf South state, including a centralized, online database of resources geared toward adaptation and use by individual houses of faith in creating local From Resilience to Restoration plans. The emphasis will be on the most vulnerable communities. Project Director Malcom will act as Restoration Hub Coordinator to facilitate the establishment of hubs in each Gulf South state.Our partners in this effort include both faith-based, interfaith,</p>

and secular organizations include:* Education, Economics, Environmental, Climate, and Health Organization (EEECHO)* Texas Impact* Gulf Coast Creation Care (GCCC)* Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy (GCCLP)* Interfaith Power & Light (IPL) chapters throughout the SoutheastEach of these partners, with their relevant geographic resilience activities, restoration knowledge, and networks of contacts, will be key to the establishment of From Resilience to Restoration hubs in each Gulf South state.

II. Progress Report Questions

1. Please revisit your proposal and review your goals and the outcomes you were seeking to achieve through this grant. How successful were you in meeting your goals? Please assess your success against the criteria you set in your proposal and use any combination of anecdotes, stories, graphs, charts, visuals as well as data to explain your success. Upload supporting files if you choose.*

(Attached)

Optional File Upload

[Final Progress Report Question 1.docx](#)

Filename: Final Progress Report Question 1.docx **Size:** 79.3 MB

2. How has your work benefited your organization, professional field, community, or other stakeholders?*

From Resilience to Restoration (FRtR) has benefited The People's Justice Council (PJC) by furthering our mission to engage and equip communities with tools and access to build power from the grassroots up for change at the policy level toward our vision of a world that is equitable and sustainable, with just policies, that place people and planet over profit. We have learned from—and been inspired by—every national, state, and local restoration partner in this process.

FRtR has benefited the frontline communities in which restoration plans were crafted in a multitude of ways that are as diverse as the communities involved, from Africatown, Alabama, to Unitarian Universalist Church of Jackson. In Jackson, where we held our third partner convening of the grant, we toured a former bottling facility with its own freshwater well now being refitted to provide clean drinking water to an EJ community. The diversity of benefits from other restoration plans include:

- Affordable housing
- Career assistance
- Civics and character traits education
- Climate action
- Community clean-up
- Community gardens
- Compassionate care of animals
- Cooling centers
- Dignity
- Disaster prevention and preparedness
- End of life services
- ESOL classes
- EV showcases
- Financial education
- Flood mitigation and prevention
- Food justice
- Formerly incarcerated services
- Grant assistance
- Greenspaces
- Home energy renovation workshops
- Immigrant/citizenship services
- Infrastructure
- Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) initiatives

LGBTQIA+ support
Local, worker-owned cooperatives
Minority-owned businesses
Native species
Nature trails
Permaculture
Pollution reduction
PTSD therapy
Public health
Public parks
Reuse and recycling
Renewable energy
Resilient and restorative spirituality
Support for teen mothers
Sustainable ranching
Thrift and freecycling
Tree planting
Unhoused assistance
Vegetarian/vegan diets
Workforce development
...and more!

FRtR has benefited other stakeholders through our extensive partnerships and networking, helping match resources with needs beyond the Gulf South and shifting the framework and focus nationally from resilience to restoration.

3. Are there any other successes related more broadly to this project that you would like to share with us?*

We opened our original grant application with the following quote: Archimedes once said, “Give me but a firm spot on which to stand, and I shall move the earth.” As we then proposed, and have since confirmed, communities of faith are indeed a firm spot from which to move the Gulf South—and the earth. Also, while we certainly can’t take all the credit for it, From Resilience to Restoration (FRtR) has helped shift the national focus from resilience to restoration. More and more people are recognizing what the wise old coach warns, that “We cannot win by playing a purely defensive game.” We must move from resilience to restoration.

4. What did you learn (positive or negative) as a result of this grant? What lessons would you share with other organizations or the field at large?*

Two key takeaways from our initial From Resilience to Restoration (FRtR) Gulf South cohort are:

1. Let the community drive the plan (i.e., our framework is a suggestion, not a constraint), and
2. “A few loaves and fishes can miraculously make a feast”.

Let the community drive the plan: While The People’s Justice Council (PJC) provides sample restoration workshop and plan templates, we emphasize that these are for inspiration, options, or starting points, not constraints. For example, while PJC’s Weatherize Every Residence in the South East (WERiSE) program is widely applicable and has been adopted into many restoration plans, it is not always a fit for a frontline community. For example, when PJC recently visited Camp Hill, Alabama (perhaps the first community in America to jointly suffer a climate and mass shooting disaster), locals needed roofs, not air sealing. Likewise, while our “3E” reporting framework to the National Academies is widely applicable, not every restorative action falls within these categories. Cultural restoration is a key component of several plans, and Education is yet another “E” category. And while many of our local partners are houses of faith, not all of them are. We have other nonprofit organizations and neighborhood associations driving restoration plans in some communities. For these, the Ecumenical category may be omitted or used in an ethical, philosophical, or other non-faith framework.

“A few loaves and fishes can miraculously make a feast”: Referring to well-known Bible stories of Jesus feeding thousands of individuals with a few loaves and fishes, we continue to be amazed and inspired by how, as we assemble a few individuals in a room or Zoom meeting, the resources to match needs almost miraculously emerge from the shared discussion. WERiSE is just one of many possible solutions that may emerge as we meet with and get to know frontline community folk. It is our practice to amplify local voices and (if asked) attempt to match resources with needs. It is the local folk who are the experts on what their community needs; not us.

5. How do you characterize your relationship with the GRP and what suggestions do you have for improvement?*

The People's Justice Council (PJC) wishes to express heartfelt thanks to the National Academies for your financial, logistical, and moral support of From Resilience to Restoration (FRtR). We wish to expressly thank Dawn and Gabby for their availability, friendliness, and expertise throughout the whole process. Working with them—and the whole National Academies team—has been a pleasure. We also appreciate your flexibility with minor budget changes and other necessary adjustments. Finally, a special shoutout to Olufunmilayo “Funmi” Chinekezi with the National Academy of Medicine for graciously donating her time as expert guest speaker on our last FRtR public Zoom of 2023!

6. Please provide any other feedback or comments you have for the GRP.*

We have no additional feedback or comments, but thank you for the opportunity!

7. If applicable, please identify and describe the ways you or your organization leveraged GRP's grant (e.g., other funders, volunteers who worked on the program, in-kind donations etc.) Please specify the value and/or number/hours of volunteers if possible.

Your faith in The People's Justice Council (PJC) has been a major factor in growing our budget (and thus our reach and services) from \$276.5K in 2021, to \$371K in 2022, to \$450K in 2023. Our mention of your support for From Resilience to Restoration (FRtR) in numerous grant applications has undoubtedly contributed to our success rate. We are very happy to relate one recent success that is directly attributable to your support: Just this month we signed an agreement with Climate Advocacy Lab and will receive \$15K in funding under their Climate Justice Microgrants Program for the purpose of:

The People's Justice Council will complete a 501(c)(3)-compliant toolkit based on the “From Resilience to Restoration” (FRtR) initiative. This toolkit will help individual houses of faith across the South create their own actionable climate action (restoration) plans. It will contain detailed guidelines, resources, strategies, and successful case studies from their pilot cohort in the Gulf South. Furthermore, it will be equipped with training modules to foster grassroots leadership within these communities, enhancing their resilience and restoration.