

WORKBOOK AND RESOURCES



CULTURAL STRATEGIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ADAPTATION AND MIGRATION

RESTORE
THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER DELTA



LOUISIANA
OFFICE of CULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT

ARTS • ARCHAEOLOGY • HISTORIC PRESERVATION • CODOFIL



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NOTE: This workbook contains more information than may be covered in the workshop.



PART ONE: UNDERSTANDING OUR SITUATION

GOALS

- ▶ Prepare for participation in the conversation with both other policy makers/planners and community members.
- ▶ Offer strategies and tools to face disruption and ground identity
- ▶ Provide examples and resources for community planners.

More specifically, this workshop explores:

- 1.** Understanding issues and patterns related to migration within the United States
- 2.** Key concepts such as adaptation, mitigation, originating and receiving communities
- 3.** The role of community culture in our sense of identity and well-being
- 4.** How culture, particularly attachment to place, impacts decision making about migration, which makes the human dimension an integral part of the community resilience conversation
- 5.** Cautions about the complexity of adaptation/migration planning.





PART TWO: CULTURE AS A RESOURCE

What is culture?

People who study culture generally define it as something like a complex whole, which includes all the knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, customs, and habits you acquire just by growing up in a place. It's the way of life that's characteristic of a particular group of people. Listed below are a few examples. And there are many more!

- ▶ Foodways
- ▶ Customs
- ▶ Traditions
- ▶ Beliefs
- ▶ Rituals
- ▶ Dance
- ▶ Music
- ▶ Crafts
- ▶ Stories and Legends
- ▶ Language
- ▶ Games and Riddles
- ▶ Occupations
- ▶ Festivals and Celebrations

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES: any activity that has significance to a culture and can be seen as a way of engaging in the culture.

Why is Culture Key?

Culture is the sum total of creative survival.

— BISHOP WILFRET JOHNSON,
PLAQUEMINES PARISH, LOUISIANA

WHY INCLUDE CULTURE IN PLANNING?

1. Culture provides a sense of well-being and community connections that will help people adjust/adapt to all the disruption. People with strong ties to culture and community support report higher life satisfaction. Culture is a source of social cohesion.. And social cohesion is a source of well-being, impacting both mental and physical health.⁶
2. There **will** be conflict between long-term residents and newcomers. There are cultural strategies to help newcomers and long-term residents adjust.

Holding onto one's culture, traditions, and networks can be as important to one's survival in a new land as gaining access to clothing, employment, and shelter.

Cultural programs create an opportunity for interpersonal interactions and for the development of healthy relationships between people who might not otherwise have the opportunity to do so.

*Social connections are critically important
for human health, happiness, and prosperity.
People need to sit down and eat together.*

— Surgeon General Report on Loneliness Report, 2023 | World Happiness Report, 2025

Well-being:

the set of needs and experiences universally required in combination and balance to weather challenges and have health and hope.

**Using well-being as a lens,
provides a way to bridge groups without judgement.**

Identify well-being assets in your community.
Provide well-being reservoirs (gathering spaces).
Be aware of well-being stripping from disasters.

– FULL FRAME INITIATIVE 2025

⁶ Sonke, J., Pesata, V., Colverson, A., Rodriguez, A. K., Carroll, G. D., Burch, S., Abraham, A., Akram, S., Marjani, S., Belden, C., & Karim, H. (2025). Relationships between arts participation, social cohesion, and well-being: An integrative review of evidence. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 13, 1589693. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1589693>

We connect those interested in the human dimension of land loss, transmitting culture in a time of disruption, and impacts of climate migrations.

WE OFFER

MONTHLY ONLINE GATHERINGS | WORKING GROUPS
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS | WORKSHOPS

We do not have all the answers nor support any one adaptation or management strategy. Together, we explore issues and options.

More information at
<https://slwdc.org/bayou-culture-collaborative>

Sign up for email announcements, Facebook and Instagram posts at
<https://slwdc.org/bayou-culture-collaborative>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Bayou Culture Collaborative /Louisiana Division of the Arts Folklife Program,
www.louisianafolklife.org/bayouculture

Arts, Culture, and Climate Migration Resource List,
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1BvVy5XoM7UOuiJL6inyJX4fXASOkzJhyh3QiSvqjcw8/edit?usp=sharing>

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