

BLUE PAPERS

Rural Development in Pervasively Poor Communities

- A sustainable quality of life in rural Louisiana depends on comprehensive and integrated human and natural resource management.
- Rural residents, through a series of dialogues and decisions, must determine what they want their communities to look like in the long term.
- Work is best begun on "common ground" issues that emerge from diverse cultural, economic and educational backgrounds.
- "Swat Team approaches" and short term solutions undercut the self-development approach and are too costly in the long run for tax payers to underwrite. America has spent trillions on poverty relief and our rural communities are more distressed than ever.
- Time consuming technical assistance and training on envisioning the future, strategic planning and creative problem solving, as well as building effective cross sector relationships only appear slower. These methods comprise a "bedrock foundation" to sustain economic development.
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The Governor's office should:

Build the capacity of Louisiana's non-profit Community Development Corporations (CDC's) and Community Based Organizations (CBO's). Preserve and strengthen this institutional base because it holds the most promise in partnership with business and government to effect lasting structural improvement at all levels of society.

1. Convene Louisiana CDC's and CBO's to promote effective planning, partnerships and resource development.
2. Establish real incentives for a philanthropy in Louisiana that support CDC's and CBO's as effective change agents in pervasively poor communities. Louisiana should give tax credits to philanthropists who invest in Community Development Financial Institutions in Louisiana.