

The Partners for Advancing Health Equity Collaborative hosted the 2022 Summit, *On the Front Lines of Equity & Justice*, December 4-6, 2022. The Summit brought together leaders in health equity and justice to foster collaboration across sectors and promote action for advancing health equity in research, practice, and policy. This report provides a synthesis of key takeaways from the plenary session, *Climate, Disasters, and the Future of Health in Gulf Cities*, hosted by John Sabo.

Session Voices



John Sabo, [Director of Tulane's ByWater Institute](#)



Jeffrey Darenbourg, [Councilperson of the Atakapa-Ishak Nation](#)



Jessica Dandridge, [Executive Director of the New Orleans Water Collaborative](#)



Shannon Antoine-Hardy, [Assistant Professor of Public Health at Dillard University](#)

Key Takeaways

Invest in long-term solutions to promote sustainable disaster management. Disaster relief must be focused on [ecosystem-based solutions](#) which address long term issues like food insecurity. Rather than waiting until the aftermath of a disaster to respond, working and learning from communities preemptively is needed. It is critical to listen to communities who are most impacted by natural disasters, such as [Louisiana indigenous nations](#), and focus efforts on the concerns and priorities of local leadership. Utilize existing regional strategies and trust that community members know their needs.

Prioritize community infrastructure needs over historical preservation. In some cases, enforcement of historical preservation [can prevent health equity progress](#). Sustainable energy grids are important for [climate resilience](#), but solar panels may not be allowed in historical districts. Other infrastructure projects, including [drinking water safety](#) and [affordable housing](#) investment, are critical for advancing public health. Cities can address housing affordability concerns by adequately enforcing short-term rental limits and vacancy taxes, while water oversight committees can ensure safe drinking water.

Take a measured approach to community investment. Community trust is necessary for residents to actively participate in the development of environmental policies. To build trust between the community and government-run organizations, invite conversation and transparent communication about the goals and costs of government-funded projects. If local leadership can create spaces for connection and trust building, it becomes easier to get residents involved in research and local initiatives. Existing [community knowledge is valuable](#): local leadership should respect the actions and information from residents to drive the specific investments necessary to improve [social](#) and [economic](#) prosperity.

Share your thoughts!

What did you think of this topic? Would you like to hear more from these speakers? Do you have any resources you would like to share with us? [Email us!](#)