

2022

Annual Report



INSTITUTE FOR
Sustainable
Communities

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A Message to Our Friends

"Our mission
is to create
equitable
climate change
solutions
around the
world."

We are pleased to share with you the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) 2022 annual report.

As the Board of Directors, we would like to express our gratitude for your unwavering support and share the progress, challenges, and future outlook of our organization.

At ISC, our mission is to create equitable climate change solutions around the world. We do this by forming collaborative, people-focused partnerships that support communities disproportionately impacted by the global climate crisis.

We are proud to report that our efforts made a significant impact this past fiscal year. In the following pages, we will highlight some of the outstanding work accomplished by our team and partners across ISC's program regions. We strive to prioritize and support communities to ensure that locally-led solutions to the climate crisis come from those most familiar with the needs of the people most impacted. Whether we are working with people of color-led community-based organizations in the United States, expanding gender-equitable green skills in India, or advancing sustainability interventions in textile and food factories in the Mekong, ISC aims to equip individuals, communities, businesses, and local governments with the tools to mitigate the impacts of climate change and build resilience.

A Message to Our Friends



LuAnn L. Bennett
2023 CHAIR



Rev. Eugene
Taylor Sutton
2023 VICE CHAIR

While we celebrate our achievements, we acknowledge the challenges that lie ahead in the fight against climate change. The urgency of the issue demands steadfast commitment and collaborative action. Moving forward, we will focus on the following priorities:

01

Scaling Up Impact: We aim to expand the reach and impact of our programs and projects by forging new collaborations, engaging with diverse partners, and leveraging innovative project models. We will continue to collaborate with other organizations to accelerate global climate action.

02

Adaptation and Resilience: Recognizing the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change, we will prioritize resilience-building efforts. By supporting disinvested communities and promoting climate-smart practices, we aim to enhance their ability to withstand and recover from climate-related disasters.

03

Lead With Equity: ISC understands that people who have contributed the least to the global climate crisis are impacted the most by its effects. The history of discriminatory policies and practices, including racial discrimination in the U.S. and gender discrimination in parts of Asia, has significantly increased the vulnerability of many communities to the climate crisis. Our programs focus on expanding agency and opportunities for these communities, fostering greater equity and inclusion, and centering the voices of those most impacted by the climate crisis.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our dedicated team, partners, and supporters who have played a crucial role in our accomplishments. Your unwavering commitment and passion have been the driving force behind our success.

Together, we can create a sustainable future for generations to come. We invite you to join us in our journey to develop solutions to address climate change and build a resilient world.

Our 2022 Board Members



Jonathan Lash

CHAIR | FORMER PRESIDENT,
WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE



LuAnn L. Bennett

VICE CHAIR
PRESIDENT, BENNETT GROUP



Ann Condon

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AND ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES, GE
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Nathaniel Smith

FOUNDER AND CHIEF EQUITY
OFFICER, PARTNERSHIP FOR
SOUTHERN EQUITY



**Reverend Eugene
Taylor Sutton**

BISHOP, EPISCOPAL
DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

Program Highlights

Partnership for Resilient Communities

The Partnership for Resilient Communities (PRC) project, funded by [The JPB Foundation](#) and now in its seventh year, had a strong year of collaboration despite the ongoing challenges of COVID-19. ISC engaged with PRC project partners during the year to discuss and provide technical assistance on their project implementation plans that included resilience hubs, green infrastructure and workforce development. “Virtual and in-person events were held throughout the year, including two mini-convenings: “Connecting Climate Leaders of Color Through the PRC,” which focused on green infrastructure, community resilience hubs, communications and marketing, storytelling, and coalition building; and the Dec. 16, 2021, “Equitable Narrative Building Technical Assistance Workshop,” which led to the completion of a [podcast episode](#) for each PRC partner.” ISC celebrated the work of PRC in April 2022, with our annual in-person convening in New Orleans, Louisiana, with our host partner [Healthy Community Services](#). Over the summer, we completed planning for Phase 2 of PRC, and [opened applications for our next cohort, which launched in Fall 2022](#).



Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact



The [Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact](#) (the Compact) has continued efforts to boost collaboration and build climate resilience across the region. Most of the Compact’s collaborative work came through events, such as the 13th Annual Climate Leadership Summit, which was held virtually Dec. 9-10, 2021, and included [more than 600 attendees](#). Prior to the summit, on Nov. 8, 2021, the Compact held a Regional Climate Action Plan Implementation Workshop titled “The Invisible Threat: Understanding, Managing and Reducing the Impacts of Increasing Heat.”

The Compact continued their e-newsletter series, sharing important updates about climate change mitigation efforts and sustainability news happening in Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach counties, the four counties represented by the Compact. In April 2022, [Why is Sea Level Rise Important to Me?](#), was released in English, Spanish, and Creole. This information flier provides an overview of rising sea levels effects on communities, and individuals, and steps local government and individuals can take to lessen impacts.

Program Highlights



Upper Texas Gulf Coast Regional Resilience Initiative

ISC's Upper Texas Gulf Coast Regional Resilience Initiative (UTRI) sought to increase the social, economic, and environmental resilience in nine of the 15 counties that comprise the Upper Texas Gulf Coast region. The culmination of this three-year project, which focused on developing cross-sector, regional resilience frameworks for communities experiencing inequitable recovery efforts after extreme weather events and other disruptions, was the creation of equitable climate recovery initiatives rooted in the centering of the health and strength of communities. In partnership with [Texas Southern University](#) and the [Coalition for Environment, Equity, and Resilience](#) (CEER), UTRI engaged community residents, business owners, and local and state officials in a series of small community group sessions to gather perspectives on what resilience and vulnerability means to these diverse partners and to identify solutions that bridge the gaps in recovery for communities most impacted by climate change.

UTRI's work [resulted in community-led climate solutions including a real time air-monitoring network](#) to measure air quality at various locations throughout the region and the development of an environmental leadership program. The Community Environmental Leadership Program (CELP) is a yearly experiential leadership training program designed to enhance community leaders' capacity, skillsets and technical knowledge to grow more fully into climate equity leaders. The program delivers tools, strengthens networks, and develops leadership across a representative cohort of community leaders. The inaugural CELP class certified 24 leaders equipped to improve community health and safety while shaping Texas' climate policies.



The inaugural CELP class certified 24 leaders equipped to improve community health and safety while shaping Texas climate policies.

Program Highlights

China DELTA

ISC's China Deep Decarbonization and Equitable Long-Term Strategies Alliances (DELTA) project was piloted in the Chinese cities of Tianjin, Guangzhou, and Changsha to develop a Climate Action Plan and an urban carbon neutrality best practices guide with a goal of helping China deliver on its 2060 Carbon Neutrality Pledge. In partnership with Swedish Postcode Foundation, DELTA provided local governing bodies and community leaders with the skills and experience to identify, prioritize, plan for, and implement decarbonization strategies over the long term and to create a roadmap to ensure a just transition. ISC's trademark Social Impact Assessment (SIA) tool was applied in these three cities during the carbon neutrality planning process and assessed 15 different indicators along six dimensions: green jobs, public service, green transportation, healthy environment, energy affordability, and good governance. The SIA tool made it possible for city stakeholders to conduct a quantitative assessment of the current circumstances and planned social impacts of a city's carbon neutrality development. **When the roadmaps are implemented, the three pilot cities will cumulatively reduce a projected 5 billion MTCO₂e by 2060.**



Clean Air Accelerator

ISC's Clean Air Accelerator (CAA) project was launched in partnership with USAID to address the growing concern of air pollution in Indian cities. The project aimed to complement India's National Clean Air Program (NCAP) and related efforts by regional stakeholders, including urban local bodies (ULBs) and industry associations. The project provided capacity-building support and technical assistance for implementing air pollution mitigation measures to the ULBs from all 19 cities in the state of Maharashtra that exceeded federal air pollution limits. Nearly 100 institutions were equipped to drive continuous emissions reductions and 45 institutions completed plans for interventions to reduce air pollution emissions. By working with school teachers to educate children on the harm of air pollution; city officials to intervene in transportation and waste emissions; and the construction sector to minimize its waste emissions, the CAA project made a tangible difference in improving air quality and public health in India's cities.





Program Highlight

More than 40 participants from 13 global apparel brands joined the event

The Mekong Sustainable Manufacturing Alliance

The Mekong Sustainable Manufacturing Alliance (the Alliance), developed in partnership with ELEVATE and the Asian Institute for Technology with funding from USAID, works with factories of global brands, including GAP, H&M, Puma, Adidas, Under Armour, VF Corporation and Victoria's Secret, on decarbonization and the enhanced treatment of factory workers in Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam. This year, the Alliance co-organized the inaugural Sustainable Supply Chain Meeting with H&M Group, the world's eighth most valuable apparel brand. More than 40 participants from 13 global apparel brands joined the event and identified common priorities, shared challenges, and concrete collaborative actions to improve sustainability performance while phasing out coal from their supply chain in the Mekong region. Additional events were held covering energy attribute certificates and thermal decarbonization to accelerate sustainable fuels for industrial clean heat solutions. The Alliance continued with its multi-pronged approach to engage factories and provide technical assistance on energy efficiency, renewable energy coal phase out, decarbonization, gender diversity, and respect for migrant workers. [Rooftop solar projects are underway at three locations, with a combined value of nearly 3 million USD](#), and worker training is underway to help increase knowledge about energy efficiency, renewable energy, and creating a respectful workplace.



Program Highlights

Women + Water Alliance

As an implementing partner of the Women + Water Alliance, spearheaded by USAID and Gap, Inc., ISC curated best practices, tools, and guidelines in water stewardship and pollution abatement for India's textiles/apparel industry. Engaging with government and private sector stakeholders to pilot these best practices, ISC demonstrated a water efficiency approach with cotton growing communities and successfully collaborated with more than 4,000 cotton farmers across 43 villages in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. With an additional focus on gender equity, [53% of the cotton farmers engaged were women](#), and 26 women-led, self-help groups (SHGs) were created to produce bio-fertilizer and bio-pesticide. This generated additional income for the women SHGs, more than 4,000 USD, and reduced the use and resulting impact of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Overall, the project reduced water footprint and greenhouse gas emissions of cotton cultivation while also [improving cotton yield and lowering costs to farmers](#). The impacts demonstrate a pathway for growing cotton in a more sustainable way, reducing the negative impacts to the health of our natural resources (mainly soil and water) in addition to raising the income for farmers. It establishes approaches that enable the shift towards the use of more organic inputs and lead to a positive behavior change amongst India's cotton farming communities.



ISC successfully collaborated with more than 4,000 cotton farmers across 43 villages



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