



Helping People – Changing Lives

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018

Approved by the ASSIST Agency Incorporated Board of Directors
September 22, 2014



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INTRODUCTION

Strategic Planning is a way for the ASSIST Agency to look back at where we have been, where we are now, and where the agency wants to be over the next 5 years. The development of a strategic plan is one of the requirements of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Organizational Standards. The strategic planning process is an excellent way to implement an organizational assessment of the agency and to ask the important questions about the future path.

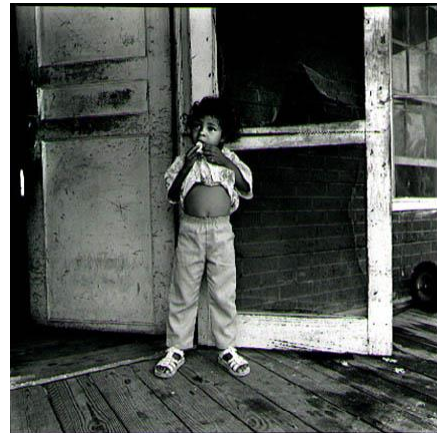
CSBG Eligible Entities are being required to achieve greater program accountability and measurable results. This Strategic Plan follows a core set of standards that to ensure that the agency will go beyond the basics of compliance and focus on high-quality performance and service delivery. The Board of Directors and staff focused on developing a strategic plan that would benefit the entire organization.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

PHASE ONE

The first phase of the planning process was to engage staff and board members in a conversation that would build a clear vision for the organization which would reflect on the historical perspective and still lean forward in order to develop a strategic plan covering the next five years. Key areas to be discussed were:

- consumer input and involvement,
- community engagement,
- community assessment,
- organizational leadership,
- board governance
- strategic planning,
- human resource management,
- financial operations and oversight,
- technology and data analysis



PHASE TWO

The second phase of the project served to define goals and objectives and establish a timeline for staff, board, and key partners, in order to implement the plan. The strategic plan will be implemented by a shared responsibility of staff, board, and key partners over a five-year period. The

idea is to plan a process that is engaging and matches the capacity of the communities to be served as well as resources of staff and board. Without buy-in from these champions, a strategic plan becomes one more report on the shelf.

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

The original assessment and the previous ASSIST Agency Strategic Plan, as well as additional research, was used to develop the strategic plan. An examination of the demographics, as well as future trends for the three parishes covered by ASSIST on poverty, employment, education, crime, and economic development was used in preparing the strategic plan. Research was also conducted with the National Association for State Community Service Programs (NASCSPP), Community Action Partnership and CAPLAW to assess current requirements and future trends in order to give a clear focus for the agency. The assessment concentrated on the causes and symptoms of poverty in the three parish area. 703 surveys were received during the survey period and the results are as follows:



- High costs of energy 29.5%
- Lack of affordable housing 10.9%
- Lack of jobs 10.0%
- Low paying jobs 7.0%
- Lack of health care 6.9%
- High costs of food 6.2%
- Lack of education 5.8%
- Lack of affordable health care 5.4%
- Lack of job skills 4.8%
- Lack of transportation 3.6%
- Domestic violence 2.1%
- Nutritional needs 1.9%
- High school dropout 1.4%
- High cost of clothing 1.3%
- Teen pregnancy 1.2%
- Crime 0.9%
- Substance abuse 0.8%
- Lack of child care 0.3%

Population Profile: Population Change

During the twelve-year period, total population estimates for the 3 parish area grew by 4.91%, increasing from 144,103 persons in 2000 to 151,181 persons in 2012. The greatest growth occurred in Vermilion Parish which experienced a 7.87% increase in population, whereas Jefferson Davis Parish experienced a 0.3% change.

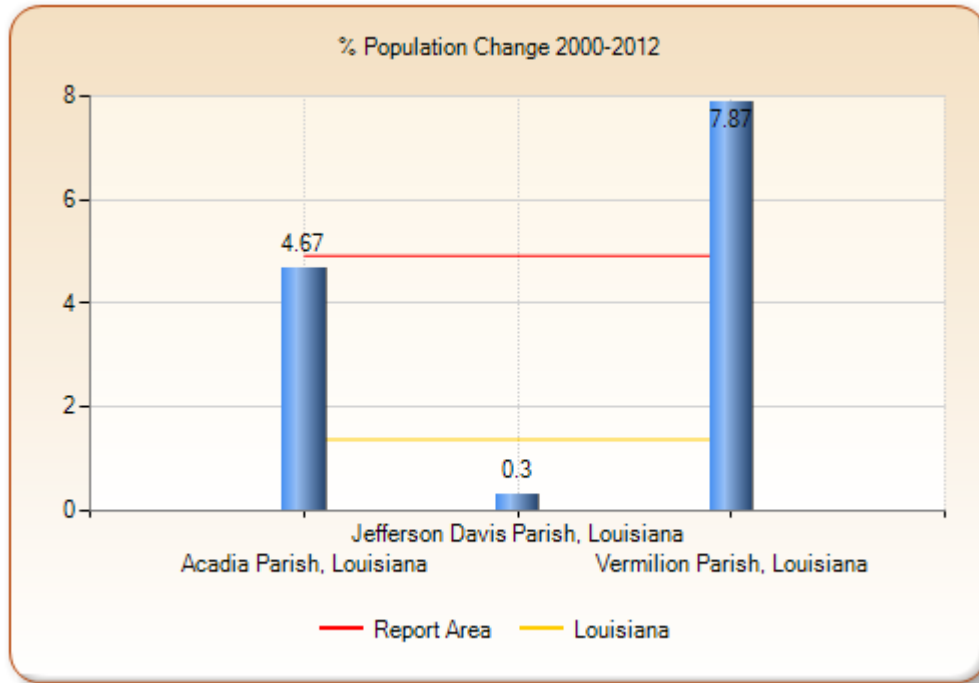


Table 1. Population Change 2000 - 2012

Geographic Area	Census 2000 Population	ACS 2008-2012 Population	Population Change	% Change
Acadia Parish, Louisiana	58,861	61,611	2,750	4.67
Jefferson Davis Parish, Louisiana	31,435	31,529	94	0.30
Vermilion Parish, Louisiana	53,807	58,041	4,234	7.87
Report Area	144,103	151,181	7,078	4.91
Louisiana	4,468,976	4,529,605	60,629	1.36

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Census 2010. Release Date: February 2011](#) and [U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012 Data Release, December 2013.](#)

Population Profile: Poverty, 2012

2012 poverty estimates show a total of 28,879 persons living below the poverty rate in the report area. In 2012, Acadia Parish had the highest poverty rate (20.7 percent), while Vermilion Parish had the lowest poverty rate (17.4 percent). Poverty information is at 100% of the federal poverty income guidelines.

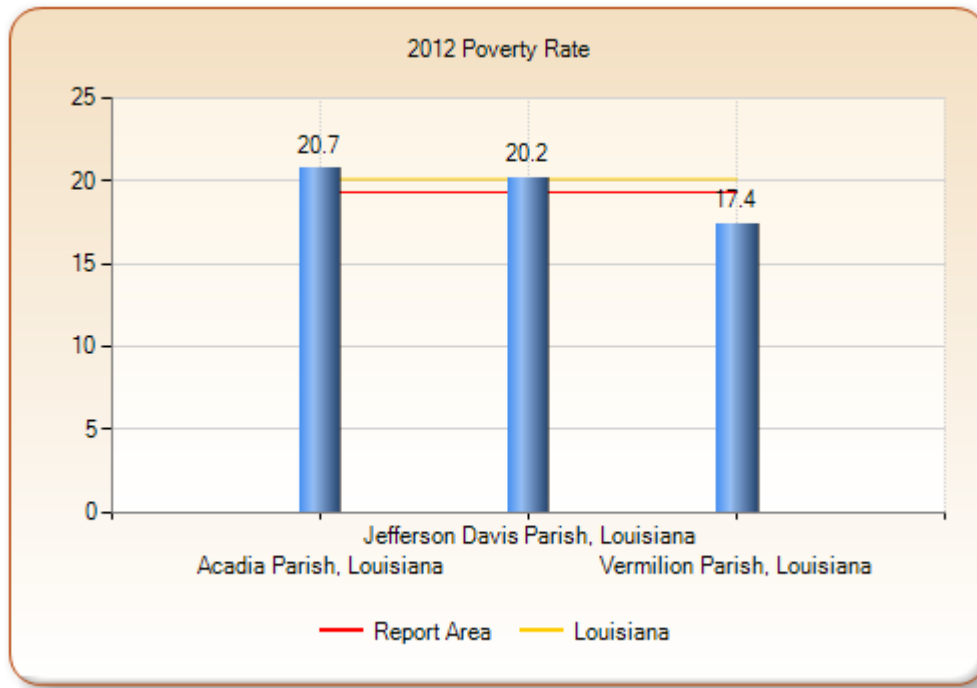


Table 5. Poverty, 2012

Geographic Area	All Ages		Age 0-17		Age 5-17	
	Number of Persons	Poverty Rate	Number of Persons	Poverty Rate	Number of Persons	Poverty Rate
Acadia Parish, Louisiana	12,596	20.7	4,625	28.2	3,236	27.3
Jefferson Davis Parish, Louisiana	6,203	20.2	2,141	26.4	1,436	24.6
Vermilion Parish, Louisiana	10,080	17.4	3,830	25.1	2,580	23.3
Report Area	28,879	19.3	10,596	26.6	7,252	25.2
Louisiana	900,395	20.1	315,185	28.6	214,695	27.2
United States	48,760,123	15.9	16,396,863	22.6	11,086,537	21.0

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates \(SAIPE\), 2012.](#)

Population Profile: Household Poverty Rate by Family Type

At 7.7 percent, Vermilion Parish had the lowest percentage of female-headed households in poverty while the Acadia Parish had the largest percentage of female-headed households in poverty. In 2012, it is estimated that 14.26 percent of all households were living in poverty within the report area. Of the households in poverty, female headed households represented 62.72 percent of all households in poverty, compared to 9.60 and 27.68 percent of households headed by males and married couples, respectively.

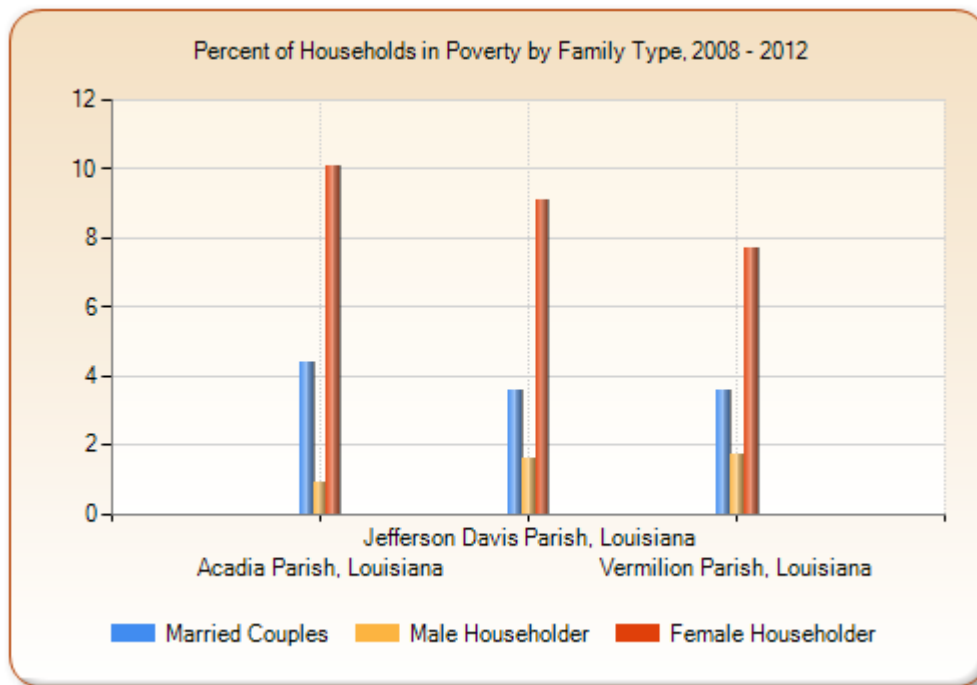


Table 10. Household Poverty Rate by Family Type, 2008 - 2012

Geographic Area	All Types	Married Couples	Male Householder	Female Householder
Acadia Parish, Louisiana	15.5	4.4	0.9	10.1
Jefferson Davis Parish, Louisiana	14.4	3.6	1.6	9.1
Vermilion Parish, Louisiana	13.0	3.6	1.7	7.7
Report Area	14.3	3.9	1.4	8.9
Louisiana	14.3	3.6	1.3	9.4
United States	10.9	4.0	1.1	5.8

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012.](#)

Employment: Current Unemployment

Labor force, employment, and unemployment data for each parish in the 3 parish report area is provided in this table. According to the U.S. Department of Labor in June, unemployment in the report area varies from 4.6 percent in Jefferson Davis Parish to 5.2 percent in Acadia Parish. Overall, the report area experienced an average 5 percent unemployment rate in June 2014.

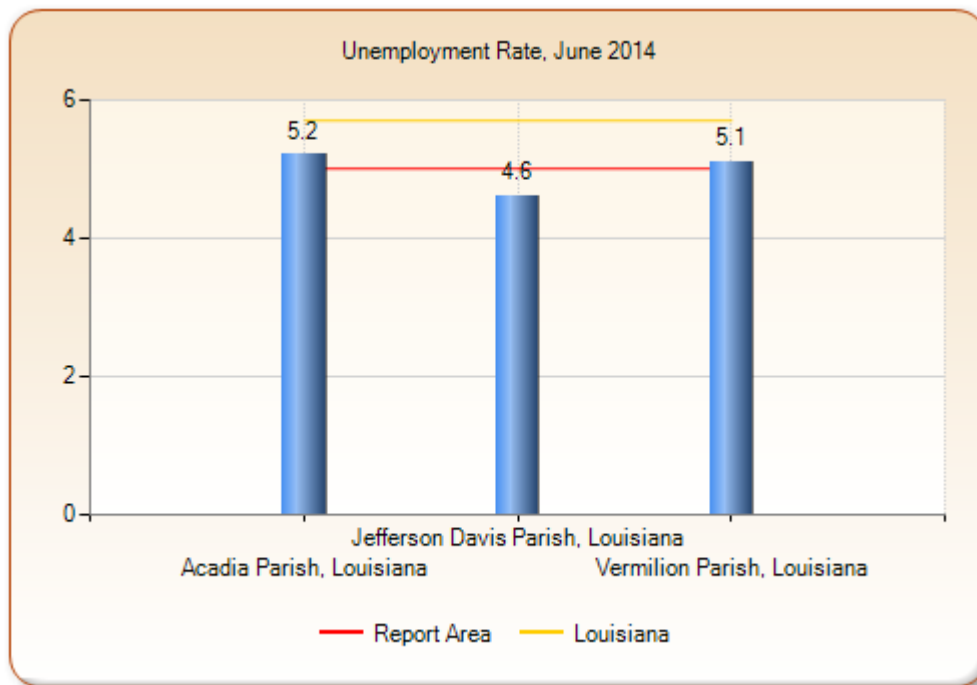


Table 18. Employment/Unemployment Information, June 2014

Geographic Area	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
Acadia Parish, Louisiana	26,092	24,742	1,350	5.2
Jefferson Davis Parish, Louisiana	14,967	14,276	691	4.6
Vermilion Parish, Louisiana	24,851	23,595	1,256	5.1
Report Area	65,910	62,613	3,297	5.0
Louisiana	2,135,386	2,013,688	121,698	5.7
United States	158,137,393	148,098,004	10,039,389	6.3

Source: [U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics.](#)

Education: Adult Literacy

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) produces estimates for adult literacy based on educational attainment, poverty, and other factors in each county/parish. Estimated literacy rates for the 3 parish report area ranged from 18 in Jefferson Davis Parish to 19 in Acadia Parish in 2003.

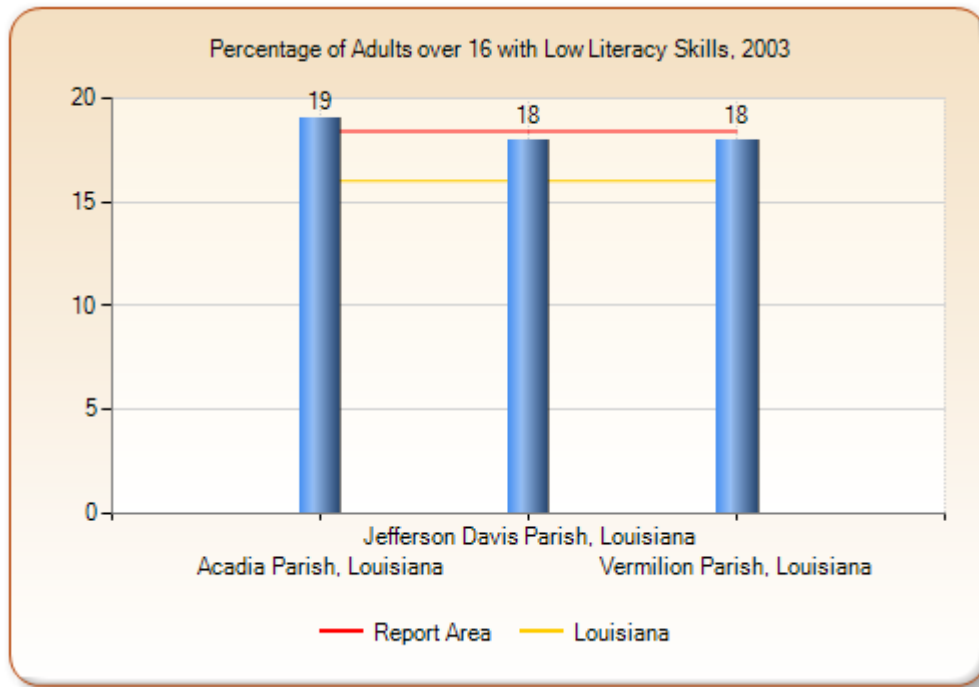


Table 26. Persons Lacking Basic Prose Literacy Skills, 2003

Geographic Area	Estimated Population over 16	Percent Lacking Literacy Skills
Acadia Parish, Louisiana	43,132	19
Jefferson Davis Parish, Louisiana	22,841	18
Vermilion Parish, Louisiana	40,564	18
Report Area	106,537	18
Louisiana	3,313,847	16
United States	15,058,111	22

Source: [U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, State and County Estimates of Low Literacy, 2003.](#)

Housing: Homeowners

The U.S. Census Bureau estimated there were 39,140 homeowners in the 3 parish report area in 2000, and 41,252 owner occupied homes in the report area for the 5 year estimated period from 2008 - 2012.

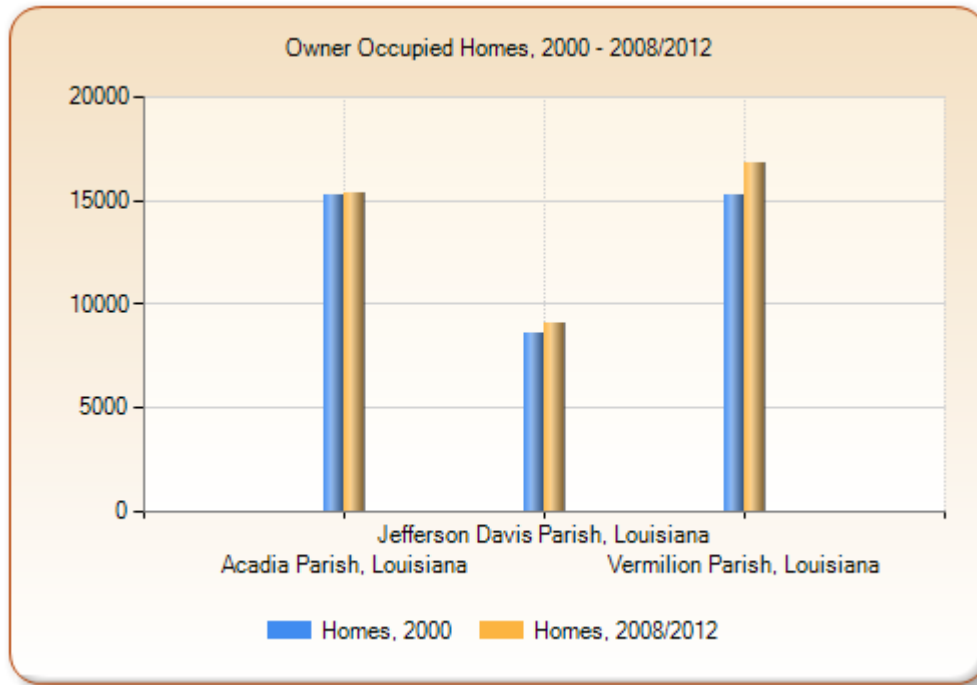


Table 29. Owner Occupied Homes, 2000 - 2008/2012

Geographic Area	Homes, 2000	Homes, 2008/2012
Acadia Parish, Louisiana	15,260	15,373
Jefferson Davis Parish, Louisiana	8,597	9,079
Vermilion Parish, Louisiana	15,283	16,800
Report Area	39,140	41,252
Louisiana	1,125,135	1,142,965
United States	1,293,556	1,544,719

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary File 1, 2000](#); [U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012 Data Release, December 2013](#).
 The 2012 American Community Survey 5-year data is a 5-year average of data collected from 2008 through 2012.

Health Care: Uninsured Population

The uninsured population is calculated by estimating the number of persons eligible for insurance (generally those under 65) minus the estimated number of insured persons. In 2011, the percentage of persons uninsured ranged from 20.3 in Acadia Parish to 20.6 in Vermilion Parish.

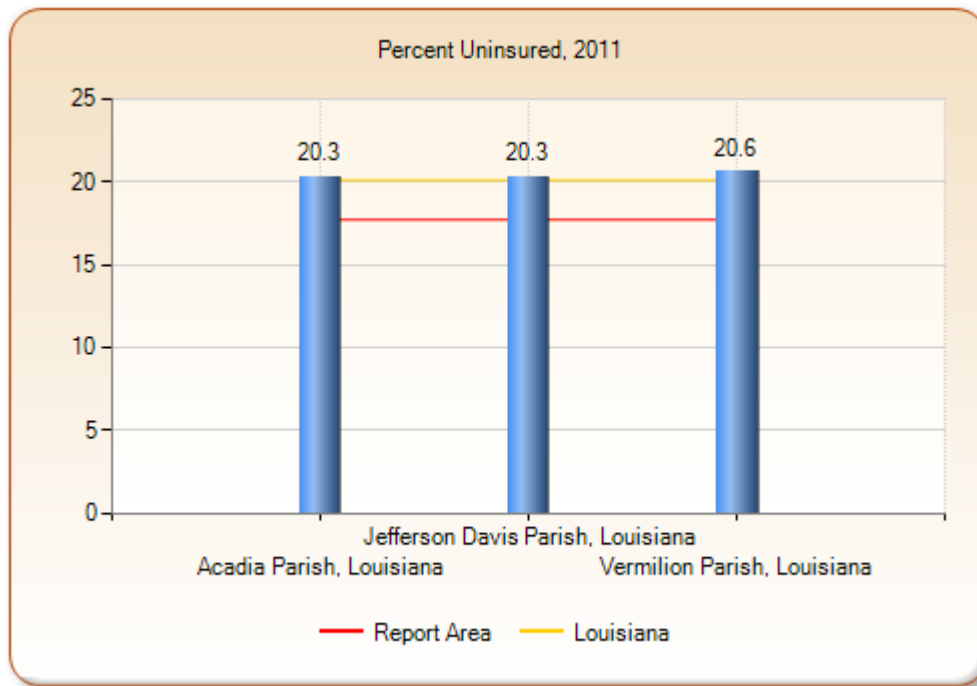


Table 39. Uninsured Persons, 2011

Geographic Area	Insurance Population (2011 Estimate)	Number Insured	Number Uninsured	Percent Uninsured
Acadia Parish, Louisiana	61,430	42,559	10,827	20.30
Jefferson Davis Parish, Louisiana	31,545	21,319	5,436	20.30
Vermilion Parish, Louisiana	57,660	40,016	10,411	20.60
Report Area	150,635	103,894	26,674	17.71
Louisiana	4,484,596	3,103,956	783,015	20.10
United States	306,603,774	217,966,406	45,725,534	14.91

Source: [U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, 2011 \(August 2013 release\)](#).

SWOT Analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

Additional assessment of the agency was gathered utilizing SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis. Strengths and Opportunities are the positive Enablers for the Agency’s work, while Weaknesses and Threats are Challenges that must be addressed in order for the Agency to achieve its strategy. The SWOT Analysis includes both internal (Strengths and Weaknesses) and external (Opportunities and Threats) factors.

SWOT Analysis

Internal

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEADER IN THE COMMUNITY • STRONG PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS • STRONG BOARD AND EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP • FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE • LOW STAFF TURNOVER • BOARD/STAFF COMMITMENT TO MISSION • DIVERSITY OF PROGRAMS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OUTDATED TECHNOLOGY & SOFTWARE • EMPLOYEE CROSS-TRAINING • LACK OF FOLLOW-UP • LACK OF BOARD TRAINING • STAFF RESISTANCE TO CHANGE • SLOW TO IMPLEMENT CASE MANAGEMENT

External

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEVELOPMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING • PARTNERSHIPS WITH UNTAPPED ENTITIES • CASE MANAGEMENT • OTHER FUNDING SOURCES • NEW HOMELESS SHELTER • ENHANCE EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT • EXPAND MARKETING EFFORT • EDUCATE LEGISLATORS • BREAK CYCLE OF POVERTY 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNCERTAINTY OF FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES • LACK OF STATE FUNDING • CONTINUAL SLOW ECONOMIC RECOVERY • GROWTH OF LOW-INCOME POPULATION • DEMAND FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES • CHANGING POLITICAL CLIMATE

RESULTS-ORIENTED MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

In 1994, the Federal government produced a National Strategic Plan endorsing a “results-oriented management and accountability” approach for Community Action Agencies, which became known as ROMA. Throughout the strategic planning process, the agency based its objectives upon the principles contained in the ROMA framework for continuous growth and improvement.

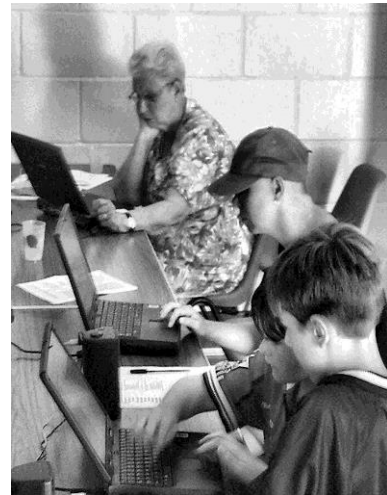
The Six National ROMA Goals

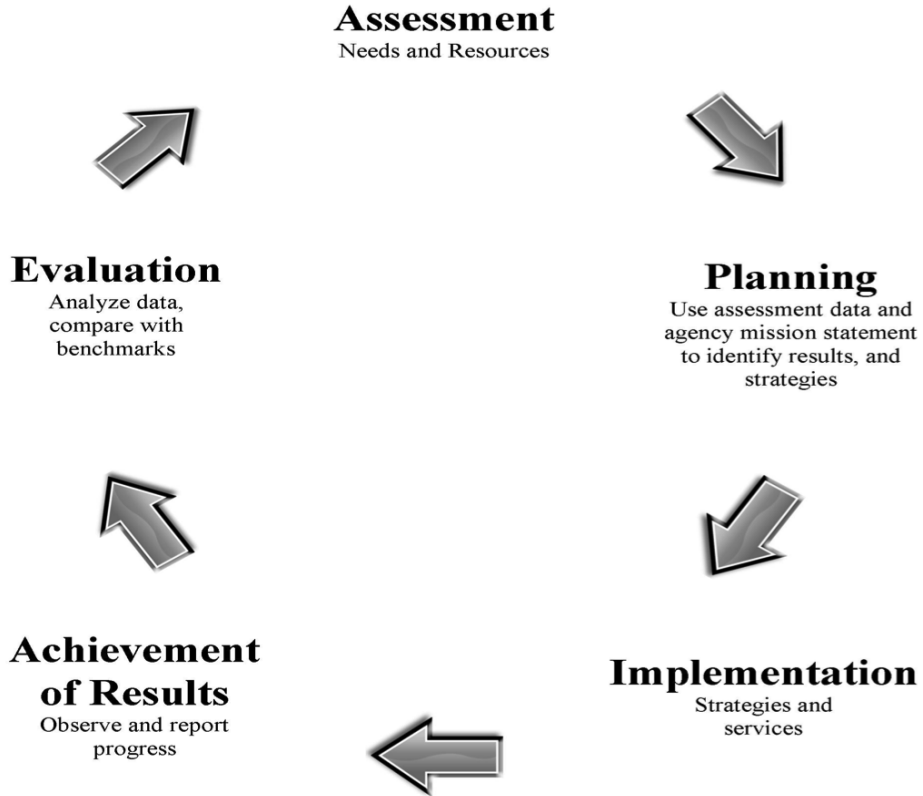
(Representing three levels of results – Family, Community & Agency)

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| Goal 1 Low-income people become more self-sufficient. | Family |
| Goal 2 The conditions in which low-income people live are improved. | Community |
| Goal 3 Low-income people own a stake in their community. | Community |
| Goal 4 Partnerships among supporters and providers of services to low-income people are achieved. | Agency |
| Goal 5 Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results. | Agency |
| Goal 6 Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems. | Family |

In the CSBG Act of 1998, ROMA was amended, mandating a comprehensive performance-based management system defined as: “a sound management practice that incorporates the use of outcomes or results into the administration, management, and operation of community action agencies.”

In 2006, the ROMA Cycle guide for a results-oriented planning process was created, “Planning for Results.” This ROMA Cycle included the following activities: Assessment, Planning, Implementation, Achievement of Results, and Evaluation. The ROMA system now incorporates the six national goals into the agencies performance management process as follows:





NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

After establishing mandatory performance reports in 2001, the Federal Office of Community Service created a standard system of reporting Community Action Agency results called the National Performance Indicators (NPIs). The NPI report is the “accountability” portion of the ROMA cycle and is monitored by OCS.

LOGIC MODEL

Many funders in their Request for Proposals require applicants to create a Logic Model which links between community needs, services, outcomes and measurement of results. A Logic Model specifically designed for CAA follows the following steps:

Logic Model	Problem Statement	Service or Activity	Outcome	Outcome Indicator	Action Results	Measurement Tool	Data Source	Frequency of Data Collection
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ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

Established in 1967 as Acadia- Vermillion Community Action Program (AVCAP), the organization grew from a small community-based program with a focus on providing solutions to poverty, to at one point, multiple programs, million plus dollar budget, the inclusion of Jefferson Davis Parish in 1981, to now fewer programs and a smaller budget and new leadership. What has been key through these changes and challenges has been the commitment by staff, board, and community stakeholders in three parishes to strive for a solution to poverty. The culture of the organization is such that they clearly identify with the concept of providing a hand up as a solution, not a hand out.

AVCAP/ASSIST Agency, Inc. is a community action agency with its heritage drawn from funding provided from the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. No two CAA's in the United States are alike and there are no typical CAA's. But despite this fact, there is a typical CAA approach to fighting the causes of poverty. Local agencies approach these goals by offering a variety of programs that serve low income children, families, and seniors. They coordinate emergency assistance, provide weatherization services, sponsor youth programs, operate senior centers, and provide transportation in rural areas. CAA's provide linkages to job training opportunities, GED preparation courses, and vocational education programs. They provide a range of services addressing poverty related problems – from income management and credit counseling to entrepreneurial development and small business incubators; from domestic violence crisis assistance to family development programs and parenting classes; and, from food pantries and emergency shelters to low income housing development and community revitalization projects.



The term ASSIST in the agency's new name is an acronym representing *A Self-Sufficiency Improvement Support Team* and the new name came about after 1992 and a change in organizational leadership.

The staff and Board are committed to the tagline that greets guests and clients at the front door- *Helping People-Changing Lives*. Both groups repeated stories about times that they have come together as a team to

do just that- help people and change lives, particularly during recent disasters. These key perspectives shape the core values of the organization, its position in the community, and its leadership. While the organization has struggled at times with the loss of programs, changes in staff, and changes in funding mechanisms, it is an organization that expresses through its culture that it will continue to help people.

MISSION

The mission of ASSIST Agency, Inc. is to elevate the standard of living and improve the quality of life for low-income families and communities in Southwest Louisiana.

PHILOSOPHY

People can help themselves if given a helping hand and not a handout.



VISION

To have the public trust and be recognized as a leader in helping to empower people in becoming more self-sufficient and to help in strengthening local communities in becoming more responsive to the needs of the people.

POSITION AND CORE VALUES STATEMENT

ASSIST Agency, Inc. supports the development of a national policy that ensures that:

- Everyone who can work should work.
- Those who do work should earn sufficient income to provide for their families' basic needs.
- Those who are unable to work or who work but do not earn enough to provide for their families should be assisted by policies and programs to meet their basic needs and secure safe and decent housing.

TAGLINE

HELPING PEOPLE - CHANGING LIVES

ASSUMPTIONS

ASSIST Agency, Inc. is committed to providing services to low-income families and the communities of Southwest Louisiana including the parishes of Jefferson Davis, Acadia and Vermillion. During the strategic conversations, participants were asked to delineate what services from the list below best identified as being the core services for ASSIST. The collective conversations identified housing services as the primary service and those related services, marked in italics as key to meeting the mission of ASSIST for Jefferson Davis, Acadia and Vermillion Parishes.

Other services provided are vital, community-based, and reflect the changing needs of each community within the scope of the organization. Each CAA is funded through Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds which are considered



innovative concept funds in that they give CAA's the flexibility to design programs that address needs specific to individuals and the local community and to identify specialized resources that fit these needs.

Services

- Affordable Housing
- Medicaid/LA Chip/Part D Application Assistance
- Prescription Medication Help
- Emergency Food, Utilities, and Rental Assistance
- Food Vouchers for Families
- Summer Feeding Program
- Revolving Loan Applications
- Outreach and Referral (Employment services)
- Homeless Shelter for Women and Children
- VITA Tax Assistance (seasonal)
- Toys for Tots
- IDA
- Housing and Financial Counseling

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Executive Director of the ASSIST Agency is responsible for ensuring that all Strategic Plan goals are met. Additionally, other staff members have been assigned the task of ensuring that specific goals are met as well.

GOAL ONE CONSUMER INPUT AND INVOLVEMENT

The ASSIST Agency will engage people with low incomes in a coordinated and comprehensive manner to develop programs and services that will make a critical difference in the lives of participants.

Objective	Accountability	Timeline
The ASSIST Agency will involve low-income individuals in its community activities, such as board governance, volunteering, and other participatory means so that they are able to move themselves and their families out of poverty.	BOD, ED, CSD, PBD	STO
The agency will analyze information collected directly from low-income individuals as part of its on-going Community Assessment.	BOD, ED, PBD	STO
The agency will implement a systematic approach for collecting, analyzing, and reporting customer satisfaction data to the governing board.	ED, CSD, PBD	STO
The agency will use the information gathered to identify current gaps in service delivery and program evaluation to ensure program quality and effectiveness.	ED, CSD, PBD	AO

GOAL TWO COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The ASSIST Agency will successfully move families out of poverty and revitalize communities through formal and informal partnerships from community and faith-based organizations, educational institutions, government, and business, ongoing community planning, advocacy, and engagement of people with low incomes.

Objective	Accountability	Timeline
The partnerships that the agency has cultivated, especially those that are anti-poverty focused, will be documented and/or demonstrated.	ED, PBD	AO
The agency will utilize information gathered from community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, private sector, public sector, and educational institutions in assessing the community needs and resources.	BOD, ED, PBD	AO
The agency will communicate to community, volunteers, and donors the value of the services provided by ASSIST Agency through printed materials, internet and media.	BOD, ED, CSD	AO
Establish collaborations with community partners in order to facilitate a simultaneous access to agencies, information, and create a forum to share viable solutions to issues and problems.	ED, CSD, PBD	AO
Continue membership(s) and participation in a minimum of three strategic areas: Community Outreach, Homelessness, and Housing	ED, CSD, HD, PBD	AO
Conduct presentations to outside groups in showcasing the agency's programs and leadership in poverty reduction.	ED, CSD, HD, PBD	AO
The agency will engage and enhance the service delivery system to those in the rural areas we serve.	ED, CSD, HD, PBD	AO

GOAL THREE COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Regular assessment of needs and resources at the community level is a vital management and leadership tool. Regular comprehensive Community Assessments that take into account the breadth of the community needs as well as the partners and resources available to meet these needs must be utilized by the agency in determining how best to meet those needs.

Objective	Accountability	Timeline
The ASSIST Agency will conduct a Community Assessment and issue a report.	BOD, ED, CSD, PBD	AO
The agency will collect data specific to poverty and its prevalence related to gender, age, and race/ethnicity for the three parish area.	ED, CSD, PBD	AO
Qualitative and quantitative data on the three parish area will be collected and analyzed and incorporated into the Community Assessment.	ED, PBD	AO
The governing board of directors will formally accept the completed Community Assessment.	BOD	AO
Develop a consensus building, tabling model to assess organizational and staff capacity prior to adding additional programs. This must include board and community stakeholders' involvement.	BOD, EXS	AO

GOAL FOUR ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Maintain a position as the community-based organization whose responsiveness is nimble enough to respond with teamwork to events that impact the community they serve, both today and into the future. The agency leadership is exemplified at all levels of the organization, from a well-functioning board to a focused Executive Director to a well-trained and dedicated staff.

Objective	Accountability	Timeline
The governing board of directors will review the ASSIST Agency's Mission Statement to assure that it addresses poverty and that the agency's programs and services are all in alignment with the mission.	BOD	STO
The Community Action Plan of the agency is outcome-based, anti-poverty focused, and ties directly to the Community Assessment.	BOD, ED, PBD	STO
The Community Action Plan and the Strategic Plan documents the full use of the ROMA cycle.	BOD, ED, PBD	STO
ASSIST will have in place a Board-approved succession plan for the position of Executive Director.	BOD, ED	STO
The agency will conduct an organization-wide risk assessment and present to the governing board of directors for acceptance.	ED, FD	MTO
Investigate the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis, Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), and Total Quality Management (TQM) Models for agency evaluation that both clients and employees would benefit from in order to improve the function of the workplace.	BOD, EXS	LTO

GOAL FIVE BOARD GOVERNANCE

In the face of increased competition, the Board of Directors will accept the challenge of increasing its effectiveness and maintain a position as a community-based organization whose responsiveness is nimble enough to respond with teamwork to events that impact the community they serve. The board objectives include: providing leadership in efforts toward providing solutions to poverty; fostering collaboration to improve the community; building community capacity through innovative culturally competent strategies and by achieving impact by acting as a catalyst for positive change.

Objective	Accountability	Timeline
The agency will ensure that the governing board is structured in compliance with the CSBG Act, that at least one third have been democratically-selected and documented to represent the low-income community, and meets in accordance with the frequency and quorum requirements and fills board vacancies as set out in the bylaws.	BOD, ED, PPR	AO
The agency' bylaws have been reviewed by an attorney within the past 5 years.	BOD, ED, PPR	LTO
Documented that each governing board member has received a copy of the bylaws	ED, PPR	STO
Each governing board member has signed a conflict of interest policy.	ED, PPR	STO
Develop a board orientation manual and a policy of deepening board engagement during the new board member recruitment process. This would include inviting prospective members to an actual board meeting.	BOD, ED, PPR	STO
Board members will participate in governance training to better understand the relationship between policy making and management and	BOD, ED	AO

<p>will review their specific fiduciary duties of care, loyalty, and obedience to the law during board training and presentations on ROMA concepts and bylaws.</p>		
<p>The Board of Directors, as a tripartite board, will bring together representatives of the private sector, public sector, and low-income community to collaborate on developing responsiveness to local needs in order to develop a long-term community needs assessment.</p>	<p>BOD, ED, PBD</p>	<p>STO</p>
<p>The governing board members will receive, review and approve all programmatic reports at each regular board meeting.</p>	<p>BOD</p>	<p>STO</p>

GOAL SIX STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic Planning takes on the task of looking both at internal functioning and at the community's needs. For the agency to be efficient, it needs to know where it is headed, how the board and staff fit into that future, and how it will measure its success in achieving what it has set out to do.

Objective	Accountability	Timeline
The agency will have an agency-wide Strategic Plan which has been approved by the governing board of directors within every five years.	EXS	LTO
The agency will address reduction of poverty, revitalization of low-income communities, and empowerment of people with low incomes to become more self-sufficient in the approved Strategic Plan.	BOD, EXS	AO
The approved Strategic Plan contains Family, Agency, and/or Community goals as well as customer satisfaction data and input as part of the Community Assessment.	BOD	LTO
When and if disaster strikes in our communities, the ASSIST Agency will examine its role in the long term recovery process through organizations such as VOAD and LTRC.	BOD, ED, PBD	AO
Review the staff/space relationship of existing and future programs, against the availability of property within the three parish region in order to prepare a growth plan for the organization.	EXS	AO
Identify and develop new programs that engage a diverse changing community which includes expanding minority populations.	BOD, EXS	AO
The agency will explore subcontracting LiHEAP services in Acadia and Jefferson Davis Parish to improve service delivery to its residents.	BOD, EXS	LTO

ASSIST AGENCY, INC.

The agency will seek out new programs to increase the populations' access to banking and credit unions.	ED, CSD, PBD	MTO
The governing board of directors will receive updates on meeting the Strategic Plan.	ED	AO

GOAL SEVEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Attention by the agency to organizational elements such as policies and procedures, performance appraisals, and training lead to a strong organization with the capacity to deliver high-quality services in low-income communities.

Objective	Accountability	Timeline
The agency's written personnel policies will be reviewed by an attorney and approved by the governing board of directors	ED, PPR	LTO
The agency's written job descriptions will be reviewed and updated.	ED, PPR	LTO
The governing board of directors will conduct a performance appraisal of the Executive Director within each calendar year.	BOD	AO
The agency will develop a staff development work plan which includes regularly scheduled opportunities for professional development of staff members, opportunities for attendance at off-site trainings, webinars, team building activities, and participation in cross-training meetings.	EXS	STO
The agency will designate who will act on behalf of key staff members in their absence.	ED	AO

GOAL EIGHT FINANCIAL OPERATIONS AND OVERSIGHT

The ASSIST Agency and staff maintain a high level of fiscal accountability through audits, monitoring by State and Federal agencies, and compliance with Federal Office of Management Budget circulars (OMB Circular A-133). The management of Federal funds is taken seriously in the day-to-day operational functions by agency staff and the oversight role of the governing board of directors.

Objective	Accountability	Timeline
At each regular board meeting, the governing board of directors will receive financial reports that include organization-wide reports on Revenue and Expenditures, categorized by programs and Balance Sheet/Statement of Financial Position.	ED, FD	STO
The governing board of directors will annually approve an organization-wide budget.	ED, FD, PBD	AO
The Fiscal Policies will be reviewed by the staff, updated as necessary, with changes approved by the governing board of directors.	ED, FD	MTO
A written procurement policy is in place and will be reviewed by the governing board of directors.	ED, FD	LTO
The agency will document and/or update how it allocates shared costs through an indirect cost rate, or through a written cost allocation plan.	ED, FD, PBD	STO
The agency will implement and/or update a written policy in place for record retention and destruction.	ED, PPR	AO

GOAL NINE TECHNOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

The ASSIST Agency works to move families out of poverty on a daily basis and produces data that reflects the collective impact of these efforts. The agency strives to better document the outcomes of individuals, families, communities, and other agency achievements.

Objective	Accountability	Timeline
CAP60 and ServicePoint will be utilized to its full potential to track and report services customers receive and their outcomes.	ED, CSD, PBD	STO
The agency will improve the accuracy and timelines of the information entered into CAP60 and ServicePoint.	ED, CSD	STO
The agency will research and assess community data in partnership with SLCC, ULL, ARDD, and others with the specific purpose of identifying future trends for serving low income children, families, and seniors, to support agency marketing/public relations functions and Strategic Planning.	ED, CSD, PBD	AO
Develop a mechanism for supporting existing administrative technology which will allow staff to work efficiently without being totally reliant upon one funder for hardware repairs and installation or software upgrades.	ED, CSD, PBD	AO
Provide and expand a range of services addressing housing related problems – from Individual Development Accounts and housing counseling to housing development and housing rehabilitation to foreclosure prevention and CHDO related activities such as a HOME funded project.	ED, HD	STO

LEGEND

ABBREVIATIONS

ARCH	ACADIANA REGIONAL COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS & HOUSING
ARDD	ACADIANA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
BOD	BOARD OF DIRECTORS
CHDO	COMMUNITY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION
CSBG	COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT
CSD	COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR
ED	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
EF&S	EMERGENCY FOOD & SHELTER PROGRAM
ESC	ELIGIBILITY/SERVICE COORDINATORS
ESG	EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT
EXS	EXECUTIVE STAFF
FD	FISCAL DIRECTOR
HD	HOUSING DIRECTOR
HPRP	HOMELESS PREVENTION & RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAM
LTRC	LONG TERM RECOVERY COALITION
PBD	PLANNING & BUDGET DIRECTOR/EO OFFICER
PPR	PERSONNEL/PHYSICAL RESOURCE OFFICER
ROMA	RESULTS ORIENTED MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY
UWA	UNITED WAY OF ACADIANA
VOAD	VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTERS
WIA	WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

TIMELINE

STO	Short-term Objective (< 1 year)
MTO	Medium-term Objective (1 – 3 years)
LTO	Long-term Objective (up to 5 years)
AO	Annual Objective (addressed on an annual basis)

SUMMARY

The ASSIST Agency has a rich heritage of working closely with the communities in Acadia, Jefferson Davis and Vermillion parishes since 1967. The strength of the organization lies in the collective experience of its Executive Director and staff as well as the commitment of key members of the Board of Directors. But in order for this to translate to a strong future for the organization, bold steps must be taken by those same stakeholders. The promise of any community action agency is to change people's lives, embody the spirit of hope, improve communities, and make America a better place to live.

The ASSIST Agency is well positioned to provide immediate and tangible impacts to the individuals, families, and communities that the agency serves. Using the planned goals laid out in this Strategic Plan as a guide, the board of directors and management of the ASSIST Agency will be able to develop measurable, effective goals to meet the long term strategic vision of the organization.



It is up to the ASSIST board, staff, and volunteers to work within the areas they know best to find solutions to fight poverty now and in the future. The results of implementing and achieving these goals will be felt by each family lifted up from and out of poverty for generations to come.