



# Gauging the water: Understanding future adaptive capacity needs for young people in Louisiana

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## Introduction

This project hopes to add to the many future oriented adaptation efforts in Louisiana by researching adaptive capacity needs for young people as it pertains to land loss issues now and in the future. Focusing on the community and individual level, this project will explore cognitive and social factors, specifically knowledge, skills, and behaviors.

## Methods

Two semi-structured interviews were conducted with professionals who work with communities in Louisiana on land loss issues. Data from Interview transcripts were then coded according to its relation to the research question and its prevalence in the interviews. Data were then further organized under constructs and sub-constructs.

## Results

From the interviews several constructs emerged under each theme of knowledge, skills, and behaviors as well as sub-constructs as seen in Tables (1), (2), and (3). Further analysis revealed a relationship between the three themes as can be seen in Figure 1. Furthermore, the themes and the subsequent constructs not only pertained to young people as individuals but also to young people as future professionals in the space of adaptation in Louisiana.

## Conclusion

Young people will need to develop a variety of attributes in order to adapt to land loss on different scales. Plus, there may be more as limitations to this study include the few number of interviews, time constraints, and a lack of data from community members, especially those from marginalized communities. In the future, a broader sampling and more in-depth analysis is needed.

## Acknowledgments

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Knowledge needed for future adaptation efforts		
Construct	Sub-construct	Example
What to expect	Community changes	Social bonds may unravel
	Stressors	"People feel less safe, feel loss, chronic stress..."
	Decision influences	Social networks will play a big role in adaptation efforts
	Drastic changes	"Land loss crisis in Louisiana is unlike anything else"
What to understand	Community makeup and needs	Different scales of adaptation require different strategies
	Flood Risk	"There is not getting rid of flood risk, just reducing it."
	Community members are experts	"People have been in these places for generations and have incredible knowledge"
	Collaboration is key	Multiple expertise and stakeholders are going to have to work together
	Community support is a must	"Having strong social networks is necessary for survival"
	Environmental Injustice	"The history of where they are needs to be taken into account..."

Table 1. Theme of knowledge organized by constructs and sub-construct

Skills needed for future adaptation efforts		
Construct	Sub-construct	Example
Interpersonal Skills	Listening skills	Understanding others is key to moving forward
	Social-emotional skills	Drastic changes will result in lots of stressors to handle.
	Ability to handle conflict	"You have to get comfortable with the complexity of relationships"
	Empathy and understanding	Empathy is critical to successfully working with people with different backgrounds
	Negotiation Skills	Advocating for resources will be necessary to adapt
Professional Skills	Ability to be creative in adaptation efforts	"...find ways to integrate adaptation into what people are already working on"
	Communication Skills	Being able to communicate needs and wants will help with adaptation efforts
	Mindful of one's biases	"You have to come to that space with humility"

Table 2. Theme of Skills organized by constructs and sub-construct

Behaviors needed for future adaptation efforts		
Construct	Sub-construct	Example
Long-term planning	Common ground	Crucial to meaningful include everyone
	Find funding	Outside funding is critical to small and large adaptation efforts
	Persistence over time	"I would say it's one champion who's keeping everybody on the same page"
	Need expertise	Important to, "bring in the expertise you need"
Embrace Social Connection	Strengthen ties	Building and maintaining social networks is crucial for adapting
	Collaborate with your community	Having clear goals goes a long way to successfully adapt
	Empathy and understanding	Understanding where others are coming from will help to find solutions and collaborate
Conversation s needed	Inland moving	Conversations about more communities moving inland will be necessary
	Receiving new people	As people move inland we "need to start planning for this"
	Wants and needs	"We need to start having these conversations early and often"

Table 3. Theme of Behaviors organized by constructs and sub-construct

Figure 1. Diagram showing how the three themes relate to each other

