

Special Groups

Female-headed Households

Female-headed households tend to constitute a vulnerable population worldwide and especially in post-disaster settings. As such, it is important to look at the particular problems facing households such as these. Nearly fifteen percent (14.7%) of the households surveyed in Central City can be classified as female-headed households being that the only adults in the household are female. The total percentage of female headed households is likely higher than this, as adult male dependents may often be present. The percentage of households in which all adults are male is 15.9%, and 69.5% of the households surveyed which have a combination of female and male adults. Every respondent that claimed to be from a female-headed household self-reported being African American (Annex B, Table 17).

The socio-economic status of female-headed households tends to be lower than that of their counterparts. Therefore, these households are more vulnerable to economic downturns and breakdown of services such as those experienced after a disaster. The fluctuation in assets held and incomes earned can have a disproportionately severe impact on the viability of the household. The percentage of female-headed households that own their home (36.4%) was comparable to the percentage of mixed-sex and male-headed households that also own their residences (36.8% and 27.3% respectively). However, no female-headed households reported having a pre-Katrina income higher than \$3000 per month. While, 7.7% of male-headed households and 12.8% of mixed-sex households reported having an income higher than this pre-Katrina (Annex B, Table 17). Exactly half (50.0%) of female-headed households experienced a

decrease in their income post-Katrina, while only 26.3% of households with adults of both sexes experienced an income decrease. Of the male-headed households surveyed, 38.5% reported that their income has increased since Hurricane Katrina. Only 16.7% of female-headed households reported an increase in income post-Katrina (Annex B, Table 18).

Female-headed households appear to have been especially vulnerable to many of the negative impacts of Hurricane Katrina. As compared to mixed-sex households, a higher percentage of female-headed households reported having a number of hurricane related impacts including, loss of health insurance (41.7%), loss of contact with family and friends (75%), disruption of health care (58.3%), lack of utility services (50.0%), problems fulfilling regular eating habits (41.7%) and problems with transportation (58.3%) (Annex B, Table 19, Table 20). More female-headed households stated that they lack selected household amenities than did mixed-sex households. These wanting amenities include a working kitchen (25%), heat (12.3%), air-conditioning (8.3%), the internet (91.7%) and ample lighting in the neighborhood (41.7%). A higher percentage of female-headed households also reported the presence of household deficiencies such as mold (16.7%), pests (41.7%) and roof leaks (16.7%) than did mixed-sex households (Annex B, Table 18).

Security is always a concern for female-headed households and is particularly relevant among those surveyed in Central City. Two thirds (66.7%) of female-headed households feel that safety is a problem in the post-Katrina environment. Nearly sixty percent (58.3%) also feel that Central City suffers from problems with crime (Annex B, Table 20). Before Katrina, 75.0% of female-headed households felt safe in Central City during the day. Now, only 41.7% of these households report feeling safe out alone in their neighborhood during the day. This percentage drops to zero when they are asked if they feel safe out alone in Central City during the night (Table C).

Table C. Percent of households that feel safe in Central City by household composition by sex.

Feel Safe Out Alone in Central City		Male Only Households	Female Only Households	Mixed Sex Households
Before Katrina				
<i>During the day</i>	%	69.2	75.0	89.5
	N	9	9	51
	Con. Int.	(46.4, 85.4)	(49.0, 90.3)	(76.0, 95.8)
<i>At night</i>	%	69.2	50.0	73.7
	N	9	6	42
	Con. Int.	(46.8, 85.2)	(26.2, 73.8)	(57.6, 85.2)
After Katrina				
<i>During the day</i>	%	69.2	41.7	61.4
	N	9	5	35
	Con. Int.	(46.4, 85.4)	(20.3, 66.7)	(48.8, 72.7)
<i>At night</i>	%	61.5	0.0	35.1
	N	8		20
	Con. Int.	(39.2, 79.9)		(24.8, 47.0)

* Confidence Interval (Con. Int.) at 95%

Owners and Tenants

The percentage of homeowners has increased as compared to the 2000 census data, from 16.3% to 36.5%. (In order to more accurately quantify the percentage of owners versus tenants, the response of “relative/friend of householder” was filtered out, resulting in an increase of percentages for both homeowners and tenants.) Conversely, the percentage of renters has decreased from 83.7% to 63.5% (Annex B, Table 1, Table 22). One explanation is that homeowners had more incentive to return after the storm. Katrina left Central City relatively unscathed structurally and it is now one of the few

habitable neighborhoods in the New Orleans area. As such, it is predicted that more tenants will become part of the Central City population. This is evidenced by the fact that out of all of the new residents surveyed in Central City (new, meaning that they did not live in the neighborhood prior to Katrina), 81.1% of them are the primary tenants of their residence; while none of them reported owning their residence (Annex B, Table 30).

If it is predicted that more and more tenants will reside in Central City, it would be worthwhile to look at differences in the characteristics and needs of people who rent the residences in which they live and people who own their residences. We can see in Annex B, Table 22 that tenants are more likely to be from a “minority” race (African American or Hispanic). The tenants surveyed reported having lower pre-Katrina monthly household incomes than did the homeowners that were surveyed: 53.4% of the tenants had a household income less than \$2000 per month, whereas, only 37.5% of homeowners reported a household income below \$2000 per month (Annex B, Table 22). However, after the storm 32.5% of surveyed tenants reported an increase in their income. Only 13.9% of home owners reported an increase in their income post-Katrina (Annex B, Table 23).

Tenants also seemed to have fewer complaints about the state of their residences than did homeowners. A higher percentage of owners than tenants report lacking heat, air-conditioning and a working kitchen, and having leaky roofs and mold in their homes. These findings are, perhaps, illustrative of an improvement in post-Katrina living conditions, as most of the neighborhood’s new residents are renters (Table D).

Table D: Percent of households that report specific characteristics of vulnerability by characteristic and residential status.

Characteristics of Households		Owners of Residence	Tenants of Residence
Central City Residences	%	36.5	63.5
	N	72	125
	Con. Int.	(29.8, 43.8)	(56.2, 70.2)
Chronic Illness or Disability	%	41.7	40.8
	N	30	51
	Con. Int.	(32.9, 51.0)	(30.9, 51.5)
Ability to Access Care Needed for Chronic Illness or Disability			
For all services	%	43.3	59.2
	N	13	29
	Con. Int.	(27.4, 60.8)	(43.0, 73.6)
For some services	%	26.7	22.4
	N	8	11
	Con. Int.	(13.7, 45.3)	(13.6, 34.7)
Not at all	%	30.0	16.3
	N	9	8
	Con. Int.	(15.9, 49.3)	(7.4, 32.1)
Post-Katrina Change in Income			
Increased	%	13.9	32.5
	N	10	40
	Con. Int.	(8.8, 21.3)	(24.6, 41.6)
Decreased	%	36.1	26.8
	N	26	33
	Con. Int.	(26.9, 46.5)	(18.5, 37.2)
Stayed the same	%	45.8	38.2
	N	33	47
	Con. Int.	(36.2, 55.7)	(27.6, 50.1)
Lacks Household Amenities			
Garbage pick-up	%	9.9	13.1
	N	7	16
	Con. Int.	(4.9, 19.0)	(8.3, 20.1)
Internet	%	70.4	71.0
	N	50	88
	Con. Int.	(57.8, 80.6)	(63.6, 77.4)
Working kitchen	%	30.6	12.1
	N	22	15
	Con. Int.	(19.6, 44.3)	(7.6, 18.7)
Heat	%	26.8	8.2

	N	19	10
	Con. Int.	(15.8, 41.5)	(4.4, 14.7)
Air conditioning	%	20.8	7.3
	N	15	9
	Con. Int.	(11.6, 34.5)	(4.2, 12.5)
Smoke detector	%	37.5	30.9
	N	27	38
	Con. Int.	(26.1, 50.5)	(22.8, 40.4)
Ample lighting in neigh.	%	27.8	25.2
	N	20	31
	Con. Int.	(18.1, 40.0)	(18.5, 33.3)
Household Deficiencies			
Pests	%	37.5	43.1
	N	27	53
	Con. Int.	(27.5, 48.7)	(36.1, 50.4)
Roof leaks	%	29.2	16.3
	N	21	20
	Con. Int.	(20.2, 40.1)	(10.2, 24.9)
Mold	%	23.9	15.3
	N	17	19
	Con. Int.	(15.9, 34.5)	(9.9, 23.0)

* Confidence Interval (Con. Int.) at 95%

It was reported that most other hurricane related impacts were encountered equally by tenants and homeowners (Annex B, Table 24, Table 25). It was, however, the case that the renters and homeowners surveyed differed in opinions on the issue of safety in Central City. Before Katrina, a higher percentage of homeowners than tenants felt safe out alone in Central City both during the day and at night. In the post-Katrina environment, tenants now feel safer than homeowners in Central City at night (28.1 % as compared to 35.4%, respectively, Annex B, Table 26).

Employed/Unemployed/Retired

The majority of households surveyed (65%) have at least one member that is employed either full or part time. The percentage of households that contain all unemployed residents is the same as the percentage of households whose members are all retired (17.5%). The majority of residents of all employment

status groups were African American. One hundred percent of the unemployed households categorized themselves as African American (Annex B, Table 27).

Not surprisingly, the households that contain at least one employed member are less vulnerable with regards to a number of variables than those households that do not have an employed member. Compared to employed households, both unemployed and retired households were more likely to report having a chronic illness or disability. Over thirty percent of employed household reported an increase in their income since the hurricane. Only 21.4% of both unemployed and retired households reported an increase in income. Half of all retired households reported that their income has stayed the same since Hurricane Katrina (Annex B, Table 28).

Hurricane Katrina adversely affected households from all three employment status groups. However, it is possible to report on some of the more striking findings. Not unexpectedly, 64.3% of the unemployed households reported that losing their job was one adverse impact of Hurricane Katrina. It is interesting to note that 50.0% of employed households also reported losing their job. A large percentage of both groups also reported losing their benefits (34.6% of employed households and 28.6% of unemployed households.) Generally, retired and unemployed households are less likely to have common household amenities, such as a working kitchen, air conditioner, and internet, than employed households. And, they are more likely to report being beset with pests. (Annex B, Table 28)

New/Longtime Residents

Length of residency was determined by reviewing the reported date of home purchase or lease signing. Over twenty-five percent of those surveyed are reported to be new to the neighborhood. New residents, overwhelmingly, are

primary tenants at 81.1% with no homeowners among them. Longtime residents, defined as residents that lived in Central City prior to Katrina, are typically homeowners, at 43.9%. Only 38.1% of longtime residents are primary tenants (Annex B, Table 30).

More new residents reported an increase in income post Katrina than did longtime residents, 30.8% and 23.4%, respectively. New residents were less likely to lack household amenities than longtime residents. Only 7.4% of new residents lack a working kitchen, 9.4% lack heat, 7.4% lack air conditioning, 20.4% lack a smoke detector, and only 20.4% believe there is a lack of ample lighting in the neighborhood. (Table E).

Table E: Percent of households that report specific characteristics of vulnerability by characteristic and by duration of residing in Central City.

Characteristics of Households		Longtime Residents	New Residents
Lacks Household Amenities			
Garbage pick-up	%	11.5	13.5
	N	16	7
	Con. Int.	(7.1, 18.1)	(5.7, 28.5)
Internet	%	70.7	74.1
	N	99	40
	Con. Int.	(60.9, 78.9)	(60.3, 84.3)
Working kitchen	%	23.6	7.4
	N	33	4
	Con. Int.	(15.2, 34.7)	(2.5, 19.9)
Heat	%	18.0	9.4
	N	25	5
	Con. Int.	(10.9, 28.3)	(4.5, 18.6)
Air conditioning	%	15.0	7.4
	N	21	4
	Con. Int.	(8.6, 24.9)	(3.0, 17.0)
Smoke detector	%	37.9	20.4
	N	53	11
	Con. Int.	(29.9, 46.5)	(10.9, 34.8)
Ample lighting in neigh.	%	26.6	20.4
	N	37	11
	Con. Int.	(19.5, 35.2)	(11.8, 32.7)

* Confidence Interval (Con. Int.) at 95%

There is also quite a difference in the problems experienced by households that are new to the neighborhood and those that lived in the community prior to the hurricane. New residents, being strictly tenants, expressed problems with not having enough money for rent (48.1%). Only 34.8% of longtime residents reported this as a problem. New residents also reported having problems with increasing rent (67.3%) (Annex B, Table 33). On the other hand, longtime residents reported more health-related problems. Close to half (47.9%) of longtime residents report having a chronic illness or disability, whereas, one third (34.0%) of new residents reported having an ill or disabled member of the household (Annex B, Table 31). Nearly thirty percent (29.1%) of longtime residents reported lacking prescription drugs or medicines that they need, while only, 17.3% of the new residents report this being a problem for them (Annex B, Table 33). Both longtime and new residents reported that the main impact of Hurricane Katrina on their household was losing touch with family and friends (64.7% of the longtime residents and 73.6% of new residents) (Annex B, Table 32).