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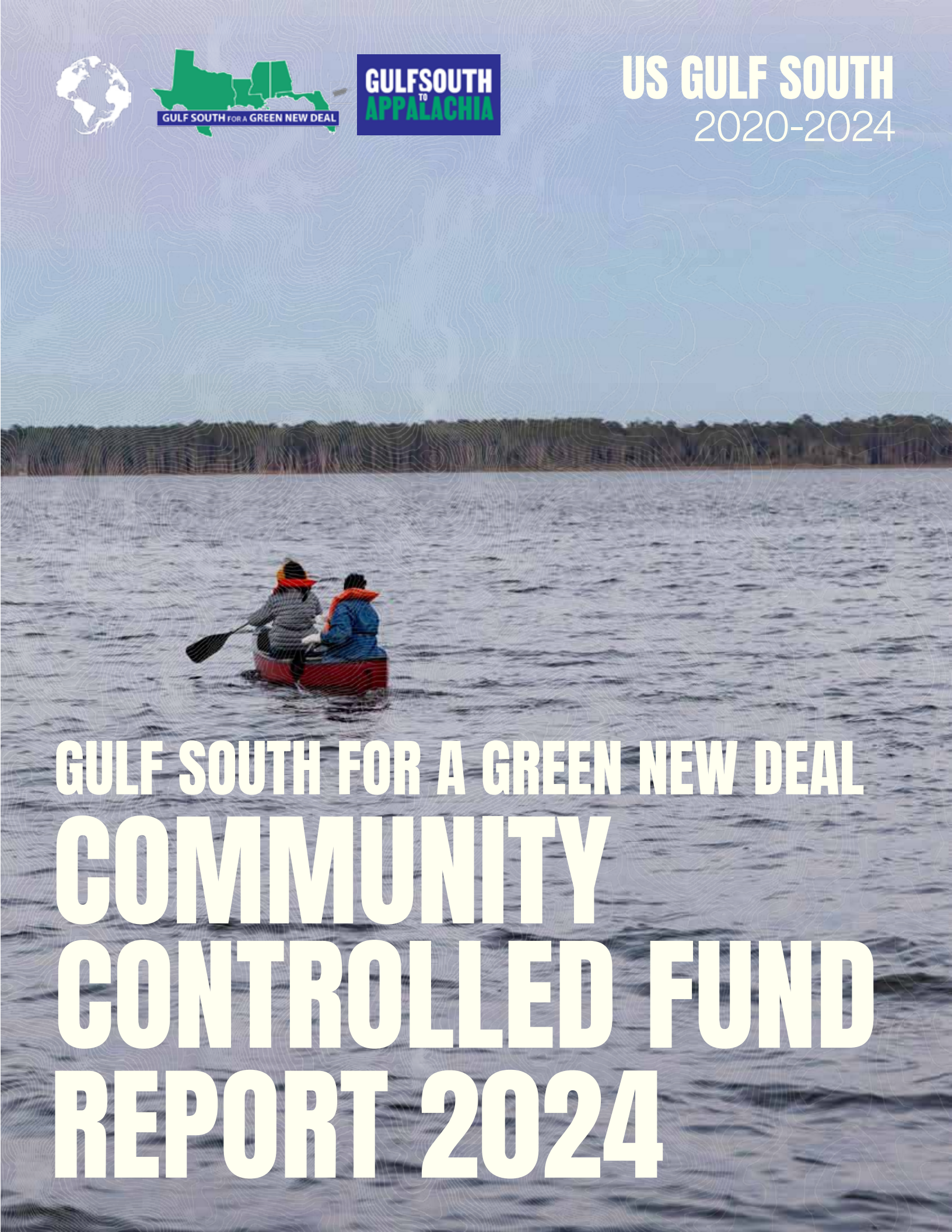
2020-2024



GULF SOUTH FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

COMMUNITY CONTROLLED FUND REPORT 2024

GULF SOUTH FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

COMMUNITY CONTROLLED FUND

2020-2024
REPORT PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 26, 2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report is offered with deep gratitude to the frontline community leaders from Gulf South Rising to the Gulf South for a Green New Deal for their vision, solutions, and practice that made the GS4GND CCF possible. A special note of thanks to the GS4GND Financial Leads for taking on major responsibilities to ensure funds moved within the legal framework of 501c3 guidelines, while creating flexibility for community direction to lead the process and decision-making.

Peace,

GULF SOUTH FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

GULFSOUTH TO APPALACHIA

TAPROOT EARTH

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TERESA FOX-BETTIS

Executive Director of Center for Fair Housing (Mobile, AL) & Lead in Alabama GS4GND Hub

"When I think about the CCF I think about power, and it is a game-changer for community. Many times the people in the community are trying to go to the people in power, and you are really at their mercy because they may give you the finances or the resources you need, but more often than not, they don't. I live in a predominantly Black Community where the poverty rate is about 35%, but what I see is the power is usually top-heavy. By the time it gets to the ground, there is no power, versus starting at the ground and then resonating up. When you look at the history and what has happened to Black and Brown communities around power, and even now in my work on housing justice, I have seen such an abuse of power which has shaped my thought process, that power is not necessarily a good thing. Because the equity is still not there."

"The question becomes, who holds the power? and then what do they do with that power? Having funds that are community controlled is powerful. It begins to shape the trajectory of how communities build and how they are able to sustain themselves."

GULF SOUTH FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

GULF SOUTH TO APPALACHIA

GULF SOUTH FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED FUND REPORT 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Funding the Climate Frontlines:
Gulf South for A Green New Deal Community Controlled Fund

The Gulf South for a Green New Deal (GS4GND) Community Controlled Fund (GS4GND CCF) presents a transformational model in climate justice investment. In this model, communities most impacted by the climate crisis lead in directing resources and shaping solutions that safeguard their futures.

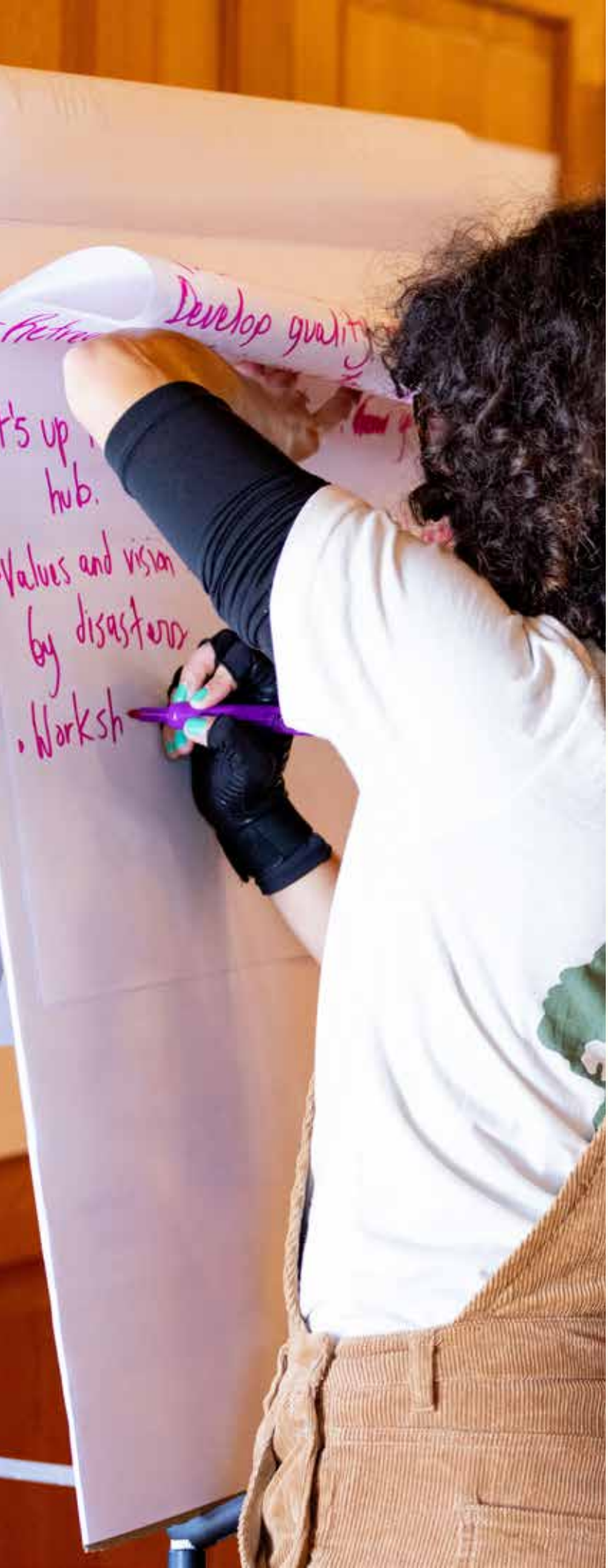
Regional History And Context

From 2010-2015, more than five years of People's Movement Assemblies, the Gulf South Rising (GSR) Initiative focused on building movement infrastructure and collective power in the Gulf South — a region targeted by extractive industry because of its geographical and demographic makeup, which is particularly vulnerable to climate disaster. In 2019, in response to the national call for a "Green New Deal", the GSR Initiative birthed the Gulf South for a Green New Deal (GS4GND) formation to provide a rooted Southern analysis and vision. The GS4GND formation organized more than 400 Gulf South organizations to advance climate justice across **Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Puerto Rico.**

The Gulf South for a Green New Deal (GS4GND) vision elevated frontline solutions rooted in a history of community leadership, collective self-governance, and climate, racial, and economic justice. The GS4GND Policy Platform formalized this vision and was put into practice by the GS4GND formation from 2019 - 2023. In 2023, the formation collectively affirmed moving together with frontline communities in Appalachia, to form the **Gulf South to Appalachia (GS2A)** formation.

Establishment of The Community-Controlled Fund

Like the formation itself, the Gulf South for a Green New Deal Community Controlled Fund (GS4GND CCF) emerged from the Gulf South Rising (GSR) Community Controlled Fund. It was **designed to pool significant philanthropic dollars and distribute them through a participatory budgeting process.** This work



recognized the structural barriers faced by individual organizations seeking funding in the Gulf South.

After the **2020 Gulf Gathering**, GS4GND members **launched a campaign targeting a three-year, $15 million investment (a fund which was later raised to $17 million to include Puerto Rico).** For its first two years, Project South fiscally sponsored the fund, with Taproot Earth (formerly Gulf South Center for Law & Policy) assuming fiscal responsibility in the third year, 2023. All resource distribution decisions were made by the GS4GND Hubs participatory processes.

Goals And Objectives Of The GS4GND CCF

The GS4GND CCF was established with the goals to:

- **Support grassroots climate solutions,**
- **Advance just transition policies,**
- **Build regional movement infrastructure, and**
- **Uplift collective governance as a model for sustainable change.**

Through these means, **the GS4GND CCF proved once again that the frontlines of impact know best how to mobilize and distribute resources.** This approach challenges an extractive financial system and approach that curtails community leadership and decision-making. Instead, the GS4GND CCF prioritized self-determination, equity, and collective governance in financial decision-making.

Key Outcomes

Over the three-year period, from 2021 to 2023, the GS4GND CCF effectively **redistributed over $14 million, including $10 million allocated to 100 organizations across six state hubs (TX, LA, MS, AL, FL and one occupied territory (PR)** through a participatory budgeting process. These funds sustained many groups through the COVID-19 crisis and expanded long-term community capacity by keeping critical organizations open and operating in building community power and mutual aid. During this time, GS4GND also mobilized more than 1,000 residents at the 2022 Climate Justice & Joy community assembly and engaged more than 5,000 residents in Texas and Louisiana on key energy and environmental issues.

GS4GND Regional hubs held gatherings and trainings, including two annual Gulf Gathering Governance Assemblies, connecting 300 leaders from 100 groups for network building, policy engagement, and leadership development. Hub-specific mobilization efforts ranged from Puerto Rico's focus on food sovereignty and Florida's hurricane recovery, to Mississippi's fight for clean water in Jackson and Texas's environmental justice tours.

Critical Learnings

The CCF highlighted both the **complexities of financial governance** within frontline communities, and **immense power and potential** that arise from collective governance of resources. The following are key wisdoms cultivated during the 2021-2023 period:

1. Communities in the Gulf South **excel at resource mobilization.**

2. Funders who **place trust in frontline leaders** — without imposing restrictive metrics — are investing in true autonomy and a commitment to democracy.

3. Navigating historical trauma around race, class, and power is essential. This requires **intensive facilitation to build accountability, trust, and healing** in financial decision-making.

4. Community leaders agreed to **collective agreements and processes with rigor and flexibility**, often needing to revisit agreements to heal patterns of harm, respond to emerging situations (such as disasters), and get resources to the places they are most needed.

5. Success is multi-faceted; establishing **shared definitions of financial success** and celebrating diverse achievements creates alignment and morale among participants.

6. GS4GND's foundational values of equity, frontline leadership, and mutual respect acted as **a living accountability mechanism** that strengthened unity and resolved conflicts.

7. The GS4GND CCF offers an **alternative to extractive finance** by using funds to attract further investment, foster sustainable projects, and build a culture of healing into its funding approach.

Looking Forward

Gulf South For A Green New Deal (GS4GND)

In 2023, **the GS4GND formation collectively made the decision to merge with climate justice leaders from the Appalachian region, forming the Gulf South to Appalachia (GS2A) Formation.** This renewed formation builds on legacies of regional solidarity between the two U.S. regions most impacted by oil and gas extraction. This new region-to-region structure moves beyond individual state hubs to collectively advance climate justice rooted in Black Liberation and self-determination, based on the #WeChooseNow Climate Action Strategy.

The future of the Community Controlled Fund

As affirmed by GS4GND, GS2A will steward the remaining CCF funds. In 2024 G2SA affirmed that the CCF should be used to **strengthen regional governance across the Gulf South and Appalachia** and support movement leadership among the two regions. Taproot Earth will continue to steward the CCF in 2024 and 2025, as the GS2A builds its new governance structure and explores opportunities for broader regional collaboration.

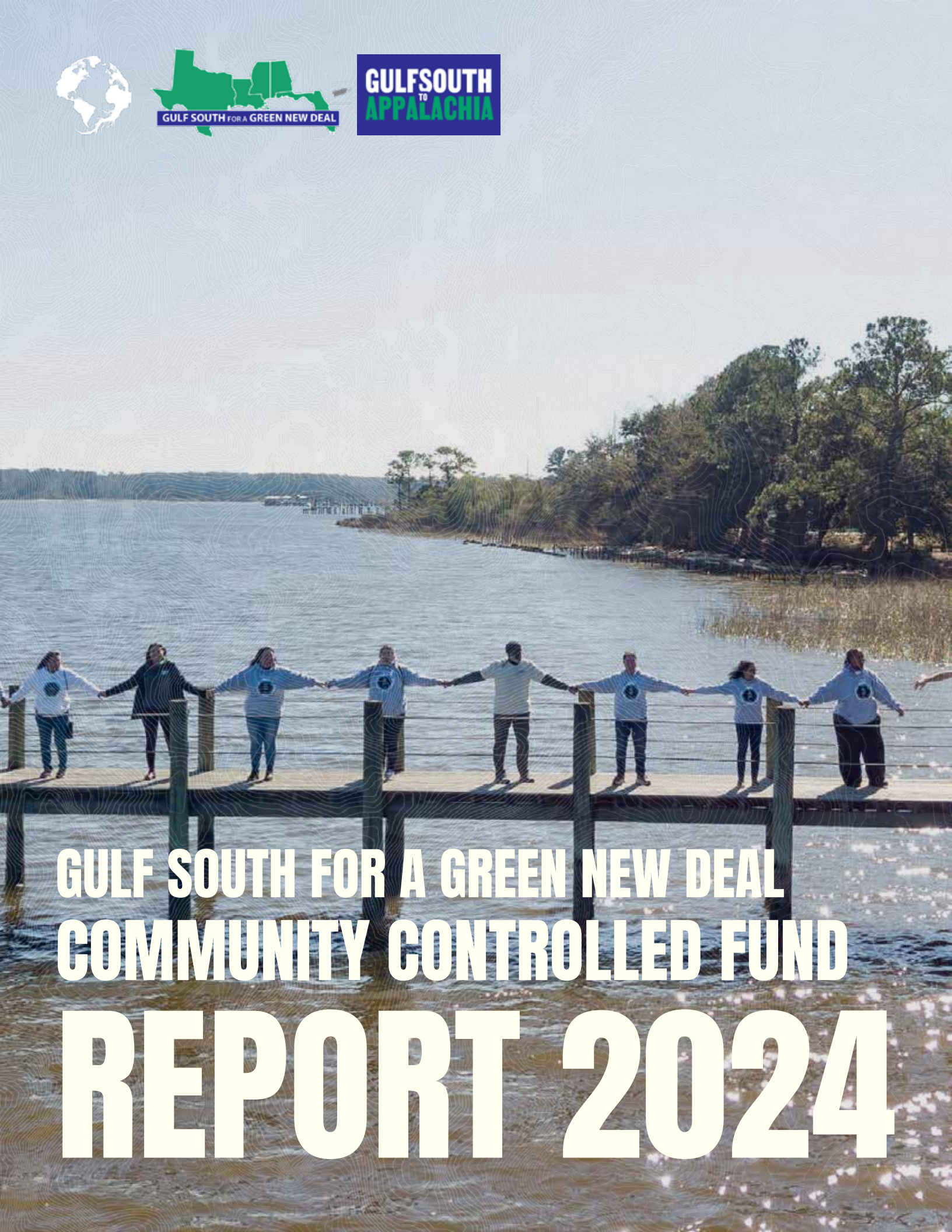
In Summary

As the climate crisis intensifies, the legacies of extractive financial systems fail to deliver real solutions in frontline communities. Communities most impacted by the climate crisis must direct resources and shape solutions that safeguard their own futures. Deep investment in frontline community control and self-governance practices liberatory resource mobilization.

Gulf South for a Green New Deal's Community Controlled Fund offers **a replicable model for development that centers equity, self-determination, and collective governance.**

The GS4GND CCF demonstrates that **when frontline communities control their own resources, they shape thriving climate futures.**

Follow the frontlines.



GULF SOUTH FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED FUND REPORT 2024

INTRODUCTION

Some people define 2030 as the date of irreparable harm to human life on the planet. As 2030 approaches, authoritarianism rises and climate disasters imperil frontline communities. These systems lead to continued privatization, extraction, and exploitation of water, energy, and land – seeking to deny communities' right to self-determination and governance.

With every climate disaster, the frontlines experience waves of privatization of public lands, housing, schools, water systems as was the case in Louisiana and Mississippi after Katrina in 2005, in Puerto Rico after Maria in 2017, in Barbuda after Irma in 2017. As climate disasters and emergencies intensify – so do attacks on public government, and increases in authoritarian rule. Both these systems push to the margins, extract from, and erase Black and Indigenous peoples across the globe.

Yet, frontline communities have a long history of resisting extractive cycles, building solidarity across borders, and advancing a vision rooted in power, community, and abundance. The frontlines have envisioned – over and over again – opportunities to build a new world that addresses the new climate reality while catalyzing real justice.

Taproot Earth has learned with the frontlines:

- We have the opportunity to reclaim stewardship of water, energy, and land.
- We can build democracy and challenge borders by building networks of relationships, solidarity, and action.
- We can root an economy in care and reimagine labor. Bodies are not something to be controlled or exploited, but a part of a broader ecosystem.

To follow the frontlines, global financial systems must be transformed. Finance remains a tool of colonialism and extraction - continuing to oppress Black, Brown, Indigenous and poor people at a community level- and whole nations at a sovereign level - in debilitating debt. Unjust, colonial debt threatens self-determination, community stewardship of natural resources, and a liberated ability to live, rest and thrive. This debt continues to place extractive systems over frontline communities - benefiting the very entities and nations that have caused historical harm in the first place - often implemented by the World Bank, IMF, and other public-private institutions.

With the rapidly changing climate reality, actors in the global financial system have created new avenues of climate finance. Climate finance is a new tool of extractive investment. It prioritizes carbon markets and profitability over community health and wellbeing. Climate finance uses extractive loans or grants that continue to transfer wealth and resources from the Global South, Appalachia, and the Gulf South into the hands of corporate elites. Their tools are an old playbook: use extractive grants and loans to dictate how countries govern their futures and resources. These financial mechanisms continue to build oppressive debt and hinder frontline solutions of self-determination and collective governance of resources.

The good news: Investing in our climate future does not have to be this way! Climate frontline communities, communities who experience the first and worst impacts of climate extraction, are best positioned to offer the solutions forward. The frontlines have alternative models and solutions that reimagine how to move, how to use, and how to transform financial resources through collective governance.

The following report provides an overview of a three-year process from 2021 to 2023 detailing how the Gulf South for a Green New Deal Formation (GS4GND) created an alternative model through the Community Controlled Fund (CCF). This report provides an accounting of the process and shines a light on the practices of collective governance and decision-making over financial resources. The report offers recommendations and next steps for the future of the CCF under the stewardship of the Gulf South to Appalachia Formation (GS2A).

BRIEF HISTORY

Gulf South for a Green New Deal (GS4GND)

The Gulf South for a Green New Deal (GS4GND) formation emerged from the Gulf South Rising 2015 initiative (GSR 2015). GSR 2015 catalyzed movement governance and organizing work for climate justice in the Gulf South (TX, LA, MS, AL, FL) around a calendar of significant commemorations in 2015 including 50 years since the Selma to Montgomery March, 5 years since the BP Deepwater Horizon Drilling Disaster, and 10 years since Hurricane Katrina.

Notably, a five-year process of People's Movement Assemblies (PMAs) across the Gulf South rooted in cultivating frontline solutions to the climate crisis cultivated the Gulf South Rising 2015 strategy document. One of the fours goals outlined in the Gulf South Rising strategy document included the development of regional movement infrastructure including the form of community controlled funds. Funds raised during GSR 2015 were held in escrow until a collective process could be developed to use them. Gulf South community members participated in a year of weekly meetings throughout 2016 to build and refine their own process of holding and distributing money and power back to the community, ultimately creating the Gulf South Rising Community Controlled Fund.

Gulf South for a Green New Deal (GS4GND) continued this work in 2019 by charting forward a vision for the Gulf South to respond and center climate frontline solutions as the nation rang with calls for a "Green New Deal." Gulf South frontline communities answered the call by asserting their own Gulf South perspective on a Green New Deal. This call for a Gulf South for a Green New Deal was anchored in the histories, realities, and power of the region and practiced a commitment to self-governance and self-determination.

The GS4GND formation brought together 400 Gulf South organizations to advance long-existing work toward climate, racial, and economic justice. After more than a year of meetings and collective decision-meetings across all five Gulf South states, this formation launched the 2019 GS4GND Platform as an accountability and organizing document across

the region. The formation moved together for a total of five years, from 2018 - 2023. For the first two years, there was little to no philanthropic investment to match the community investment of time, care, and energy that it took to build relationships and collective analysis of the challenges that the region faced. Sensing a real opportunity to change the story of investment in the Gulf South, the formation decided to create a community-controlled fund to mobilize resources and invest in frontline solutions.

The Creation of the GS4GND Community Controlled Fund

The Gulf South for a Green New Deal Community Controlled Fund (GS4GND CCF) was a community governed fund born out of the Gulf South Rising Community Controlled Fund. From Katrina 10 in 2015 until 2018, the Gulf Coast Center for Law & Policy (GCCLP), held peoples movement assemblies and strategy sessions, and facilitated conversations around climate, racial, and economic justice in the Gulf South: Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Puerto Rico. GCCLP used the Gulf South Rising Community Controlled Fund model for community stewardship and decision-making to provide collective resources to meet the needs of communities.

Building on this history, GS4GND members convened at the Gulf Gathering in 2020 and ratified a campaign to raise resources dedicated to the capacity and organizing work of GS4GND. They decided these funds would move through a community controlled fund alternative model

Due to the inequitable structural barriers and historical disinvestment in Southern climate justice leadership, many smaller organizations within GS4GND were unable to receive the significant level of resources from philanthropic institutions. The proposed solution used a community controlled fund model. The model allowed for the aggregation of dollars in large amounts, which then could be distributed out in manageable processes and sizes to groups suffering from financial barriers and disinvestment. In short, the community controlled fund model creates a solution to historical injustices in philanthropic giving and finance. GCCLP (and later Taproot Earth), facilitated the process of fundraising and development for GS4GND. The GS4GND formation affirmed a decision to utilize existing infrastructure of the dormant Gulf South Rising Fund as the structure to mobilize resources.

The GS4GND CCF could receive significant financial resources that could be collectively distributed to the

ground. For the first two years of the GS4GND CCF, movement leader Project South fiscally sponsored the fund, while GCCLP and then Taproot Earth facilitated the governance processes. In year 3, Taproot Earth fiscally sponsored the Fund.

The GS4GND formation called for a three-year, 15 million-dollar investment in the Gulf South. (This was later increased to 17 million to include 2 years for Puerto Rico, which officially joined the GS4GND formation in the second year of the fund process.)

Fundraising: Funders and Resources Raised

On March 2, 2021, GCCLP along with financial leads selected by each Hub (TX, LA, MS, AL and FL) held a funder webinar to raise $15,000,000 over three years to support the GS4GND through the model of the CCF. The funder webinar - and consequently additional funder cultivation - was successful. From March 1 - December 31, 2021, GS4GND raised nearly 35% of the $15 million goal. Over the three-year period, the GS4GND raised and secured 17 million in commitments - 2 million of which were reserved for 2024 and 2025. During the CCF decision-making processes, the formation agreed to use surplus dollars and any additional foundation commitments for regional work in 2024 and beyond.

Please review Appendix I: Financial Accountability for a report out of the distribution of dollars.

GS4GND also agreed to other governance processes for the distribution of funds. For example, Funders could choose to invest directly into the GS4GND Fund or to the Financial Leads, who stewarded the funds at the state Hub level. Also, regardless of how money was fundraised, the GS4GND agreed that each Hub would get $1,000,000 per year.

The following funders invested in the GS4GND CCF and Process from 2021 to 2024 – including disaster response during Hurricane Ida:

- Wallace Global Fund
- Surdna Foundation
- Mertz-Gilmore Foundation
- Nathan Cummings Foundation
- Energy Foundation
- Cloud Mountain Foundation
- Elizabeth B. and Arthur E. Roswell Foundation
- Hive Fund for Climate and Gender Justice
- Kendeda Fund
- Green New Deal Network
- Common Counsel Foundation
- Aec Trust
- Park Foundation Inc
- Blue Umbrella, LLC.
- Libra Foundation
- Ananda Fund
- Impact Assets
- Bezos Earth Fund (via PolicyLink)
- Rudolf Steiner Foundation, Inc. dba RSF Social
- Finance
- Amalgamated Charitable Foundation Inc
- Gelman Giving
- Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc
- Greenleaf Trust
- Lawson Valentine Foundation
- Carolyn McCoy
- Satterberg Foundation

KEY DECISION PROCESSES

Key Decision-Makers in the GS4GND CCF

Please refer to Appendix 2 for a more detailed description of the processes utilized to advance governance and distribution of the funds. The following offer a few key points:

1. Hub Participants: All budget decisions for the distribution of dollars in the CCF were determined by Hub participants through a participatory budgeting process. At each Gulf Gathering and subsequent Hub meetings,Hubs would build their budgets for investment and approve them. No dollars could be moved without an accountable participatory budgeting process affirmed by active participants.

2. GS4GND Facilitative Leads: These are organizations that played a critical role in facilitative Hub meetings and formation regional agendas and gatherings. Varying by Hub, some facilitative leads helped build out the participatory budgeting processes.

3. GS4GND Financial Leads: These are organizations that played two primary roles within the CCF. First, the financial leads received the distribution of dollars and redistributed to Hub participants. Second, they represented the Hub at the Regional CCF meetings to provide accountable governance and approvals for financial resource mobilization.

4. Project South: Project South fiscally sponsored the GS4GND CCF for years 1 & 2.

5. GCCLP (and later Taproot Earth): GCCLP -later Taproot Earth - fiscally sponsored the fund in year 3. For years 1 - 3, GCCLP and later Taproot Earth managed funder relationships, grant administration, and facilitated processes for collective decision-making. GCCLP/Taproot Earth did not make any decisions on how money should be allocated.

Key Decisions Made by the GS4GND CCF Leads

Over the three-year process, the GS4GND Financial Leads made a series of decisions facilitated by GCCLP and later Taproot Earth. Financial Leads met on a monthly basis to discuss progress, processes, and key learnings and decisions. Please review Appendix 2 for an outline of the guidance and process that leads utilized.

The following is a summary of key decisions made that impacted the CCF and distribution:

1. The CCF would run for a three-year period, with an evaluation of the fund and the GS4GND formation at the Gulf Gathering in November 2023.

2. Distribution of funds required an affirmed participatory budget. Financial and facilitative leads must facilitate a participatory budgeting process to ensure that Hub members could determine how dollars should be utilized in their Hub.

3. Fiscal Years (FY) would run October 1 - September 30 (Note: there was a 4-month lag in disbursements).
   a. FY1, served as a shortened year March 2021 - September 2021,
   b. FY2, October 2021 - September 2022, and
   c. FY3, October 2022 - September 2023.

4. Given the shortened FY1, the five Hubs would receive $420,000 for FY1, with each Hub receiving $1,000,000 in FY2 and $1,000,000 in FY3. Puerto Rico was brought in and included as a Hub for FY2 and FY3.

5. Foundations could give directly to financial leads rather than the CCF to support GS4GND work. This would count towards the fundraising goals (NB: This ended up only being the case for Alliance for Affordable Energy in Louisiana).

6. Any surplus dollars and anything raised beyond FY3 would be put into the CCF to use for regional purposes and priorities, not necessarily Hub-specific uses.

7. Project South would transfer fiscal sponsorship to Taproot Earth for FY3 (2023).

8. Taproot Earth could be reimbursed $150,000 for administrative costs (50,000 per year to Project South for FY1 & FY2, with 50,000 for FY3), out of the abundance of resources raised. In actuality, Taproot Earth paid out $100,000 to Project South and rather than seek reimbursement, Taproot Earth reinvested these dollars into the CCF.

GULF SOUTH FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

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GULF SOUTH FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED FUND REPORT 2024

GOALS OF THE CCF

GOALS OF THE CCF

Goals and Highlights (2021 - 2023)

Goals of Gulf South for a Green New Deal supported by Community Controlled Fund resources:

1. Redistribute funds to community organizations;
2. Create policy models that would allow communities to develop their own climate solutions;
3. Advance and deepen community capacity for civic engagement around climate solutions;
4. Highlight and advance the tangible and material shifts of just transition - including advancing workers' rights in the shift away from extractive and exploitative practices - for scaling throughout the region;
5. Promote human rights, rights of nature, climate justice in communications narratives and strategies within state and federal opportunities;
6. Challenge the influence of extractive economies -such as fossil fuel and biofuel companies -on local communities' wellbeing, workforce, and government programs;
7.Advocate for deeper transparency, accountability, equity, and language justice within state agency programs that implement federal dollars.

The following highlights of the work that the CCF resources supported included:

1. The CCF practiced collective governance and decision-making. GS4GND successfully redistributed 14 million dollars through a participatory budgeting process (to about 100 organizations overall in the region).

This helped many organizations stay open during Covid and build long-term capacity to engage in communities after this grant period. The redistribution of dollars also provided resources for engagement and civic education with communities across the Gulf South states and Puerto Rico around energy, land, climate, and water policies and programs at state and national levels.

2. The GS4GND CCF built community networks and power. GS4GND served to continuously connect what had often been a disjointed region. For example, using funds from the GS4GND CCF, the regional formation engaged, activated, and mobilized over 1,000 residents at Climate Justice & Joy in 2022, and engaged over 5,000 residents in Louisiana and Texas on off-shore permitting and lease sales while raising awareness

across the nation around the challenges of off-shore oil and gas and the implications of a just transition.

GS4GND CCF used funds to facilitate two Gulf Gatherings in the past two years, bringing together over 300 leaders from 100 organizations across all 6 Hubs to build relationships, advance shared political analysis and understanding, and identify priorities and solutions. Over 50 GS4GND leaders participated in a regional Building a Movement training facilitated by Taproot Earth and Project South - a six-month intensive leadership development program that builds skills of facilitation, organizing, mediation, political analysis, and strategy.

3. The GS4GND CCF built capacity within the six Hubs.

a. The Puerto Rico Hub was established later than the other Hubs in 2022. This Hub focused on food sovereignty - building out models and projects to inform land-use policy and financing solutions around regenerative agriculture and food sovereignty. The Hub sent multiple leaders to the Taproot Earth and Project South BAM trainings - building capacities around facilitation, mediation, and strategy. In 2023, the Hub focused on just transition conversations and planning actions, including work as a part of the International Workers' Day and May Day events in the community.

b. The Florida Hub held their statewide retreat in July 2023. They have distributed network leadership grants for small organizations as a key priority. Florida has been able to focus time on disaster preparedness due to the resources. The Florida Hub focused on challenging the current political context and advancing narratives and solutions for climate justice in the state. Much of the work in 2023 focused on hurricane recovery, building out networks for mutual aid, and advocating for better federal and state policies on resource mobilization for disaster recovery and preparedness. The Hubs also engaged in models and concepts around energy democracy and the shift to renewable energy, specifically in quickly gentrifying neighborhoods - highlighting the inequity of energy burdens and renewable energy deployment.

c. The Alabama Hub focused on disaster preparedness and recovery efforts - moving resources and recovery programs to address significant tornado and hail storm recovery. The Hub continued to push and advocate for equitable and affordable housing, supported worker organizing around extractive economies, and advanced food and farm solutions. Many Hub members also supported efforts for civic engagement and fair voting districts to ensure that communities have a right to their vote and a right to be heard in policy processes. The AL Hub modeled mutual aid programs to support disaster recovery and ran a series of workshops, education initiatives, and climate programs for communities that addressed climate justice and environmental racism.

d. The Mississippi Hub focused much of its efforts on fighting for clean water in Jackson, and they have moved rapid response dollars for tornado victims. MS members engaged in rapid response and disaster recovery strategies, including directing supplies, navigating FEMA, and researching new housing solutions. The majority of funds were used to support organizational capacity in deeper base building work around land justice, housing equity, and economic justice.

e. The Louisiana Hub organized events and participated in the ongoing legislative process. The Hub led the Louisiana Week of Climate Action which included 7 events in 5 parishes, with over 350 participants, in collaboration with Stop the Money Pipeline. Earth Day Actions took place in Lake Charles, Mossville, and New Orleans, and Hub members took part in the Week of Art and Climate Action.

The Hub spurred the development of the Louisiana Coalition Against False Solutions and hosted an anti-carbon capture and sequestration lobby day on April 18th, 2023. The Hub Policy Table led a field trip to the LA Capitol to prepare for legislative sessions and held a mock committee hearing to train local justice leaders in the legislative process. The Hub has continued to build out robust fundraising, communications, governance, and organizing processes.

f. The Texas Hub worked on developing environmental justice tours around the state, bringing together over 25 leaders from 5 different communities across the state. They celebrated the Lane Plating Superfund site's demolition in Dallas, Texas. Hub-involved organizations are also engaging in local activities. For example, the Carrizo Comecrudo Tribe held the Bridge to the Ancestors Run and are engaged in pushback against polluting industries in the area. Downwinders at Risk is supporting the Singleton United Gotta Go Campaign. And the Society of Native Nations took a trip to Vietnam to work toward the global treaty on plastics pollution. The Texas Hub organized Texas Environmental Tours in Dallas, Houston, and Brownsville, TX.

Southern Sector Rising (SSR) is supporting the Sand Branch Community, a former Freedmans' Town, a Black/brown/poor white community with no running water, no sanitation, or sewer, by providing 275-gallon water totes to 41 residents with bi-monthly water tote refills of nonportable water. On a bi-monthly basis, SSR rents a 2000-gallon water tote, hires two drivers, and contracts with the City of Dallas to pay a monthly fire hydrant water bill to refill the water truck to refill the resident's water totes for a short-term solution. SSR is working in agreement with the Sand Branch Water Board and other organizations in strategizing to secure funding for a long-term solution in bringing clean running water to the community.

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ASSESSMENTS OF THE CCF

ASSESSMENTS OF THE CCF

Assessing the GS4GND Community Controlled Fund

As we the GS4GND CCF reached the end of its three-year mandate, GS4GND Hub leads and members reflected on questions assessing the GS4GND CCF:

- What else worked well? What could and should be repeated? What made relationships with funders fruitful? How could these features be recognized and replicated?
- How could we minimize unknowns when introducing new ideas, new ways, or new regions? What would help us better navigate when unknowns do arise?
- Are there any models of distributing funds with minimal fuss and burden on recipients? Are there models outside of philanthropy (ie: forgivable impact investment loans that don't require reporting on outcomes). What are the features that make it so? How do we incorporate them into round 2 of the CCF?
- What is our spectrum of success, from failure to minimum success to success to epic success? How can we have a shared view of them along the way? How can we share the stories with each other and others interested along the way?
- What would it look like to incorporate healing around money into the investment projects? How would we communicate and convince funders of this need?
- How can we ensure accountability in how we utilize donor philanthropy by not replicating zero sum models and promoting regenerative, solidarity based economics?
- What should Taproot Earth's role be in the next round of the CCF?

Learnings and Lessons of the CCF

1. The frontlines are capable and skilled at resource mobilization and distribution. In the United States context, the Gulf South is often the most disinvested and extracted-from region. Despite this lack of investment, leaders have deep experience, expertise, and wisdom in how to move funds through community processes. The GS4GND CCF is a powerful example of this practice. Raising and distributing nearly $15 million over 3 years to over 100 organizations is a testament to the ability of frontline communities to mobilize and distribute resources effectively and with accountability. Each hub utilized processes such as participatory budgeting, consensus-based decision making and voting, applications, and affirmation sessions, showing the variety of tools the frontlines have to move resources.

2. Funders that trust the frontlines are essential. Too often, investors and philanthropy want to see quantitative return on investments in order to make a determination on how to move financial resources. These metrics discount the incredibly necessary efforts for capacity building, network and relationship development, and innovation. The GS4GND CCF was successful because the participating funders trusted and followed the leadership of frontline communities without attaching strings or hard metrics. This freedom allowed for financial decisions to be made collectively and with full autonomy of the frontlines. In line with collective decisions in the GS4GND formation, funds were used to support staffing for Gulf South organizations, create and implement communications strategies, and convening over 1,000 residents at a massive community assembly.

3. We must acknowledge and create space to address past and present trauma around race, class, and power. Due to historical harms of economic extraction, the relationship to money and finances is complicated. This was a reality that participants engaging the CCF had to navigate. Because white-led organizations have often received more investment than Black-led organizations, the organizations that were in position to move funding unintentionally replicated these dynamics.

The systems that we operate within, have historical distrust of Black, brown, and poor people with money for no other justified reason than racist and classist structures. There was a constant request for - and deep need to - facilitate mediated sessions with participants to break out of these systemic challenges and lead with intentions and impacts of the decisions rooted in accountability and justice. This level of facilitation and mediation is very time intensive, often not resourced, and requires a level of investment to support the healing and growth of all participants.

4. Resource distribution systems require discipline and flexibility. Because of the varying nature of participant needs and experiences, flexibility and discipline is required to support and shape how resource decisions are made while balancing power dynamics. To achieve this, community-governed funds could benefit from more time to create collective agreements on baseline infrastructure and then build out flexibility to ensure that there is critical alignment along the journey. The Florida Hub offers one example of this practice.

Within the Florida Hub, the financial and facilitative leads created buckets of funding with participants to include: rapid response and capacity building grants. Participants then applied for the funds based on need, and members reviewed grant applications and affirmed or opposed the grant request. This set-up created a disciplined process for application and buckets of distribution, while using a process of review and application to allow for flexibility and emergence.

5. Cultivate and stay grounded in collective values. The GS4GND Community Controlled Fund began its work after GS4GND formation had collectively drafted and affirmed, amongst other things, its values of collective governance. Listed below in full, these values included advancing equity, following the frontlines, and valuing all people equally -- and they informed how the formation worked and moved together.

These values were more than a list of niceties to be occasionally reviewed, and instead represented an active commitment between all members and leads within the formation. These values were critical to guiding how formations raised resources just as much as it distributed resources. For example, GS4GND participants went through a collective process to determine if they should receive funds from a complicated source - using the values as a guide for the decision-making. The formation agreed that so long as values are not violated and that funds do not determine the frontline decisions- the funds could be accepted. The community values created an accountability mechanism that could be turned to during times of conflict or dispute, providing a path to repair. The slow but powerful work of collectively establishing these values was invaluable for the success of the fund.

6. Challenge the system of extractive finance. Formation leaders often named the following as ways to break patterns and do things differently with regarding to fundraising and fund management:

- Use the funds to fundraise other funds. How can we capture enough donors to show that this is not a risk, but a truly strategic and smart investment.
- Leverage funds to build justly regenerative economics projects beyond the traditional, capitalistic models
- Find creative models and solutions to replicate and share out
- Build a culture of healing into the funding model

Key Reflections from GS4GND Financial Leads

The following reflections were shared and synthesized by the financial leads of the GS4GND. The financial leads were responsible for distributing funds in each hub.

1. Financial leadership requires time, capacity, and investment. Navigating community governance of funds in a capitalist world often meant that the financial leads were not resourced to do the heavy lifting of resource distributions. Creating contracts, tracking dollars, providing hubs financial reports took a toll on the financial leads. The current financial systems require levels of paperwork and accounting that significantly burdened leads - especially for 501c3 organizations. This burden also unintentionally created power dynamics between the leads and participants along race and class lines, despite the best of intentions. This led to some deep resource constraints and unanticipated challenges for leads. Financial Leads recommend more capacity-building,time to level-set

expectations, training, and systems of support should be in place for organizations that are redistributing funds.

2. Onboarding is key! The investment in resources allowed for Hubs and the formations to expand membership and participation. However, with new members' discussions over money quite often sidetracked progress and alignment. Building a healthy and robust onboarding system for participants to be deeply aligned and connected is essential in order to avoid debates over money at the expense of the work.

3. Commitment to full participation is important. Similarly, partners that receive funding but never participate or engage can be a challenge. Establishing agreements and commitments to participate and help build collective work is essential for the success of a community-governed fund process, otherwise the relationship becomes a grantee-grantor one, which creates power dynamics and fails to advance the practice of collective self-governance.

4. Financial leads built critical capacity. Despite challenges, the role of financial leadership helped increase and build essential capacities of frontline organizations around bookkeeping, financial management, participatory budgeting processes, and facilitation. The capacity of the financial leads was deepened through this practice.

5. Cultivate and stay grounded in collective values. The GS4GND Community Controlled Fund began its work after GS4GND formation had collectively drafted and affirmed, amongst other things, its values of collective governance. Listed below in full, these values included advancing equity, following the frontlines, and valuing all people equally -- and they informed how the formation worked and moved together. These values were more than a list of niceties to be occasionally reviewed, and instead represented an active commitment between all members and leads within the formation. In this way, the community values created an accountability mechanism that could be turned to during times of conflict or dispute. If someone felt wronged, the conversation could be framed and understood as a violation of our agreed upon values, which then also provided a path to repair. The slow but powerful work of collectively establishing these values was invaluable for the success of the fund.

GULF SOUTH FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

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RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CCF

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to Funders

Lastly, through the CCF process, we have gleaned insights and lessons from the funder-allies that should be seen as recommendations to the broader philanthropy sector for more successful resource mobilization. These include:

- Take time to understand the context and the need in the South;
- Move general operating funds rather than specific project funds, and trust the leadership of communities to put the resources where they are most needed;
- Do not question community red lines - rather ask what other support is needed to ensure communities can receive the critical funds and support a holistic approach to giving and implementation.
- Do the internal work on implicit bias, race, and structural analysis to ensure that biases don't inform strategic giving.
- Don't give "guilt money." Understand that investment in the frontlines is a critical need for our shared survival.

Understanding the Challenges

One challenge philanthropy must be aware of is a backlog of high emotion against funders. In this process, we often heard anger, disappointment, frustration, exhaustion, exasperation, anxiety, confusion, and sadness. The funds aren't going to groups with a blank slate of experiences; people have pre-existing feelings about funders and fund stewards from their lived experiences. There are generations of trauma and loss around money holding up habits like gatekeeping, suspicion, and blame. Fund stewards at all levels must understand trauma-informed practices and build in support systems to handle emergent situations that shift initial plans, such as climate disasters.

Another factor is that funders must understand context. There is often harm that results from "helicopter dropping" funds into a community struggling with infighting. Relational support and conflict resolution can help here if done in a way that is community-driven, accountable, and takes into account cultural difference and nuance. In addition to the relational support, organizations in the South need concrete support to manage and distribute funds.

Potential Tactics for Philanthropy moving forward

- Establish outsourced grant management options for CCF recipients
- Build a process and network for nonprofit finance and public administration professionals
- Support frontline engagement in networks with that can connect people with mentorship, peer support or educational and job opportunities to build and deepen cross-sectoral organizing
- Support the recipient organizations to collectively define multiple pathways of success metrics
- Develop Funder education on sustained, movement-based grantmaking, specifically in regions that face boom-and-bust philanthropy or scarcity approaches to the work
- Connect recipients to creative solutions. For example, Traditional Ecological Knowledge found loopholes in conservation law that would allow land trusts to provide some housing for tribal stewards
- Resource leads with peer support and information by connecting them with others doing similar work in other parts of the country

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MOVING FORWARD

MOVING FORWARD

A Proposal for the GS2A Formation

The agreement and commitment between GCCLP/ Taproot Earth with the GS4GND was for three fiscal years. September 30th, 2023, marked the end of the 3-year cycle of agreement and all disbursements were finalized by December 31, 2023. At the November 2023 Gulf Gathering, the GS4GND voted and affirmed to move together with Appalachia to create the Gulf South to Appalachia Formation. As a part of this decision - the purpose and structure of the GS4GND CCF would change in 2024. A few key items:

1. The GS4GND CCF had agreed that all surplus dollars and committed funds beyond 2023 should be used for region-wide work
2. With the GS4GND and Appalachia forming the GS2A Formation, the CCF region of focus would now expand to include Appalachia.
3. The GS2A agreed that Taproot Earth would continue to fiscally sponsor the CCF until otherwise determined by the GS2A
4. That all decisions regarding the distribution of CCF dollars would be made on regional calls, until a new governance structure was formally adopted.

The Merging of the GS4GND with Appalachia

At the Gulf Gathering in October 2023, the GS4GND affirmed a merger with the ongoing Gulf to Appalachia process to form the Gulf South to Appalachia Formation. This is a new formation grounded in the #WeChooseNow Climate Action Strategy that brings together an entire region across 18 states ranging from Texas to Pennsylvania. This brings an end to specific state Hubs and solely Gulf South regional work, and moves towards a region-to-region powerbuilding effort to advance climate justice through Black liberation and collective self-determination.

This formation now assumes the remaining set of funds. In 2024, the Gulf South to Appalachia formation has voted to move $400,000 in resources to support frontline leaders in attending:

1. Community Assembly in Alabama (July 2, 2024)
2. Governance Assembly in Pittsburgh (Dec 4 - 6, 2025)
3. Provide stipends for 7 WeChooseNow Fellows (November 2024 - May 2024)

Proposal for the Regional CCF

Taproot Earth proposes to facilitate, manage, and house the Regional CCF until the GS2A has decided a long-term solution to house the Regional CCF.

We propose this for the following reasons:

- Taproot Earth intends to sunset by 2030; therefore, we believe these resources should ultimately be held by a longer-term institution that will continue to support the leadership that emerges and grows over the next 6 years.

- The next two years will focus on supporting the leadership and development of the regional collective governance of the Gulf South and Appalachia. Funds available in 2024 - 2026 can be used to support regional efforts.

- We know that financial resources are always a target for attack and threat. To best support resources moving to communities, we want to ensure that we have redundant and accountable systems that allow people to access the dollars when needed.

- There might be opportunities to link this fund with other regions and we would like to work with the formations to explore what this possibility could look like in order to build collective power and connection, and to leverage resources across political boundaries and borders.

- The GS2A Formation will create a new governance body to determine the following:
  - Distribution of remaining dollars
  - Fundraising and development strategy of the CCF - if it chooses to continue the use of this asset and infrastructure

CONCLUSION

The GS4GND CCF represents a different model of reparative climate justice investment that roots the climate frontlines as the decision-makers. The GS4GND CCF model helps to repair historical injustices such as lack of access to financial tools and systems in historically oppressed communities. This model uplifts the solutions and capacity of the frontlines – as proof that communities can self-govern, hold funds, and distribute funds on their own terms.

The GS4GND CCF, is one model of a community controlled fund. The GS4GND CCF lights the way for climate frontline communities around the world to work in solidarity to create and govern their own community controlled funds and other alternative models. The lesson of the GS4GND CCF is that when the frontlines cultivate their own power and replicate their models – the climate movement marches ever closer to the Liberation Horizon.

Follow the frontlines.

GULF SOUTH FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

GULF SOUTH TO APPALACHIA

GULF SOUTH FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL COMMUNITY CONTROLLED FUND REPORT 2024

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Financial Accountability

Chart 1: Summary Revenue by Fiscal Year

Year and Category	Revenue
FY1 CCF Total (March 2021 - Sept 2021)	$2,209,157
Year 1: Recovery (Ida+Long-term) (NCF, Organizing Resilience, AEC)	$162,833
FY2 CCF Total (Oct 2021 - Sept 2022)	$6,250,500
FY3 CCF Total (Oct 2022 - Sept 2023)	$5,846,760
FY1 - 3 Louisiana-specific Funds	$1,600,000
FY 2 Individual Giving via paypal	$10,070
Total of FY1 - FY3 CCF Raised Revenues	**$16,079,320**
Year4 CCF Commitments	$840,000
Year5 CCF Commitments	$190,000
Total of all GS4GND Revenue (FY1 - FY5)	**$17,109,320**

Chart 2: Fund Distribution

Hub	FY 1 - FY 3 Total Affirmed Distributions	FY 1 - FY 3 Total Distributed (March 2021 - September 2023)
TX	$2,420,000	$2,420,000
LA	$2,420,000	$2,458,985*
MS	$2,420,000	$2,420,000
AL	$2,420,000	$2,420,000
FL	$2,420,000	$2,420,000
PR	$2,000,000	$2,420,000
	Total: $14,100,000	**Total: $14,138,985**

* A marginal amount of additional dollars to Louisiana due to funder specific donations

APPENDIX 1

Financial Accountability : GS4GND Ida + Long-term Recovery Funds

Chart 3: Community Controlled Funds Available

Year and Category	Revenue
Total Raised FY 1 - FY 3	$16,079,320
Total Distributed FY 1 - FY 3 as determined by Leads	$14,138,985
Total Surplus for Regional use	$1,940,335
Committed FY 4 & FY5	$1,030,000
Total Amount Raised or Committed to the CCF * moving forward as of December 31, 2023**	**$2,970,335**

***GS4GND participants agreed that any resources raised in surplus and/or beyond 2023, would be used to support regional work.

In addition to the funds raised for the GS4GND, we raised **over $162,833** in response to 2021 Hurricane Ida including Ida-specific and long-term building around climate resilience and recovery. These resources came from Nathan Cummings Foundation, AEC, and Organizing Resilience. The financial leads met and decided the following breakdown of resource distribution around Ida dollars:

- **$74,440** was distributed for direct service support (70% to LA, 30% to MS) immediately. These percentages were agreed upon based on the level of impact by the storm.
- **$83,000** was distributed evenly to each of the 6 Hubs for disaster preparation and long-term building (as a result of the Organizing Resilience grant).
- **5,393** was rolled over into reserves to aid in future disaster recovery efforts.

APPENDIX 2

Decision-making Guidance

Guidance for GS4GND Budget and Fiscal Governance

Gulf South for a Green New Deal (GS4GND) is a frontline-led regional formation of more than 400 organizations advancing nearly two decades of work in the region towards climate, racial, and economic justice. Frontline communities across the five Gulf states (TX, LA, MS, AL, FL) and one colonized territory (PR). These Hubs have been building solutions to address disaster recovery and planning, while advancing policies to address the harms of the extractive economies that cause the climate crisis. The relationships that created the Gulf South for a Green New Deal were forged in collective work: resisting harm in the BP oil spill disaster; protecting and recognizing Indigenous lands that were lost to rising seas; and organizing around solutions such as Hub movement assemblies around energy democracy and the Gulf South Rising efforts that emerged during the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina in 2015.

GS4GND focuses its work through three main avenues: strategic communications, policy development, and direct action. These three avenues of work integrate organizing in all of its components towards the creation of a Green New Deal that is inclusive of frontline communities in the Gulf South. GS4GND is the first grassroots, regional-led movement for a Green New Deal in the U.S., and is inspiring change across the nation and world.

The Budget: A Participatory Process the Requires Trust

Rooted in a deep commitment to self-determination and participatory processes, GS4GND is advancing a budget process quite different from conventional top-down efforts. Part of the work of GS4GND is to build and move resources collectively as an effort that not only deepens trust and accountability, but also democratizes the power behind dollars so that money does not become a factor for division, but a source for collective action and progress. This is an explicitly transparent process that operates from the bottom-up to maintain accountability to the frontlines.

Following the 2020 Gulf Gathering (an annual event where GS4GND develops a shared agenda and action plan), the five Hubs agreed to a budget of $1 million per Hub each year for a 3-year period, totalling $3 million per Hub, resulting in $15 million for the region. This was updated to six Hubs in 2022 when Puerto Rico was added as an official Hub. Fundraising increased to $17 million to maintain the commitment to $1 million per Hub.

Each Hub, with support of their Financial and Facilitative leads, designed their own processes to build out their $1 million annual budget. Each Hub's resource requests will vary based on their specific Hub needs; examples include increasing capacity for facilitation, analyzing and developing policy, designing and developing communications collateral, growing organizing infrastructure, funding rapid response, etc.

As an emergent process, the budgets will evolve to adapt to the critical uses identified by the Hubs. While the budgets will become more explicit and detailed over time, GS4GND requires long-term investment to create momentum to move the collectively-generated policy priorities and actions forward.

As a bottom-up and participatory process, we are asking the funder community to trust the frontlines and invest in a more equitable and innovative effort to center frontline solutions. Please join us in investing in this skill- and asset-building process. While perhaps atypical, this process actually shows GS4GND's progressive leadership and will ultimately deliver a transparent and accountable process on how funds are utilized and moved. The difference is that rather than a detailed, static budget, funders should expect one that is iterative and flexible to the emergent needs identified by the community. Below outlines the values, agreements, and guidance for GS4GND's budgeting process.

Value Regional and Hub Governance

1. Advance Equity: Consider and repair historical harm against those who have contributed the least to climate change and suffered the most. Advance solutions to the climate crisis that center those most impacted.

2. Follow the Frontlines: The voices and needs of Indigenous and frontline communities must be prioritized in a Green New Deal. The sovereign rights and treaties of all tribal nations must be acknowledged and honored.

3. Build Community Wealth & Health: For too long, workers in Gulf South communities have been forced into a false choice between a living wage and their health. Jobs associated with a Green New Deal must offer living wages, prioritize sustainable farming, transitioning to renewable energy, and investing in the next generation who will live on a further changing planet.

4. Invest in Visionary & Transformative Change: Urgent transformative action capable of addressing the full scope and complexity of this moment is needed. Now is the time to invest in systems and institutions capable of bringing forth a more just, equitable, and sustainable world.

5. Advance Community & Local Control: Power must be shifted away from large corporations and to local communities. We demand pathways towards affordable housing and sustainable homeownership, public control of natural resources, renewable energy sources and utility services.

6. Use an Intersectional Approach: The challenges facing frontline communities are not rooted in a single issue but rather the consequence of intersecting breaks and injustices in our social fabric.

7. Value All Humans Equally: Every human being has value and the inherent value of our humanity is not measured by our economic output. We deserve an economy rooted in the dignity and self-determination of communities, from the bottom up.

Agreements on How We Will Move Resources as Hubs and as a Region

Built on the foundation set upon the Gulf South Rising Community Controlled Fund, we propose the following agreements for budget decision-making processes at the Hub and regional levels:

1. Operate from a place of cooperative and ecological economics that is:
   a. Anti-capitalist.
   b. Prioritizes people, relationships, and community over profit.
   c. Rooted in ecology and non-extraction, with an emphasis on balance and regenerative systems.
   d. Committed to shared resources with each other for collective gain, rather than individual organizational benefit.
2. Commitment to anti-racism and anti-white supremacy
3. Develop longevity, sustainability, and regeneration (i.e. operate with a long-term strategy)
   a. The fund cannot be regenerated through extractive practices.
4. Advance collective work and responsibility through:
   a. Value non-monetary investment (e.g. sharing wisdom or knowledge) alongside Investment of financial assets to ensure mutual success
   b. Ensure that the fund connects, at a minimum, two or three communities across the Hub or region.
5. Commitment to restorative justice and transformative justice:
   a. Distribute money rooted in restoring Gulf South frontline communities.
   b. Utilize money to repair and restore the health and well-being of people, places and relationships.
   c. Prioritize community and ecological relationships.
6. Focus on the community and group's abilities; do not get caught up on limitations.
   a. Recognize and elevate existing community non-monetary assets
   b. Use financial resources to further empower and grow the community's existing strengths.
7. Money disbursed must be beneficial to the community (e.g. beyond just the people in the room); the community decides what is beneficial and the funding disbursement must reflect that.

A Regional Fund: Governance for the GS4GND Regioanl Community Controlled Fund

The GS4GND Regional Community-Controlled Fund (the Regional Fund) serves to resource and move funds to support the six-Hub regional movement. Its purpose is to create a space for funders to donate to the collective work. If funders are agnostic or geographically bound in funding a particular Hub or anchor, this fund creates an option to continue to resource GS4GND.

The GS4GND Regional CC Fund will equitably distribute resources based on Hub budget gaps and needs. For example, if Florida meets its $1 million target in direct funds for 2021, but Texas receives only $500,000, the Fund would prioritize moving resources to Texas to reach the $1 million goal. In this way, decisions on how Hubs move resources will defer to the Hub process (see below for suggested guidelines) but decisions on moving regional funding will be held at the Fund.

Fund Structure

1. Fiscal Anchor: The GS4GND Regional Community-Controlled Fund was originally housed at Project South, but has transitioned to Taproot Earth in 2023. Taproot Earth will receive $50,000 annually to administer the fund. Project South nor Taproot Earth has no decision-making authority over the Fund.

2. Facilitator: Taproot Earth facilitates the Fund. Taproot Earth will ensure that information and funds are flowing from the CCF to the six Hubs, support processes around transparency and accountability, and mediate any challenges in decision-making. Again, Taproot Earth has no decision-making authority over the fund, but serves as a conduit for communication, organization, and facilitation.

3. Decision-Makers: The decisions for how the Regional Fund is distributed will be made by the Fiscal leads of each Hub.

Decision-Making Process

Voting

Each Hub gets one vote. (If there are two Financial leads for one Hub, they should meet in advance and agree on how to move forward with their one Hub's vote).

1. Financial leads will meet on a quarterly basis to report on how the collective Hub budgets are moving and share gaps and needs that the Regional Fund can support.

2. Financial leads will decide how to move funds from the Regional Fund towards the GS4GND Hubs.

3. With 5 votes, all funding decisions for the Regional Funds should be made by consensus (see below). If consensus is not reached, alternative proposals for solutions will be made with consideration by the group to find an equitable and just way forward; if no consensus is reached after all alternative proposals are considered, unallocated money will remain in the Regional Fund until the next quarterly meeting.

4. All Hubs must be present to vote, no votes can happen if the Hub is not represented.

Types of Decisions

Fund decisions should be used to make the Hubs "whole"

The primary purpose for moving regional funds is to ensure that each Hub meets their $1 million/year budget goal. Funds should fill any gaps in direct Hub procurement of dollars.. However, Hub Fiscal leads may have to decide how to best utilize the resources if multiple Hubs have budget gaps that need to be filled.

1. Hub leads should assess how funding moves based on the GS4GND values and agreements.

2. All decisions should be written and communicated clearly by the Financial leads across GS4GND Leads for transparency and accountability.

"Beyond the Budget" decisions

If all Hub budgets are "whole" (meeting the $1 million annual threshold), and the Regional Fund has more dollars available, the Financial leads shall meet and decide on how best to resource the work. In this scenario, Hub leads could choose to move money to the Hubs equally, based on requests, or utilize funds for shared infrastructure that would benefit the regional work as a whole.

1. For decisions to be made, Taproot Earth will request from each Hub what extra resources or supports are needed and put this into a document for the Financial leads to consider and/or any proposals for regional infrastructure support.

2. Hub leads should assess how the needs connect to GS4GND values and agreements.

3. Hub leads will decide through consensus how to best share and spread the resources.
   a. If conflicts arise, Taproot Earth will mediate sessions to solve conflicts so the group can move the collective work forward.

4. All decisions should be written and communicated clearly across GS4GND Leads for transparency and accountability.

HUB BUDGETING PROCESSES: GOVERNANCE FOR BUILDING BOTTOM-UP BUDGETS

With the emphasis on self-determination and autonomy, each Hub will move forward with a budget process that addresses the nuances and intricacies of each place. To ensure consistency and groundedness across the region, it is expected that each Hub will adhere to the values and agreements.

To support the Hub budgeting process, the following are suggested guidelines based on GSR Community-Controlled Fund, Taproot Earth staff processes, and the LA4GND Table proposed budget process:

Hub Structure

1. Fiscal Home: The Hub Financial lead will be the fiscal home of the GS4GND process. Financial leads will receive a no more than 15% administrative fee for their role as the Hub fiscal home, their engagement at the Regional Fund, processing and moving dollars including grants, reporting, and all other administrative roles that make the distribution of funds possible.

2. Facilitator: The Facilitative lead is an organization(s) separate from the financial lead. The facilitative lead is responsible to facilitate the Hub process in decision-making, which includes collaborating with the financial lead to run the participatory budgeting process.. The Facilitative Lead also receives up to 15% budget fee for this role.

3. Decision-Makers: Decision-makers are Hub GS4GND organizations that that meet the following criteria:

a. Organization Agrees to:
   1. Jemez Principles,
   2. Values and Community Agreements,
   3. Goals of the GS4GND Policy Platform and annual Action Plan (*developed annually at the Gulf Gathering; see sample 2021 document here);

b. Organization has participated in a minimum of six GS4GND Regional Monthly Calls, eight monthly Hub meetings, and is actively engaged at one of the Tables (Policy, Communications, or Actions) each year.

c. Organization is committed to frontline leadership in the Gulf South.

d. Organization priorities solutions that advance justice for Black, Indigenous, and poor communities.

4. Accountability Oversight: While the Facilitative and Financial leads hold final responsibility for the budget process, it is recommended that that an "accountability oversight committee" be formed and composed of all the Leads from the Hub (Financial & Facilitative leads and Policy, Communications, and Action Table Leads) to ensure that funds are moved with integrity and community needs are addressed. this budget tool to create their budgets.

Process

1. The Financial and Facilitative leads will co-lead a process asking participating organizations within their Hub for the following:
   a. What resources are needed to engage in GS4GND?
   b. Generally, what skills, capacities, or support would your organization like to see GS4GND provide at the Hub and local level that can be resourced in this budget?
   c. Specifically, what areas of budgeting are most important to your organization?
      i. General support mini-grants
      ii. Stipends to be available for community leaders who are not organizational aligned to engage or for new organizations joining the Hub Hub;
      iii. Evergreen Funds: holding onto resources in case of emergency or unforeseen needs
      iv. Disaster response/Mutual Aid dollars to be ready to move in case of crisis and disaster
      v. Travel and Networking
      vi. Research
      vii. Technology or other Office Needs
      viii. Other

2. The Financial and Facilitative leads will develop a proposed budget based on the information provided above using this budget tool to create their budgets.

3. The Financial and Facilitative leads will submit the proposed budget to the Oversight and Accountability Team for review and refinement. The budget will move forward following the rules of Quorum & Consensus at the Oversight and Accountability Team.

4. After refining the proposed budget, the budget goes to all organizations for a vote (as set in the criteria laid out under Structure) & following the rules of Quorum & Consensus

Annual Cycle

1. **Q1: Budget Development**
   a. October: Hub-wide priorities are developed; outreach to organizations for budget needs in relation to the priorities developed at the Gulf Gathering
   b. November: the Accountability Team (all Hub leads) draft and review proposed budget
   c. December - January: Decision-makers vote & ratify the proposed budget, based on Decision Procedure outlined below

2. **Q2-Q4: Budget Execution**
   a. January – September: Budget disbursements based on collective decisions

Decision-Making: Quorum and Consensus

1. QUORUM: Quorum is required for all budgeting decisions.
a. For the Regional Fund: Full Participation is required (all 6 Hubs present).
b. For the Hub Decisions: Quorum should be 75% of all participating organizations present in-person and/or virtually (including by phone) over the time-period of the vote as determined by each Hub.

2. CONSENSUS: Consensus means everyone agrees to move forward. If there is consensus among decision-makers, the proposal passes.

3. NO CONSENSUS. If consensus is not reached:
a. For the Regional Fund: There is a facilitated conversation by Taproot Earth with the six Hubs around concerns with the items proposed.
i. The Hub leads will be notified via email that a decision will be made at the next meeting.
ii. At the next meeting, a proposal requires 5 of 6 Hubs to pass.
b. For the Hub Decisions: There is a facilitated conversation by the Facilitative Anchor with the Hub decision-makers about the concerns.
i. The decision-makers are notified that a decision will be made at the next meeting
ii. At this meeting there should be a 75% threshold for approval.

APPENDIX 3

Chart 4: Timeline Major Decisions of the GS4GND CCF

When?	Who?	What?
December 2023	GS4GND Financial Leads + Taproot Earth	Final Disbursements paid out to GS4GND Hubs
November 2023	GS4GND	Ratified moving the GS4GND CCF funds to the GS2A formation as the GS2A CCF
August 2023	GS4GND + Taproot Earth	Resources Allocated
March 2023	GS4GND	Participatory Budgets affirmed and resources allocated
January 2023	GS4GND + Project South	Participatory Budgets affirmed and resources allocated
September 2022	GS4GND Financial Leads	Funds Allocated to hubs
June 2022	GS4GND Financial Leads	Funds Allocated to hubs
February 2022	GS4GND	Participatory Budgets affirmed to guide resource distribution
October 2021	GS4GND Leads	Decisions made to establish fiscal year as October - September; 1st distribution of funds
September 2021	GS4GND Financial Leads	Decision to distribute Hurricane Ida dollars to Louisiana and Mississippi
March 2021	GS4GND	Launched $15 million fundraising campaign
October 2020	GS4GND	Decision to renew the GSR CCF as a mechanism to move collective resources
January 2015 - December 2018	GCCLP & GSR	Distribution of funds to GSR members
January 2010 - January 2015	GCCLP & GSR	People's Movement Assemblies and creation of the Gulf South Rising (GCR) Community Controlled Fund

GULF SOUTH FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

GULF SOUTH TO APPALACHIA

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