

Theory of Change



HOME REGION PROGRAM: ARKANSAS-MISSISSIPPI DELTA

The Delta region holds enormous potential, but has experienced generations of underinvestment and systemic barriers to opportunity. All Delta residents deserve access to the resources they need to learn, build assets and lead in their communities.

Through 2030, the Home Region Program will invest in initiatives that ensure all students have access to a high-quality education, help residents build assets and economic mobility and strengthen the capacity of local leaders and community-driven solutions.

What we plan to do



Ensure youth have access to high-quality education that enables pathways to economic mobility.



Support residents in building and retaining economic assets over time.

How we plan to do it



Improve teacher quality through certification and professional development aligned with strong instructional materials.



Expand access to career-connected pathways, after-school programs and quality public charter schools.



Help individuals and families build credit and financial literacy and access pathways to home ownership.



Provide sector-specific workforce training, build partnerships between employers and educators and strengthen small business resiliency and job creation.

All initiative areas are supported by investments in coalition-building and strengthening the capacity of local leaders and organizations to sustain and scale impact.

Why we do it



Access to a quality education is an essential building block to economic mobility. In the Delta, a lack of quality instruction and limited school options hinder students from realizing their full potential.



Generational poverty and disinvestment in the Delta have made it difficult for residents to accumulate wealth. Home ownership, financial literacy and small business success are foundational to resilient families and communities.



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Education and Youth Engagement

EDUCATOR WORKFORCE AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Research shows that teacher quality is the most important in-school factor affecting student achievement. In the Delta, too many classrooms are led by uncertified teachers, contributing to region's persistently low student outcomes. All students deserve high-quality instruction and all teachers deserve the training, resources and support needed to reach their full potential as educators. That means greater investment in highly-trained, well-resourced teachers.

With support from the local community, we will support programs through 2030 that provide pathways to certification and professional development for teachers and expand their access to high-quality instructional materials.

What we plan to do



Improve teacher quality and access to instructional materials and support.



Provide ongoing opportunities for professional development.

How we plan to do it



Invest in national, regional and local partners that provide pathways to certification, leadership development and training aligned with the use of high-quality instructional materials.



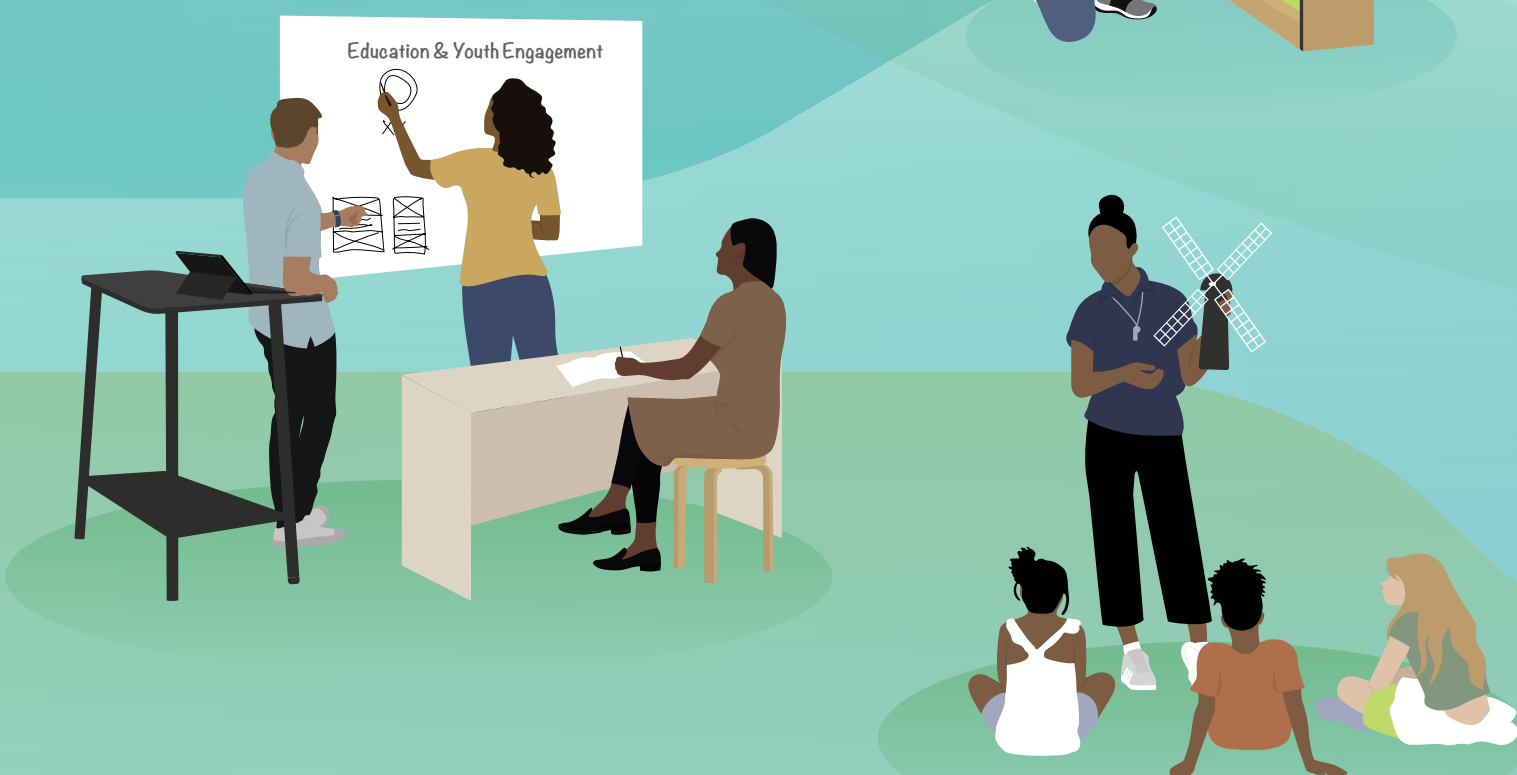
Invest in access to high-quality programs that develop teachers' leadership and advocacy skills.

Why we do it

Improved teacher quality and access to instructional materials will lead to better educational outcomes for students and families.



Solutions to educational challenges in the Delta should be led by those at the front of the classroom. Supporting the ability of teachers to lead and advocate for their profession will improve classroom effectiveness, boost teacher retention and help create a stronger, more stable learning environment for Delta students.



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Education and Youth Engagement

EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS AND PATHWAYS

Residents need clear, accessible pathways to careers—and the education that makes those pathways possible. In the Delta today, many K–12 students lack awareness of and preparation for college and career opportunities—contributing to lower average lifetime earnings. Through 2030, we will work to expand access to college and career pathways, after-school options and public charter schools.

What we plan to do



Expand college and career pathways for youth.



Build out after-school programs.



Support public charter school expansion.

How we plan to do it



Support college and career pathway programs, after-school enrichment and charter school access to increase exposure and readiness.



Invest in after-school programs that provide social-emotional and academic enrichment and prepare students for college and career pathways.



Drawing from both locally-launched and proven national networks, fund more quality charter school options for all Delta students.

Why we do it

Gaps in student exposure and preparation for college and career contribute to lower earnings and limited opportunity across the region.

Charter schools can offer Delta families a free, public alternative to traditional schools, using innovative teaching methods and specialized programs. In return for greater flexibility, they are held to high academic standards. In many high-poverty communities, charter schools have contributed to stronger student achievement.



Creating a safe, supportive and consistent after-school environment can improve student performance and exposure to career and postsecondary opportunities. These programs help close opportunity gaps and better prepare youth for future success.



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Economic Asset Building

INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY ASSETS AND SAVINGS

Owning a home or land has long been a key way to build wealth in America, but the Delta has faced a history of disinvestment and generational poverty. A lack of access to opportunity and the means to build assets impede residents' ability to thrive within their community.

The path to home ownership and generational wealth creation begins with understanding and tackling the unique financial challenges that exist in the Delta. Through 2030, we will invest in local opportunities and organizations that make building lasting financial stability a reality for all residents.

What we plan to do



Support financial literacy and asset building.



Expand home and land ownership opportunities.

How we plan to do it



Partner with local organizations to offer financial literacy programs, technical assistance and alternative lending products that build credit.



Support pathways to home ownership that reflect the local context and barriers to generational wealth.

Why we do it

Many Delta residents lack access to the financial tools and education needed to build or retain wealth. Financial literacy, credit access and technical support are foundational to household stability and long-term prosperity.



Home and land ownership are powerful drivers of intergenerational wealth, yet systemic disinvestment has left many Delta families without this opportunity.

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Economic Asset Building

WORKFORCE AND SMALL BUSINESS

Residents need access to relevant job skills and training to succeed—and to drive economic growth across the Delta. But right now, workforce systems are under-resourced, and too few people are being prepared for the jobs of the future. Small businesses also face obstacles when it comes to accessing capital.

Through 2030, we will support local organizations who support small business and workforce development, preparing residents for in-demand jobs and creating a resilient and thriving small business ecosystem.

What we plan to do



Support small business development.



Encourage workforce collaboratives.



Bolster sector-specific workforce initiatives.

How we plan to do it



Partner with organizations that provide technical assistance to small businesses with a focus on access to capital, financial management and resilience.



Strengthen connections between workforce development entities, community colleges and regional employers.



Provide job training opportunities that emphasize credentialing and immediate job placement within targeted, growing local industries.

Why we do it



Coordination between employers and educators is critical to creating a workforce pipeline ready to meet the needs of the local economy.



Access to job-specific training and credentialing is necessary to connect residents with employment opportunities in high-demand industries.

Small businesses are essential to the Delta's economy, but the region faces some of the lowest lending activity in the South. Access to capital and financial support will encourage more residents to start and grow businesses in the region.

