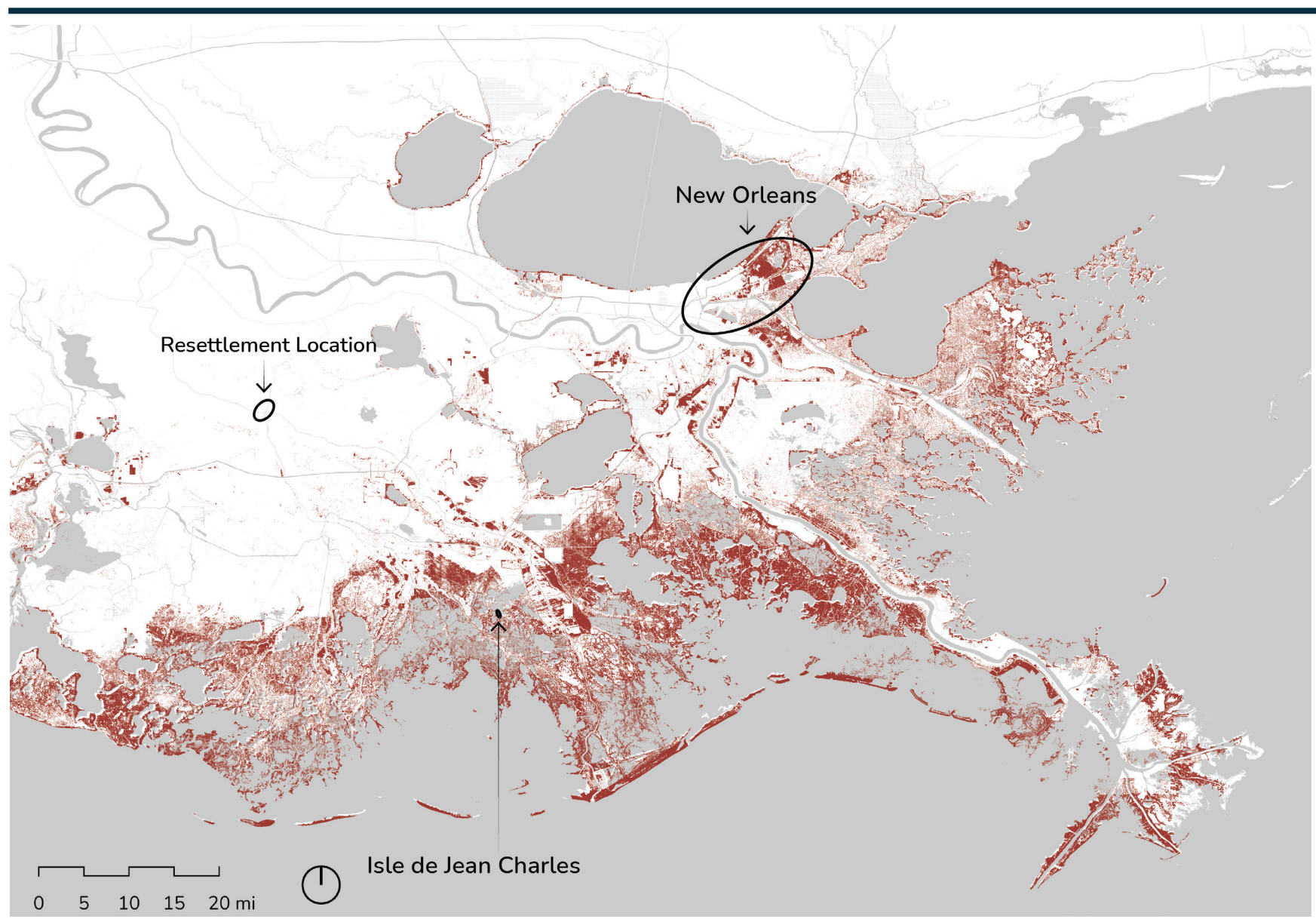


Transdisciplinary Response to Climate-Induced Resettlement in South Louisiana

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INTRODUCTION

On the surface, resettlement project seem to be about site selection, new home and site design, and construction. However, resettlement is an inherently complex process, necessitating a wide breadth of expertise and collaboration amongst atypical partners and disciplines, with residents’ narratives at the center. In a recent case study from coastal Louisiana, practitioners of applied geography, landscape architecture, planning, and sociology cultivated a constructive environment that managed to cross disciplines, understandings, and methods to create a new shared understanding and holistic approach that influenced every aspect of the resettlement. This poster examines and visually represents the mechanics of specific effective, transformative moments and maps their impact on the design and policy outcomes.



Disciplines on Isle de Jean Charles Resettlement Phase 2

DISCIPLINE	MEDIUMS of THEIR WORK	APPLICATIONS to CLIMATE CHANGE
Applied Geography Explores how people and their social structures interact with and shape the Earth.	articles books cartography geospatial modeling	Applied geographers work across scales to map and anticipate the spatial implications of climate change through the interrogation of environmental factors and economic, cultural, and social structures.
Landscape Architecture Concerned with the design and management of natural and built environments.	drawings diagrams infrastructure landscapes physical systems plants	Landscape architects design environments that improve the well-being, safety, and resilience of displaced peoples. They use systems thinking to create multi-functional landscapes that protect natural systems and sensitive habitats, increase community connectivity and cohesion, and develop a sense of place.
Planning Concerned with stewarding communities toward healthy, safe, and economically resilient futures.	comprehensive plans infrastructure ordinances public space regulations strategic plans	Planners work across cities, regions, and states to coordinate land use and transportation infrastructure, encourage housing, design public space, and promote equitable economic development. They are inherently future-oriented, anticipating social and environmental conditions to effect sustainable futures for places and people.
Sociology Studies social life, changes to it, and the impacts of those changes.	articles books ethnography interviews reports	Sociologists identify and explain social patterns, their mechanisms, their anomalies, and their effects. In the context of climate change, sociologists may study cultural preferences for certain adaptations, or the social resilience of people forced to adapt.

Highlighted disciplines, methods, and applications to climate change

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Qualitative methods include semi-structured interviews with the design team, content analysis of four published reports, and group discussion of our individual reflections.

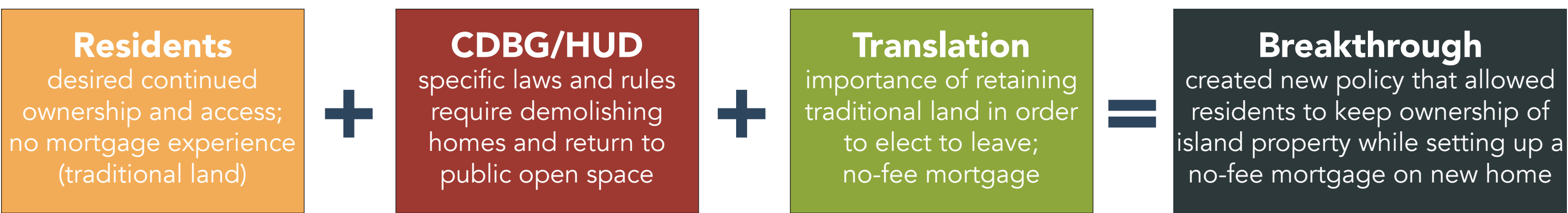
Additional research is currently being conducted by adding another series of interviews with the design team and residents, as well as the analysis of over 450 media accounts.

RESULTS

Through translation and collaboration, the following are examples of transformative breakthroughs occurred that resulted in better outcomes for of this at-risk coastal community.

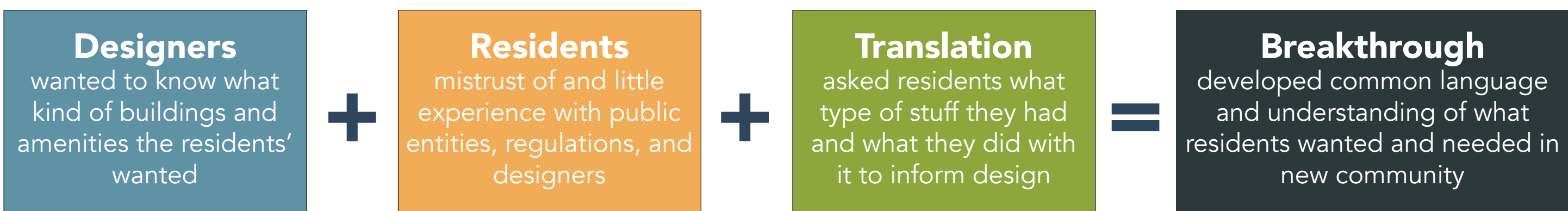
MORTGAGE

The most important concern for the residents was continued ownership of their homes and properties after they moved to the new community. However, federal grant’s laws and rules that did not allow this. The team and island residents worked together to create a unique approach allows continued ownership and access of island properties.



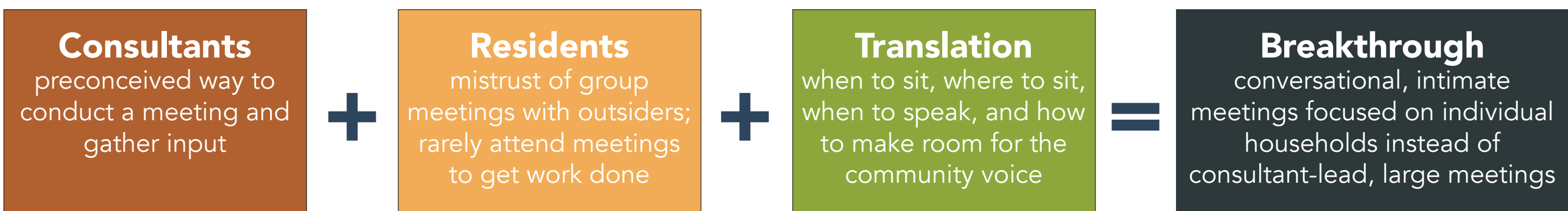
DESIGN INTERVIEWS

A traditional interview format would have reinforced the power dynamic the process was trying to reverse. To build trust, develop a common language, and create a shared understanding, the landscape architect and sociologist worked with designers to determine information needed, then asked residents questions in a conversational manner instead.



COMMUNITY MEETINGS

The consultants are used to being in meetings everyday, yet the tribal island residents rarely attend meetings. The norms of how each group gets their work done was vastly different, which was reflected in how each approach a group meeting. Together, we had to redefine how to hold community meetings so residents felt comfortable to engage.



Community conversations with island residents



Rendering of proposed resettlement design

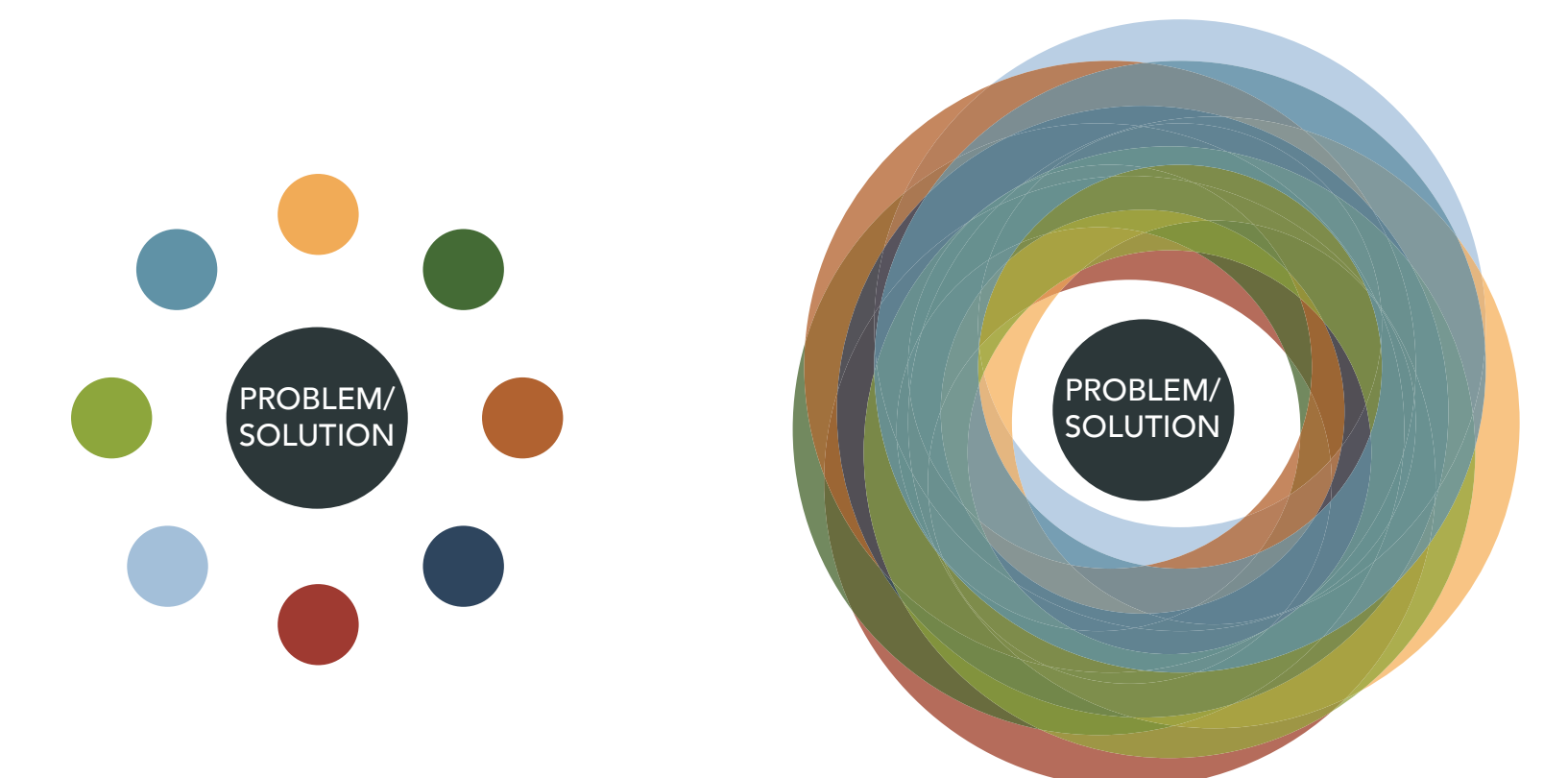
CONCLUSION

Climate-induced resettlements are not infrastructure projects with a social component, but instead social projects with an infrastructure component. Therefore, they are far too complex for a standard multidisciplinary approach. A new, transdisciplinary discipline is needed. This new discipline must be a holistic, collective, and innovative problem-solving approach where the residents and team build a new language and understanding together. In this approach, diverse practitioners do not merely contribute their individual expertise -- through discourse and problem-solving they develop a new framework for navigating and interpreting a unique resettlement process.

To create a transdisciplinary collaborative, team members need to:

- 1) Learn each other’s language by avoiding jargon, creating a common language, and asking others to illustrate and elaborate when you do not understand.
- 2) Translate each other’s ideas into relateable concepts to form a shared understanding.
- 3) Create a holistic approach to decision-making.

MULTIDISCIPLINARY VS. TRANSDISCIPLINARY



Multidisciplinary:
multiple disciplines working together to solve a problem by applying their own disciplinary knowledge

Transdisciplinary:
holistic, collective problem-solving that works across disciplines and boundaries to create an innovative, shared approach

CITATIONS

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Residents of Isle de Jean Charles

Isle de Jean Charles Resettlement Design Team