



Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative (SRBWI) Partner Organizations

Alabama

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Georgia

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Mississippi

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*Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative
For Economic and Social Justice*

*“In All Of Its Work,
Culture And Spirituality
Are Integral Components”*



MISSISSIPPI - ALABAMA - GEORGIA

What Is The Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative For Economic And Social Justice?

The Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative (SRBWI) promotes the first human rights agenda in the United States aimed at eradicating historical race, class, cultural, religious and gender barriers experienced by southern rural black women.

Mission Statement

SRBWI's mission is:

- To nourish the internal capacity of women to take responsibility for their own lives, personally and externally;
- To engage women in advocacy and policy initiatives that redirect local, state, and federal resources to help ensure women's full participation and access to economic and social justice;
- To engage women in an economic and community development agenda that includes workforce development;
- To develop organizational capacity within the region to sustain this work; and
- To build linkages with women's groups committed to economic and social justice.

Background

SRBWI grew out of a meeting convened by the Ford Foundation in New York City late in the year 2000. A small group of women from Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi met there to discuss their experiences working in the rural south and what could help improve the quality of life for southern rural women. In January 2002, a slightly expanded group of women met to form the SRBWI. A regional advisory committee, with representatives from each of the three states, is responsible for general coordination and oversight. SRBWI state lead organizations are the Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama (FOCAL) in Montgomery, AL; The Southwest Georgia Project for Community Education in Albany, GA; and the Children's Defense Fund's Southern Regional Office in Jackson, MS. The Children's Defense Fund serves as SRBWI's fiscal agent and as regional administrator.

SRBWI operates in 77 counties across the Black Belts of Alabama and Southwest Georgia, and the Delta in Mississippi.



These counties are considered some of the poorest in the rural south. However the women who live there exhibit remarkable resilience and perseverance. Working with the women in these 77 counties, SRBWI will help them increase their ability to:

- Secure employment or skills that will provide their families higher incomes
- Identify services needed in their communities and create self-employment or small business opportunities to meet those needs
- Develop programs to help young people and senior citizens

Program Areas

Advocacy and Public Policy and Leadership Development for Women and Girls are key programmatic areas and are infused through all program areas. Program areas are:

- An Assets Based Strategy for investing in women and communities for long term results that include development finances, sector based development activities, business education and workforce development and training
- A Women's Access to Power and Decision Making Strategy that will increase Southern Rural Black Women's understanding of and participation in government
- Self Empowerment and an ending Discrimination Strategy that raises women's consciousness concerning their rights to be free and equal. This Strategy will address the subliminal and blatant denial of human rights
- Arts, Culture and Communication are integrated into all program areas and will promote the preservation and evolution of Black culture and history

