

Case Study for Using Focus Groups:

Right to the City National— We Call These Projects Home

Method Used

Focus Groups

Background on Organization and Issue

Right to the City (RTTC) is a national alliance of membership-based organizations and allies across 9 cities, organizing to build a united response to gentrification and displacement in our cities.

This research project was conceived of and developed through close partnership between RTTC grassroots organizations: Miami Workers Center, POWER, and Community Voices Heard, —and RTTC resource groups: the DataCenter, Community Development Project and Advancement Project.

Present-day U.S. government housing policies are forcing low-income people out of their cities. Public housing, one of the last options of affordable housing for low-income people in the U.S., is being destroyed and replaced by mixed-income housing. Under this process, developers backed by government contracts and encouraged by federal legislation, demolish public housing and replace them with far fewer housing affordable to the lowest income families. As a result, hundreds of thousands of public housing units have been lost, families have been displaced, and communities and social networks have been torn apart. Additionally, as low-income housing becomes increasingly privatized, it is more difficult to ensure that affordable housing remains affordable and that private landlords do not displace low-income tenants. While this crisis threatens the health of cities, government officials and private developers continue to characterize mixed-income housing policies as progress.

Below is a description of the RTTC National Public Housing research project, based on the Participatory Action Research guiding framework (see Tool 2.1 and 2.2).

WHAT....

Were the Organizing Goals connected to this research?

- To promote public housing as one of the last options of permanently affordable housing.
- To shift the policy debate about public housing to include the voices of low-income community members.
- To educate elected officials and policy makers about the real-life impact of demolition disinvestment and privatization of public housing.
- To build power nationally among low-income community members.