

# WLF 2017 Community Research Report Summary

## Top Challenges

## Top Desired Changes



**Economic issues**



**Community development and resources**

**Education**

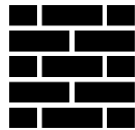


**Economic and social interventions**



**Transportation and built environment**

**Low community capacity**



**Educational support**

## **Executive Summary**

Given the findings of the Community Roundtables for women and girls, there is an opportunity to direct grant dollars toward positive regional change that truly improves the lives of people from their perspective. Grant dollars would have the highest potential for community impact if they are aligned with the areas that women and girls have the most challenges and want to see the most change. These could be projects or programs involving one or more of the following:

- Economic issues
- Education
- Community development and resources

Furthermore, all potential grantees should demonstrate a commitment to community-level outcomes and the participation of those they wish to serve in the design and implementation of their project or program. Understanding and accommodating for the persistent transportation barrier should be expected from programs.

### ***What kind of community narrative exists?***

Most women and girls we spoke to this year had a generally positive view of their community. However, there were many who held mixed or negative views, indicating issues related to intergenerational relations and neighborhood safety. Many women and girls, particularly from inland locations, reflected positively on the closeness of their communities.

### ***What is the current community context?***

When asked “What’s really going on in your community” women and girls spoke most frequently about safety concerns and economic issues. In relation to the current national political climate, issues related to immigration also weighed heavy on women and girls. One Collier girl noted “families are afraid of being separated so (there is) fear, it affects children's performance in school, (they are) not focused on education...parents (are) not going to work, (they) can't provide for (their) family.”

### ***What challenges are women and girls facing?***

The most commonly cited issues women and girls discussed are economic challenges, issues with transportation and housing, education challenges, and low community capacity (community identity and ability to obtain resources). Many of these issues are interrelated – transportation and housing issues lead to difficulties with maintaining income, creating further challenges to connect with other members of the community and access needed resources.

### ***What changes do women and girls want to see?***

The top changes women and girls want to see are more community development and resources, economic and social interventions, and educational support. One woman from Charlotte noted there should be more “support for women who are trying to advance themselves.”

### ***Who is trusted to make change?***

Women and girls trust local organizations, local people, and local leaders most.

### ***How willing are women and girls to take a role in the changes they want to see?***

Nearly all the women and girls we spoke with this year want to take an engaged role to make the changes they want to see in their communities. However, college-aged young women are the least motivated to engage for community change.

