

Cia Siab, Inc. Hmong Housing Needs Assessment

In winter 2022-2023, we conducted a housing needs assessment to identify Hmong needs in La Crosse County. This assessment was conducted because mainstream organizations' have not collected statistically significant Hmong sample sizes in their housing surveys.

Hmong housing needs and issues are intimately tied to systemic racialized poverty.

Background



101 surveys administered to Hmong heads of household in La Crosse County.



74% of respondents identify as female.



41% of respondents are between the ages of 30-39.

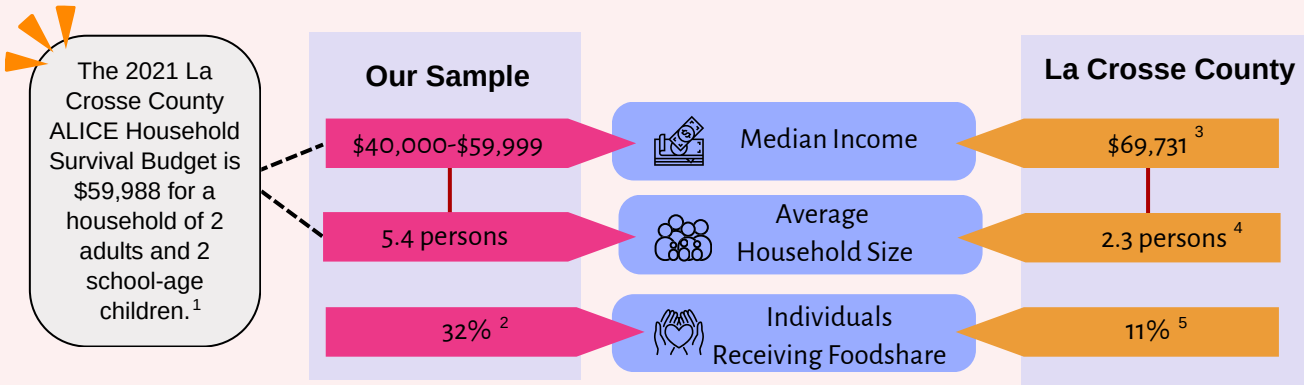
Hmong renters are concentrated in the City of La Crosse. Homeownership was strongest in Holmen and the Southside of La Crosse. There weren't any Hmong renters in Holmen, Rockland, or West Salem in our sample.

| | 54601 | 54603 | 54636 | 54650 | 54653 | 54669 |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Own | 21 | 10 | 20 | 9 | 1 | 1 |
| Rent | 13 | 15 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 34 | 25 | 20 | 20 | 1 | 1 |

Table 1: A Look at Hmong Homeowners & Renters in La Crosse County

Situating the Findings: A Brief Comparative Analysis

Hmong households support more persons with lesser income.



Debunking the Myth: Large Household DOES NOT Correlate with Low Income

The majority of Hmong households that more closely align with the County average of 2.3 persons (green) occupy lower income ranges. Contrary to popular belief, which is often steeped in racism, **Hmong people are working poor not because of their large households, but because they are not earning enough as wage earners.** Work is the primary source of income for most Hmong households.

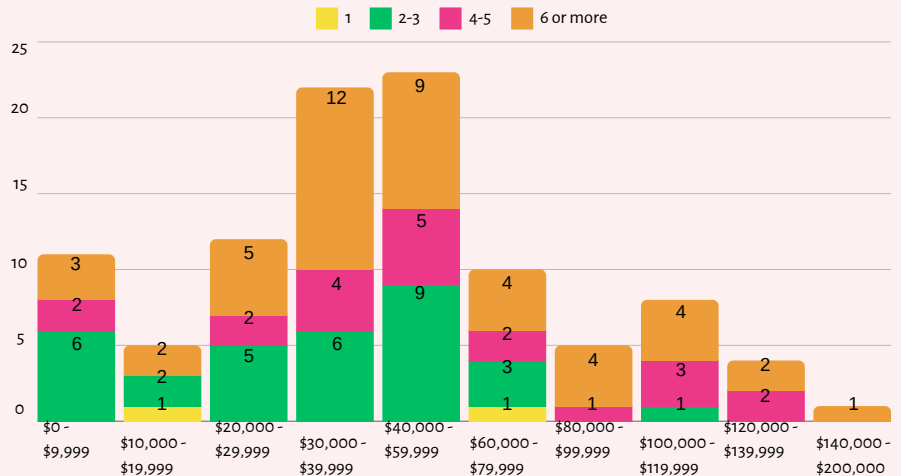


Table 2: Household Size by Income



A Call for Fair Living Wages & Culturally- and Linguistically-Accessible Social Services

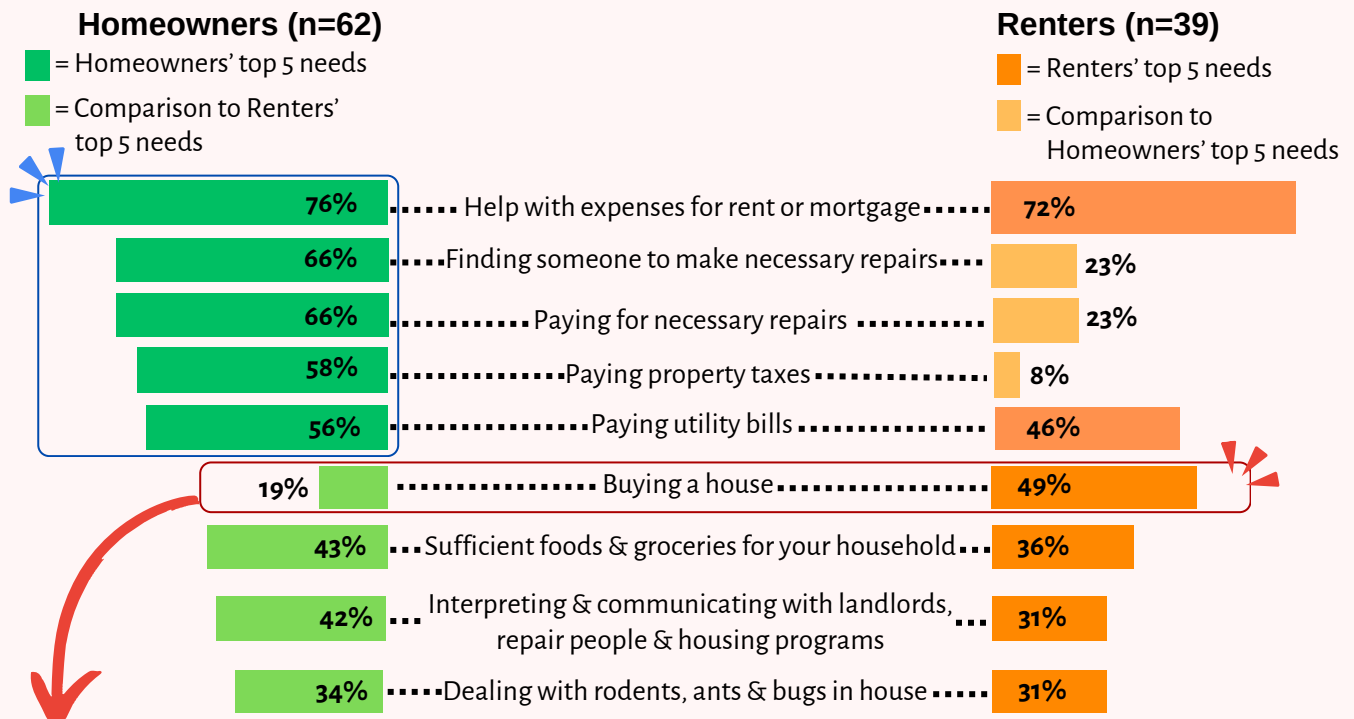
 **82%** are wage workers
HOWEVER
47% of these workers depend on at least one form of public assistance

Nearly half of wage workers in our sample are working poor. This highlights the need for fair living wages and increased accessibility to existing social services. We believe that many individuals in our sample are eligible for more public assistance but they are not applying.

Centering the Hmong perspective(s), what is a fair living wage that would result in enough net disposable income (NDI)⁶ to sustain future financial wellbeing for Hmong families? What steps must social service agencies take in order to increase the cultural and linguistic accessibility of their public assistance programs to Hmong individuals and families?

The Duality of Homeownership

TOP 5 NEEDS OF HOMEOWNERS & RENTERS



Buying a first home or a new home is a priority for fewer than half (49%) of renters and fewer than 1/5 (19%) of current homeowners (red rectangle). Local and national conversations on housing insecurity often equate home ownership with security, leading some renters to identify homeownership as a housing need; however, current homeowners' needs (blue rectangle) indicate that homeownership does not equate with security. The high level of need related to issues of homeownership demonstrates that homeowners face precarity even when they own their homes. **The conversations on housing security must take on a more nuanced and holistic approach to both renters' and homeowners' perspectives of housing security.**

Notes:
 1. United Way of Wisconsin (2021). United for ALICE. Retrieved from: www.unitedforalice.org/household-budgets/wisconsin.
 2. Our survey question asked if the survey taker themselves received FoodShare versus asking whether members of their household were recipients of FoodShare.
 3-4. US Census (2022). Quick Facts: La Crosse County, Wisconsin. Retrieved from: www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/lacrossecountywisconsin/PST045222.
 5. Wisconsin Department of Health Services. (n.d.). FoodShare: Wisconsin Data. Retrieved from: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/foodshare/rsdata.htm. The number of 10,407 unduplicated adults was taken from "2022 Yearly Recipients (Excel)" under the section of Yearly Data. This number was then divided by the 2022 ACS 18+ year old population data for La Crosse County (footnote 3-4) of 97,163. This totals 11% (the County's population receiving FoodShare).
 6. Gelles, D. (2022 June 30). How One CEO Improved Results By Investing in His Workers. *TIMES*. NDI is a metric from PayPal that measures the money left over for savings after one pays their taxes and essential living expenses. PayPal estimates an NDI of 20% as the minimum.