

**ENGAGE
TOGETHER®**

ALABAMA STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT 2026 REPORT

*Download this report, and
access the supplemental
reports, resources, and
directories here:*



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Engage Together Project for Alabama is made possible by a partnership with the Alabama Attorney General's Office and The WellHouse, and is being accomplished alongside a host of local and national partners too. Special thanks also to the Institute of Data and Analytics at the University of Alabama and Dark Watch. Learn more about the project and partners by going to the project website at engagetgether.com/project/alabama.

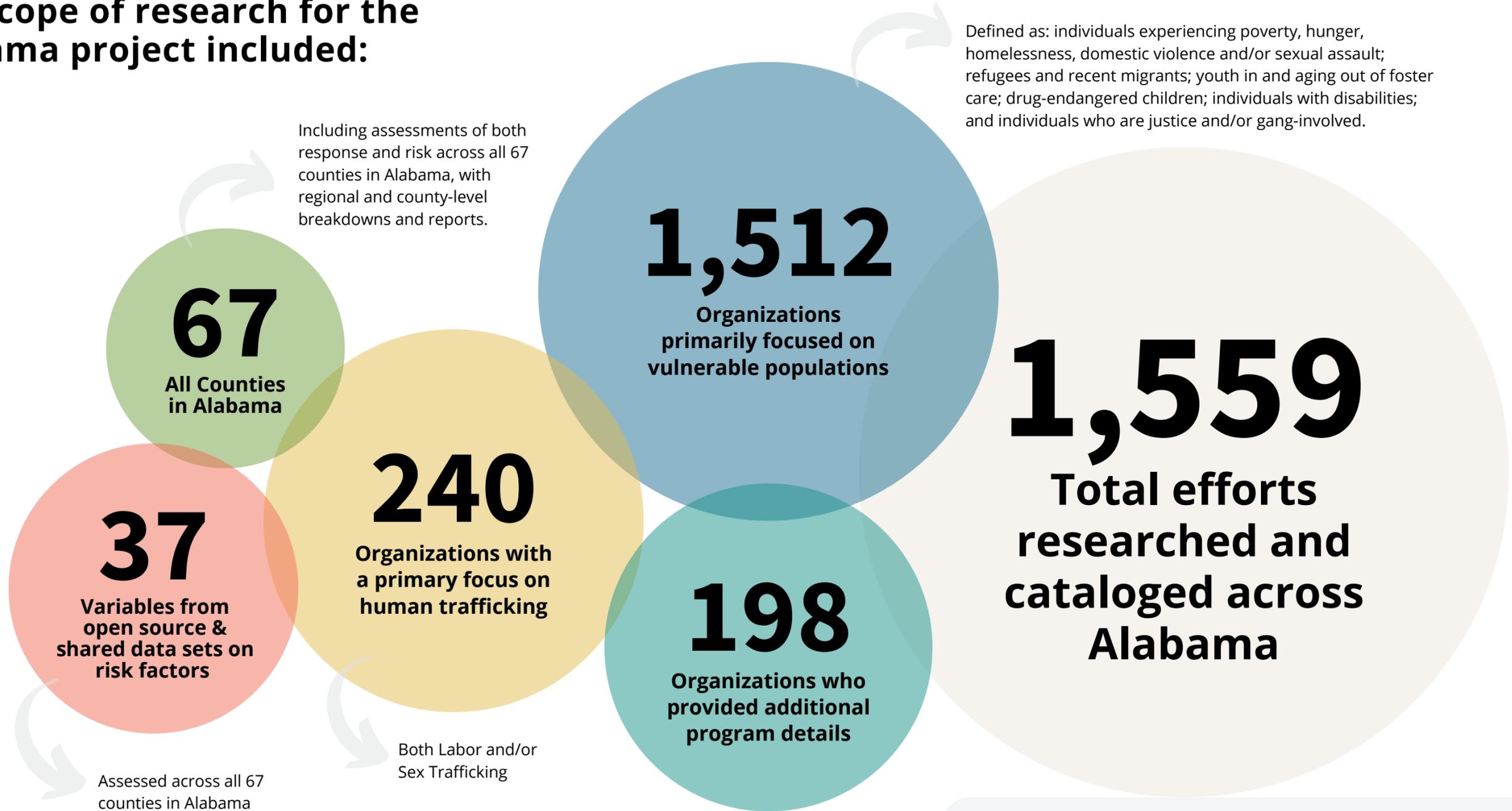


WHAT IS A COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT?

An assessment of the current strengths, gaps, needs, vulnerabilities and opportunities for community-wide engagement to end and prevent human trafficking in Alabama.

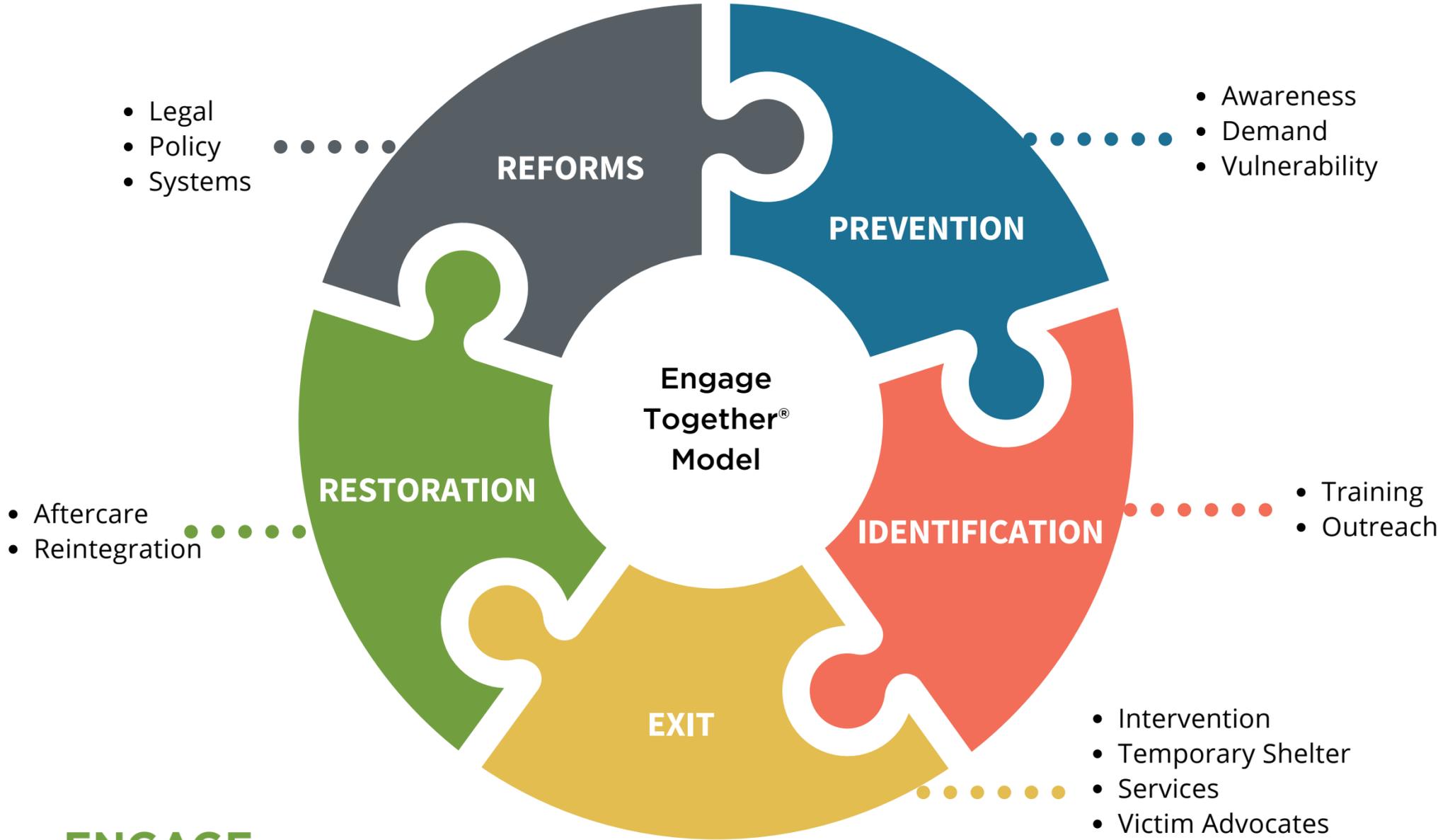
RESEARCH SCOPE

The scope of research for the Alabama project included:



Download this report, supplemental reports, and access the Alabama directory at engagetogether.com/alabama.

RESEARCH SCOPE



ETP includes research and assessments of all efforts by every sector related to labor and sex trafficking, for adults and minors, citizens and foreign nationals.



Learn more about program areas and definitions [at this link.](#)

RESEARCH SCOPE

To assist in developing **community-based prevention and early intervention strategies**, we also include within the scope of research:

+ THOSE SERVING AT-RISK & VULNERABLE POPULATIONS, INCLUDING

Refugees and recent migrants

Justice- and gang-involved individuals

Individuals with disabilities

Those experiencing homelessness, poverty, or hunger

Drug-endangered children & youth in and aging out of foster care

Those who **have already suffered** other types of abuse or exploitation (DV/SA)

WHY?

Because traffickers exploit vulnerable people, luring victims with promises of work, shelter, food, and support. Addressing vulnerabilities in your community is critical to prevention.



+ EVERY EFFORT BY EVERY SECTOR

Churches & Houses of Worship
Civic/Service Clubs
Businesses
Foundations

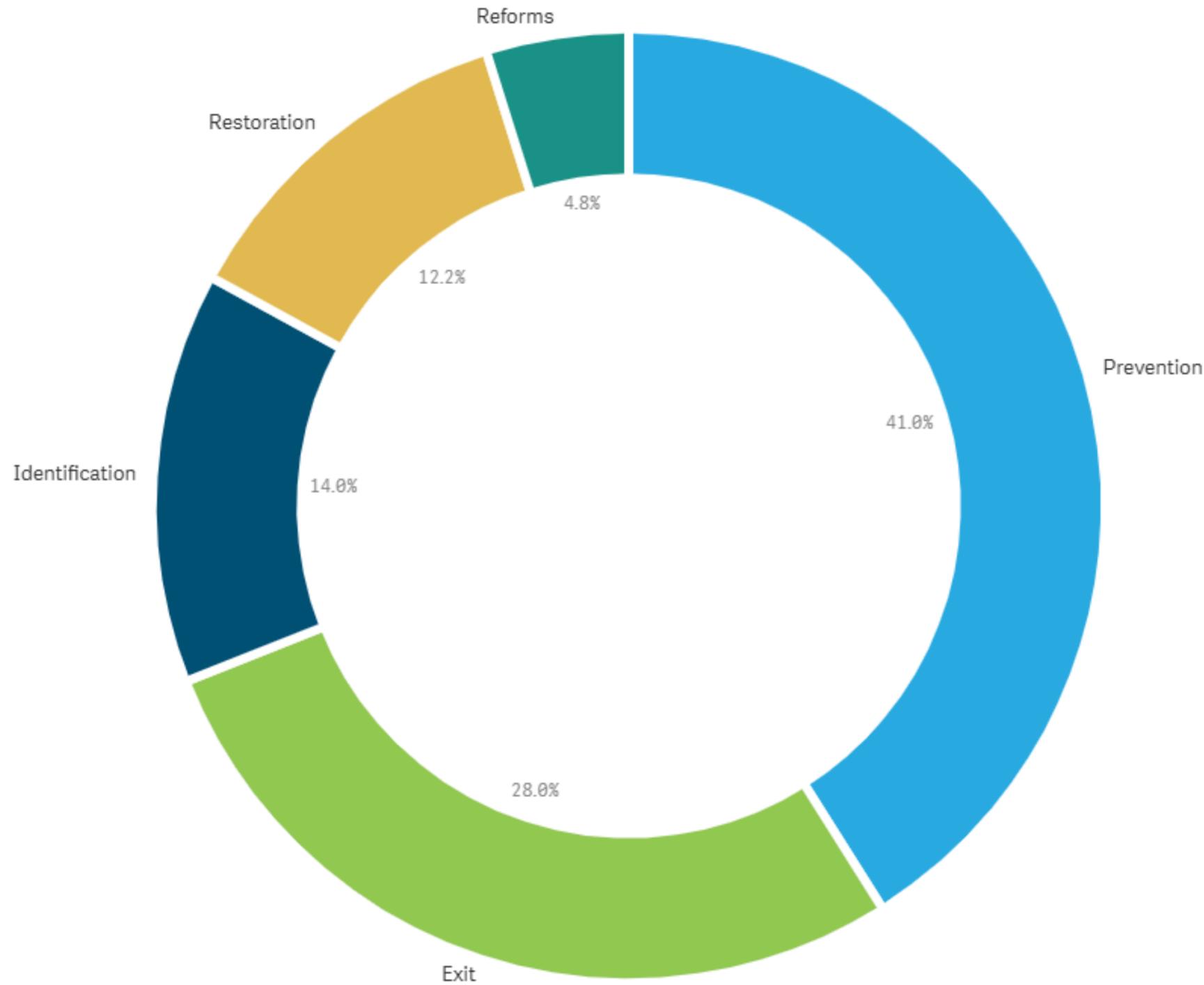
Government
Legal
Healthcare
Individual Practitioners

Nonprofits
Professional Associations
Education
Taskforces & Coalitions

CURRENT RESPONSE TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The following is an assessment of Alabama's current efforts to directly address labor and sex trafficking as of January 2026.

BY PROGRAM



BY PRIMARY SERVICE

Efforts to address human trafficking in Alabama are currently highly concentrated in PREVENTION (41.0%), followed by Exit (28.0%). Programs that focus on IDENTIFICATION (14.0%), RESTORATION (12.2%) and REFORMS (4.8%) will need attention and strengthening.

BY HUMAN TRAFFICKING TYPE

Of the 240 organizations that work to directly address human trafficking in Alabama:

99% are working to address **sex trafficking**

59% are working to address **labor trafficking**

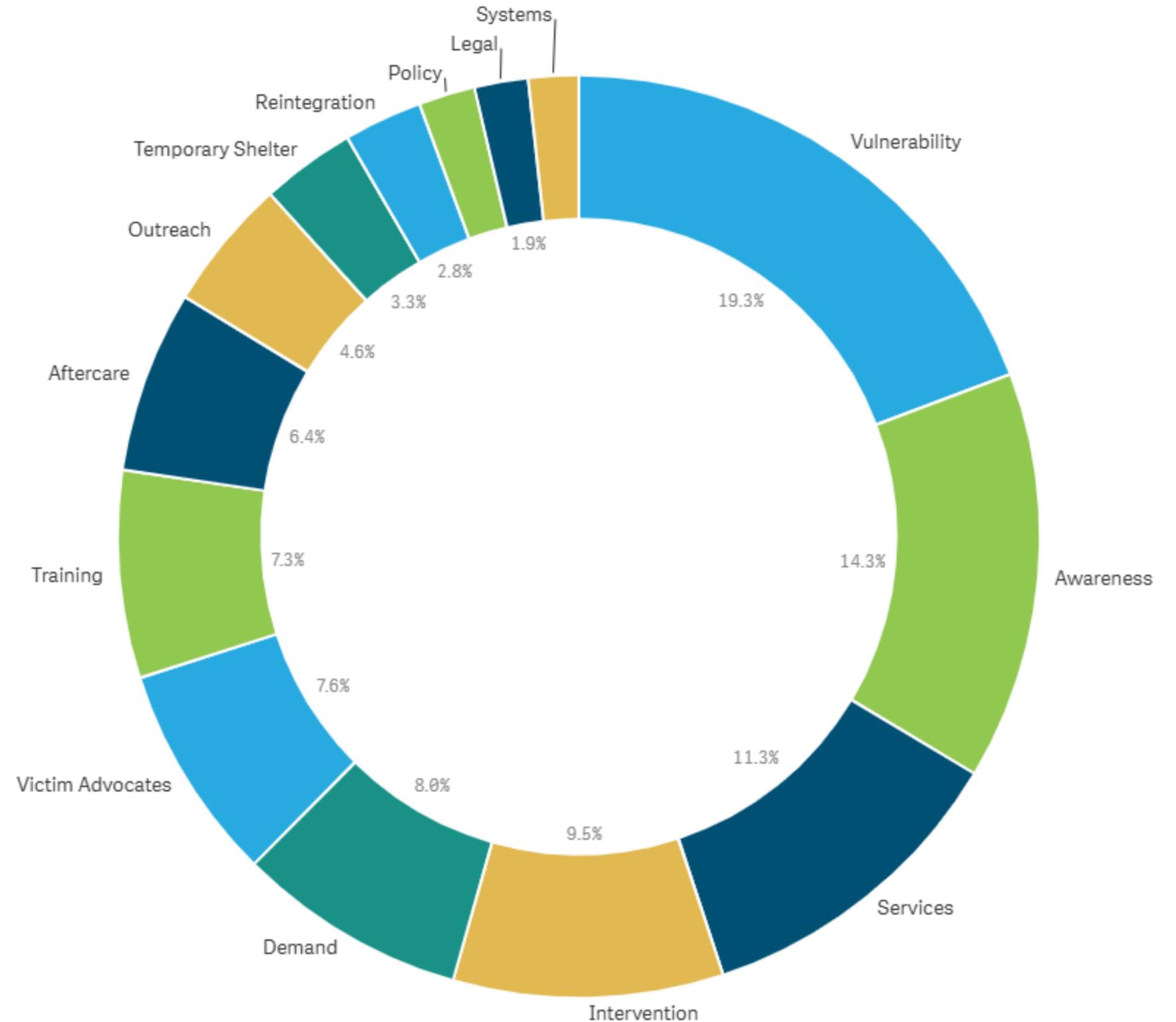
BY PROGRAM

BY SUB-CATEGORY

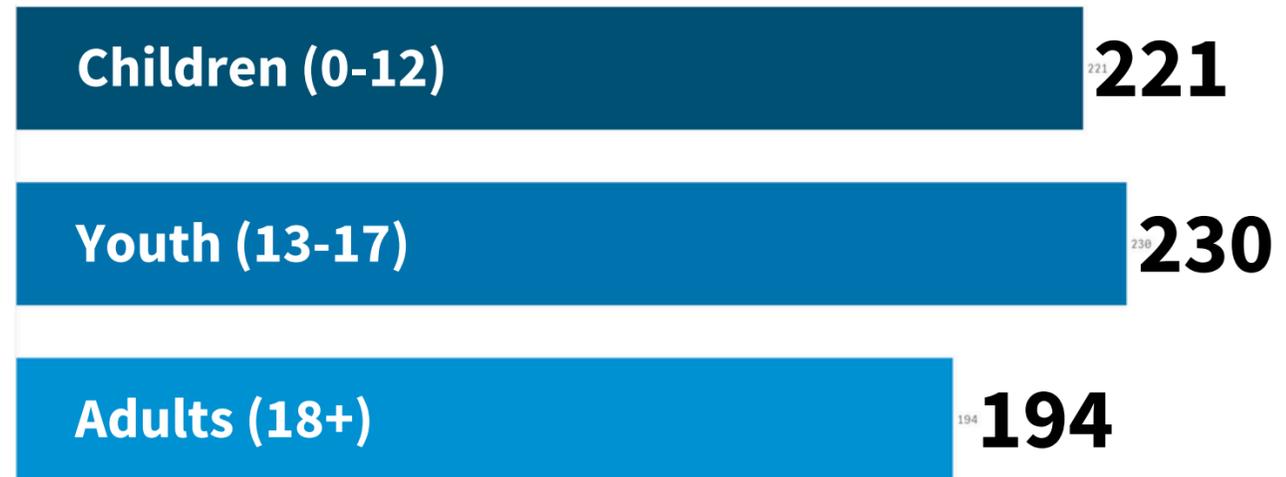
Over 50% of efforts to address human trafficking across Alabama are currently concentrated in 4 of 14 sub-categories: addressing Vulnerability, raising Awareness, providing Services, and engaging in Intervention.

Concerning Services and Intervention, the majority of the 103 organizations working to provide this type of support for HT victims and survivors include nonprofits (74) and government agencies (42). Most nonprofits reported being able to serve 10-50 individuals per year. Of note, these efforts are highly concentrated in Jefferson, Madison, Shelby, and Tuscaloosa counties; while the greatest risk for trafficking is present in Houston, Dale, Mobile, Calhoun, and Montgomery counties. Hence, there is a need to increase the reach and capacity for these types of programs and services.

Areas of effort that need special attention and strengthening include: increasing availability of Temporary Shelters; strengthening Aftercare support, especially building Reintegration pathways for survivors; expanding Training to all those in a position to recognize and respond to human trafficking, along with proactive Outreach to at-risk populations; increasing Victim Advocate programs and improving efforts to address Demand.



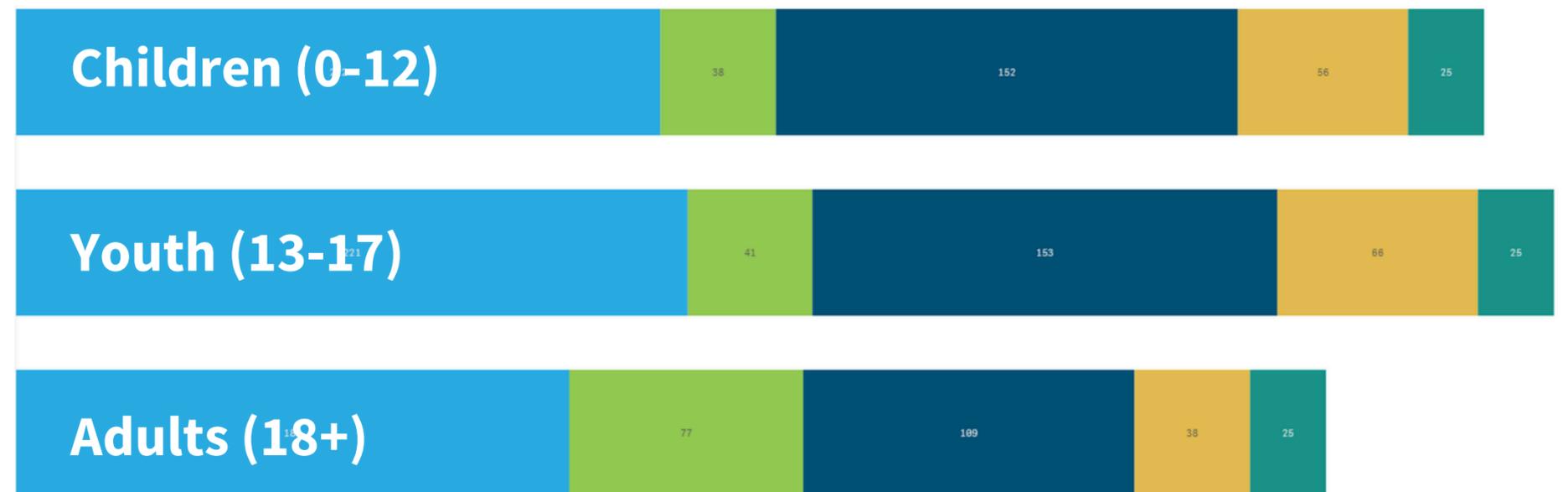
BY DEMOGRAPHIC



The majority of programs reported being able to serve all genders, and most, both citizens and non-citizens. The highest concentration of available programs and services across Alabama, however, are for youth sex trafficking victims.

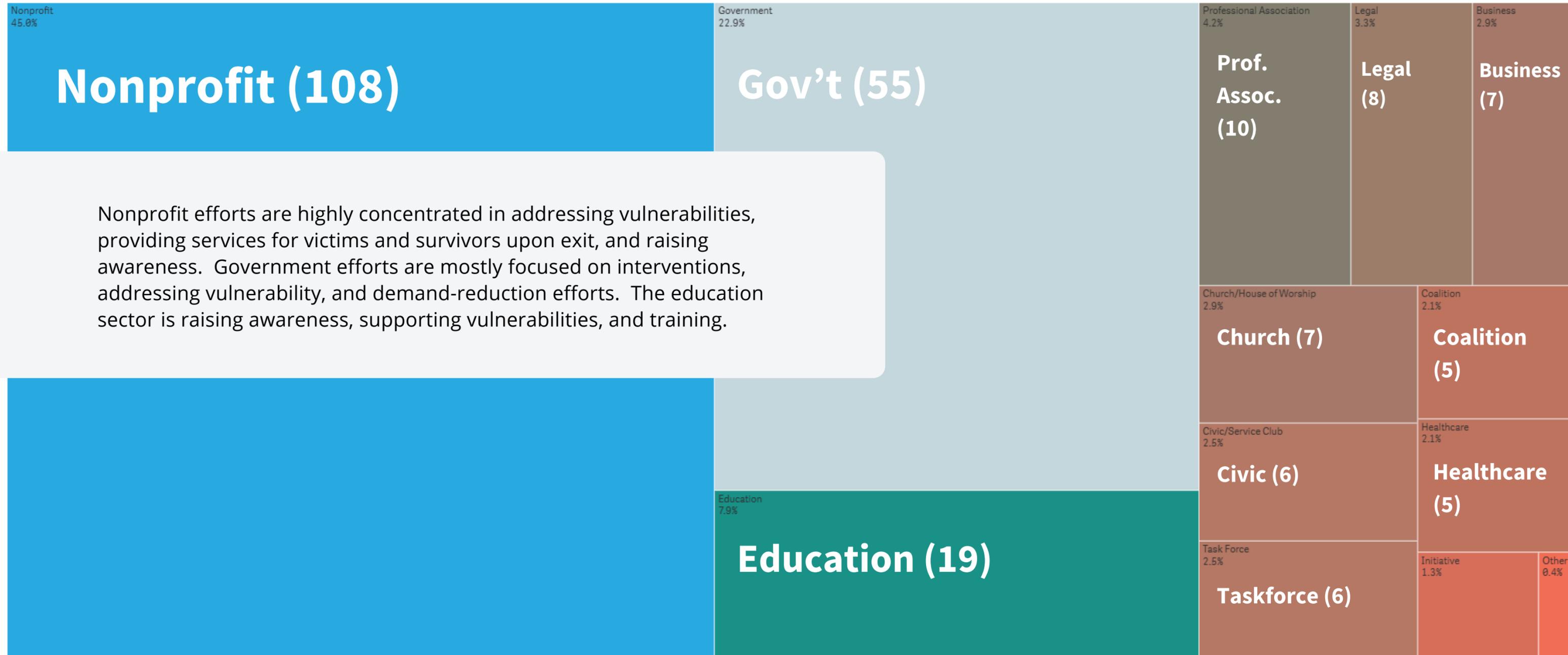
And the programs available to this particular demographic are highly concentrated in addressing vulnerabilities and providing immediately accessible services upon exit.

When comparing programmatic efforts across age groups, what is common to all is the need for increased Identification efforts, including Training for those in a position to recognize and respond to human trafficking, and also Outreach to at-risk populations to help them understand how to stay safe or seek help.



■ Prevention
 ■ Identification
 ■ Exit
 ■ Restoration
 ■ Reforms

BY SECTOR ENGAGEMENT



Nonprofit efforts are highly concentrated in addressing vulnerabilities, providing services for victims and survivors upon exit, and raising awareness. Government efforts are mostly focused on interventions, addressing vulnerability, and demand-reduction efforts. The education sector is raising awareness, supporting vulnerabilities, and training.

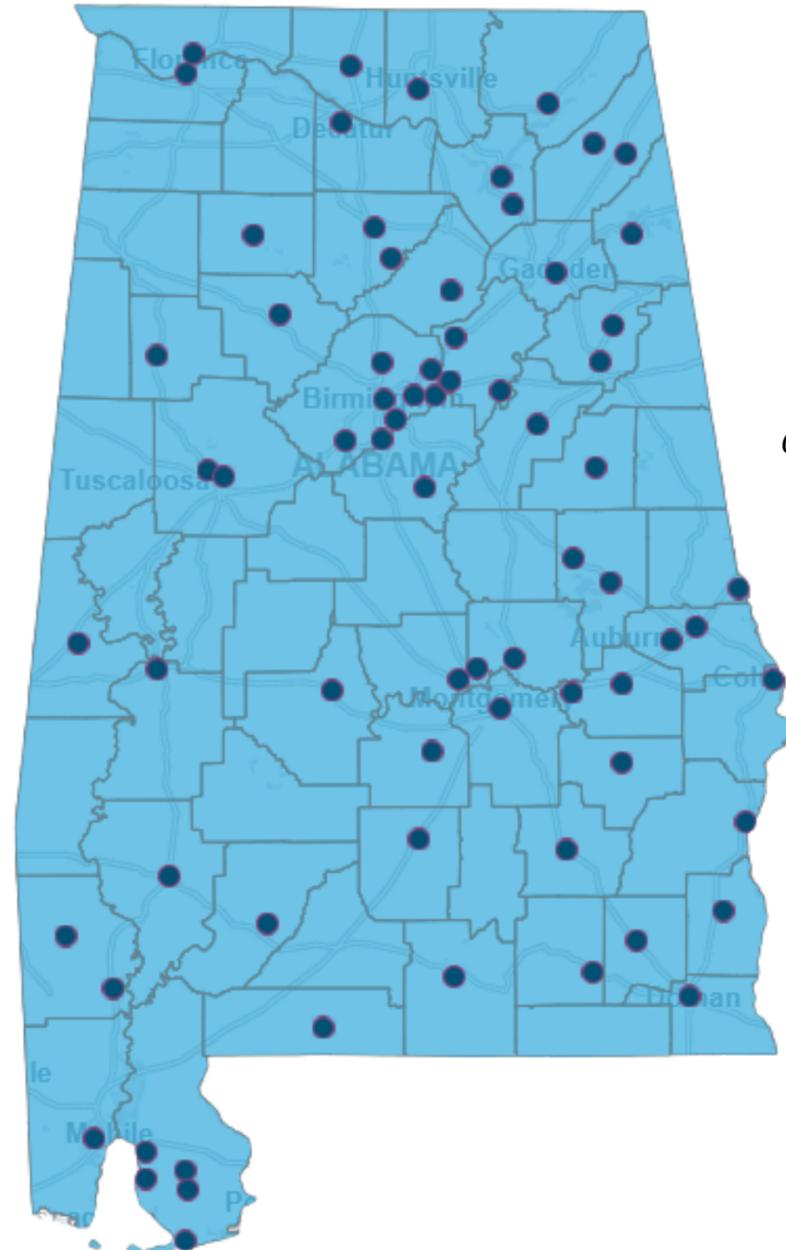
Presently, there is very limited engagement by those sectors that will need to be at the table to meet needs and fill gaps, including Legal, Business, Churches, Civic and Service Clubs, Healthcare, and Foundations.

BY GEOGRAPHY

The top 5 counties with the **highest concentration of efforts** to address human trafficking in Alabama include:

- #1 Jefferson
- #2 Madison
- #3 Shelby
- #4 Tuscaloosa
- #5 Lee

Dots indicate the primary location of dedicated human trafficking efforts



NOTE: Counties in highlighted in red score 85% or higher for risk for human trafficking in Alabama. Of note, also above 85% but not in the top 20 counties for concentrated efforts to address human trafficking are Dale, Jefferson, Franklin, Talledega, and Barbour counties.

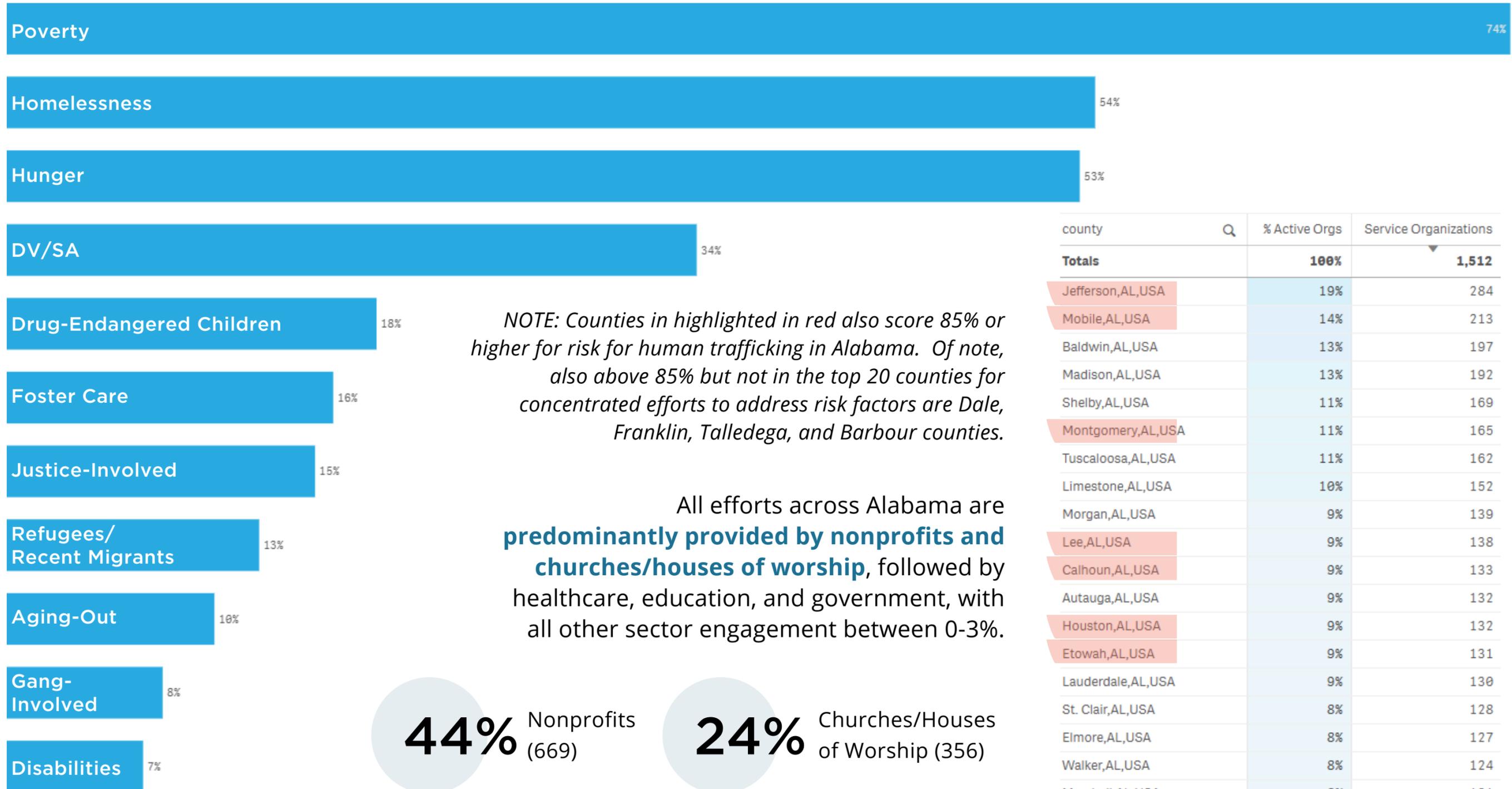
county	Q	% Active Orgs	Service Organizations
Totals		100%	240
Jefferson,AL,USA		38%	91
Madison,AL,USA		33%	79
Shelby,AL,USA		32%	76
Tuscaloosa,AL,USA		32%	76
Lee,AL,USA		30%	73
Mobile,AL,USA		30%	73
Morgan,AL,USA		30%	73
Autauga,AL,USA		30%	72
Baldwin,AL,USA		30%	72
Cullman,AL,USA		30%	72
Elmore,AL,USA		30%	72
Montgomery,AL,USA		30%	72
St. Clair,AL,USA		30%	72
Blount,AL,USA		30%	71
Calhoun,AL,USA		30%	71
Houston,AL,USA		30%	71
Walker,AL,USA		30%	71
Butler,AL,USA		29%	70
Dekalb,AL,USA		29%	70
Etowah,AL,USA		29%	70

CURRENT RISK FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The following is an assessment of the current risk for human trafficking in Alabama, based on the presence and prevalence of risk factors and vulnerable populations in each county.

AT-RISK POPULATIONS

Of the **1,512 organizations** supporting populations at high-risk of trafficking across the 67 counties of Alabama, those efforts are concentrated as follows:



NOTE: Counties in highlighted in red also score 85% or higher for risk for human trafficking in Alabama. Of note, also above 85% but not in the top 20 counties for concentrated efforts to address risk factors are Dale, Franklin, Talledega, and Barbour counties.

All efforts across Alabama are **predominantly provided by nonprofits and churches/houses of worship**, followed by healthcare, education, and government, with all other sector engagement between 0-3%.

44% Nonprofits (669)

24% Churches/Houses of Worship (356)

county	% Active Orgs	Service Organizations
Totals	100%	1,512
Jefferson,AL,USA	19%	284
Mobile,AL,USA	14%	213
Baldwin,AL,USA	13%	197
Madison,AL,USA	13%	192
Shelby,AL,USA	11%	169
Montgomery,AL,USA	11%	165
Tuscaloosa,AL,USA	11%	162
Limestone,AL,USA	10%	152
Morgan,AL,USA	9%	139
Lee,AL,USA	9%	138
Calhoun,AL,USA	9%	133
Autauga,AL,USA	9%	132
Houston,AL,USA	9%	132
Etowah,AL,USA	9%	131
Lauderdale,AL,USA	9%	130
St. Clair,AL,USA	8%	128
Elmore,AL,USA	8%	127
Walker,AL,USA	8%	124
Marshall,AL,USA	8%	121
Cullman,AL,USA	8%	120

VPI OVERALL SCORE

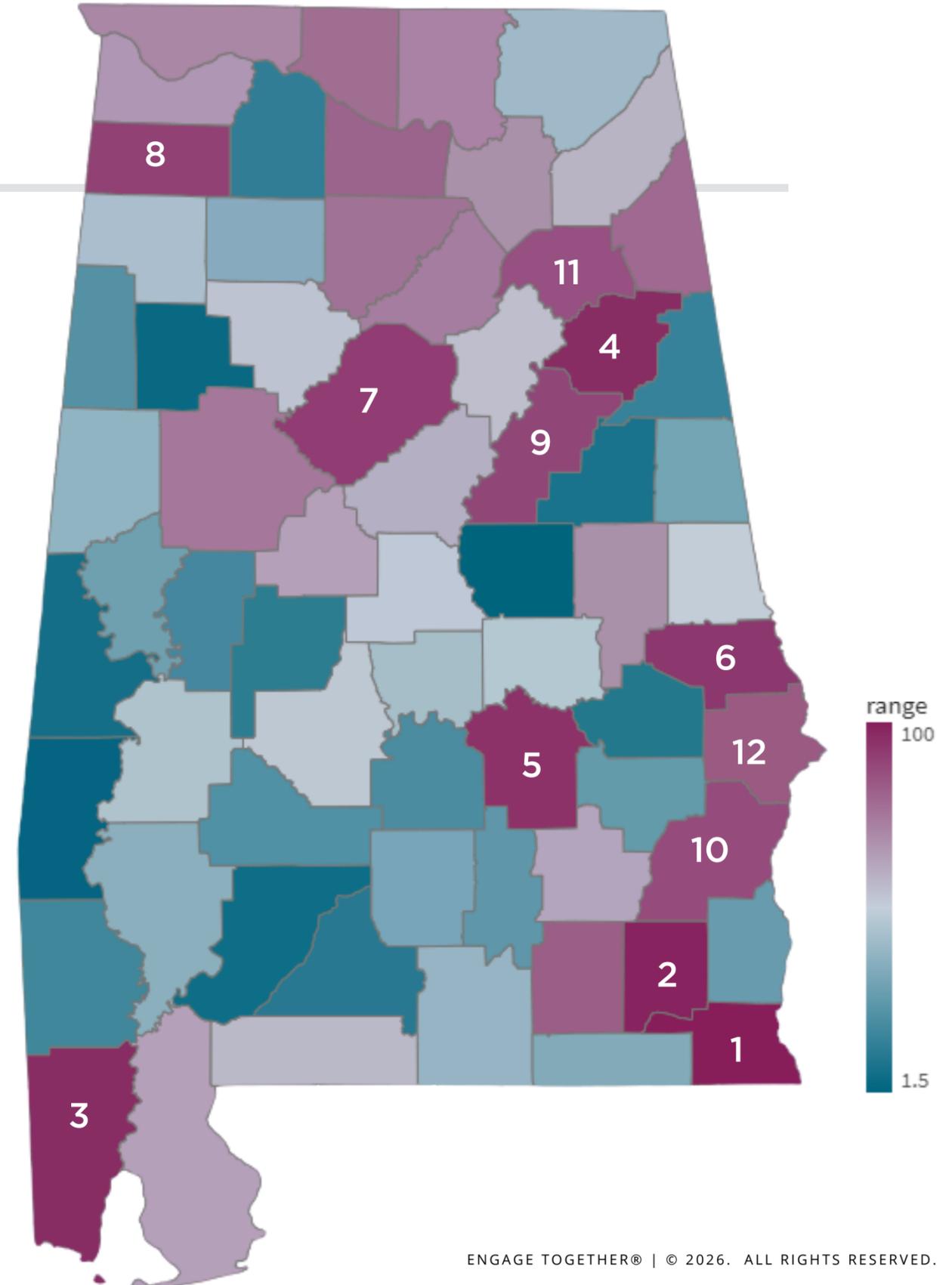
The **Vulnerable Population Index (VPI) Score** assesses risk for human trafficking by analyzing data that illuminates the presence and prevalence of known risk factors and/or populations vulnerable to human trafficking (sex and/or labor), within the context of six key vulnerabilities:

Demographic | Local Environment | Socio-Economic

Youth | At-Risk Industries | Known Human Trafficking Activity

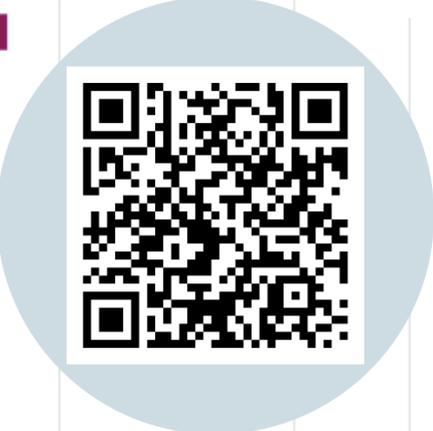
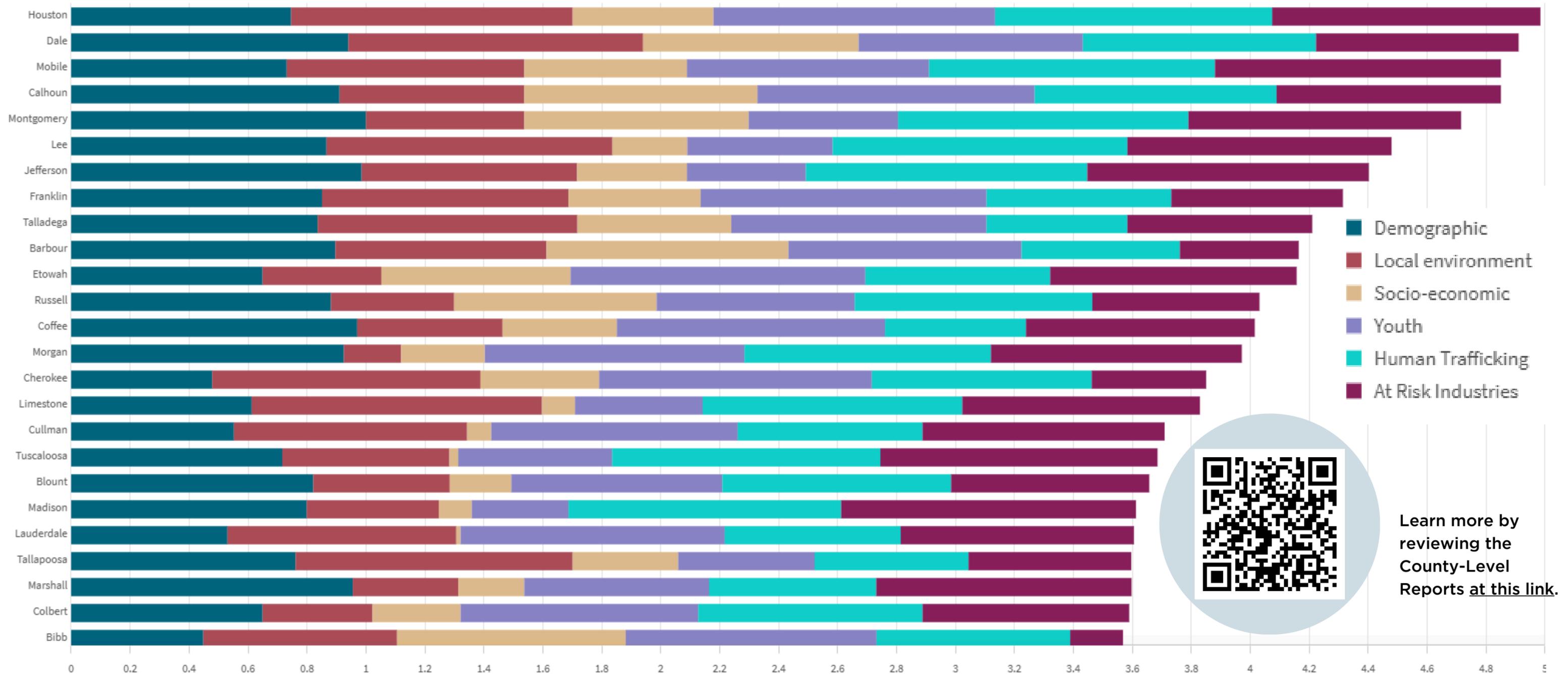
- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Houston (100%) | 7. Jefferson (91%) |
| 2. Dale (99%) | 8. Franklin (90%) |
| 3. Mobile (96%) | 9. Talladega (88%) |
| 4. Calhoun (96%) | 10. Barbour (87%) |
| 5. Montgomery (94%) | 11. Etowah (85%) |
| 6. Lee (93%) | 12. Russell (84%) |

Top 12 high-risk counties in Alabama for human trafficking are:



Dive deeper and learn more by reading the County-Level Reports.

VPI COUNTY COMPARISON (TOP 25)



Learn more by reviewing the County-Level Reports [at this link.](#)

CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

The organizations that provided additional program details also shared their top three tangible, funding, and service needs - along with thoughts regarding current challenges and successes in anti-trafficking efforts across Alabama.

PRIORITIES

Based on all the research and data gathered and assessed throughout this Engage Together Project, here are our top five recommended priorities and next steps for Alabama statewide.

1

Improve IDENTIFICATION efforts by TRAINING critical organizations and professions who are in a position to recognize & respond to human trafficking

While awareness efforts are well underway in Alabama, training efforts that provide profession-specific details on the indicators likely to present in local settings, and the local protocols and partnerships to activate once identifications are made, need to increase. Priority groups to train across the state include:

- Healthcare
- Disability-Service Providers
- Juvenile Justice
- Law Enforcement
- Educators
- Child-Serving Professionals
- Children & Youth
- Waterways, Ports, and Transit Authorities
- 1,512 Organizations Working to Support High-Risk Populations

All these groups will need to receive training across the state, but immediate priority should be counties with VPI scores above 80%. Training should include consistent definitions, language, statistics, and response protocols.

2

Develop a coordinated statewide strategy to address localized youth vulnerabilities to PREVENT and IDENTIFY exploitation

Bring together a **working group** that includes child welfare, juvenile justice, corrections, law enforcement, local schools, youth services, homeless programs, disability-service providers, community health, workforce development partners, churches, youth-serving nonprofits, youth with lived experience, and others to help **develop community-specific and multi-sector action plans** to address youth vulnerabilities across the state.

3

Prioritize a strategic plan to address LABOR TRAFFICKING

Alabama data indicates **high risk for labor trafficking** and yet **dedicated efforts to address labor trafficking are minimal**. Given the prevalence of vulnerable populations and at-risk industries (especially farming, forestry, construction, and manufacturing), there needs to be a dedicated effort to increase: community-wide engagement to prevent and identify labor trafficking, outreach to at-risk populations to educate them on how to stay safe or seek help, and dedicated services and programs labor trafficking survivors. Collaborations with the departments and agencies overseeing at-risk industries in Alabama will be key to prevention and early intervention.

4

Mobilize dedicated OUTREACH and supportive SERVICES for under-served and highly vulnerable populations across Alabama.

Across nearly all counties in Alabama, resources to support specific high-risk populations are minimal to none. Those populations include: disconnected and homeless youth, youth aging out of foster care, justice- and/or gang-involved individuals, adults and minors with disabilities, foreign-born/noncitizens, unaccompanied minors, men and boys. Mobilize local churches, businesses, and civic/service clubs to **meet basic needs and build bridges** to jobs, education, and safe and supportive community for these marginalized populations.

5

Strengthen strategies for communities in Alabama that face disproportionate risk, including rural as well as border-adjacent counties

Rural communities across Alabama are experiencing heightened risk for human trafficking due to the lack of locally available and accessible services for vulnerable populations. Develop a **public health approach** to increasing resources for these communities. Further, many of the highest risk counties in Alabama border other states. Increasing **multi-state, multi-sector collaborations** will be essential to address risk and response.

SUPPLEMENTALS

This Report includes the overall assessment and recommendations based on the findings of Engage Together® Project for Alabama . For additional reports and supplementals, including the Regional and County-Level Reports and Directory, go to engagetgether.com/alabama.



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