

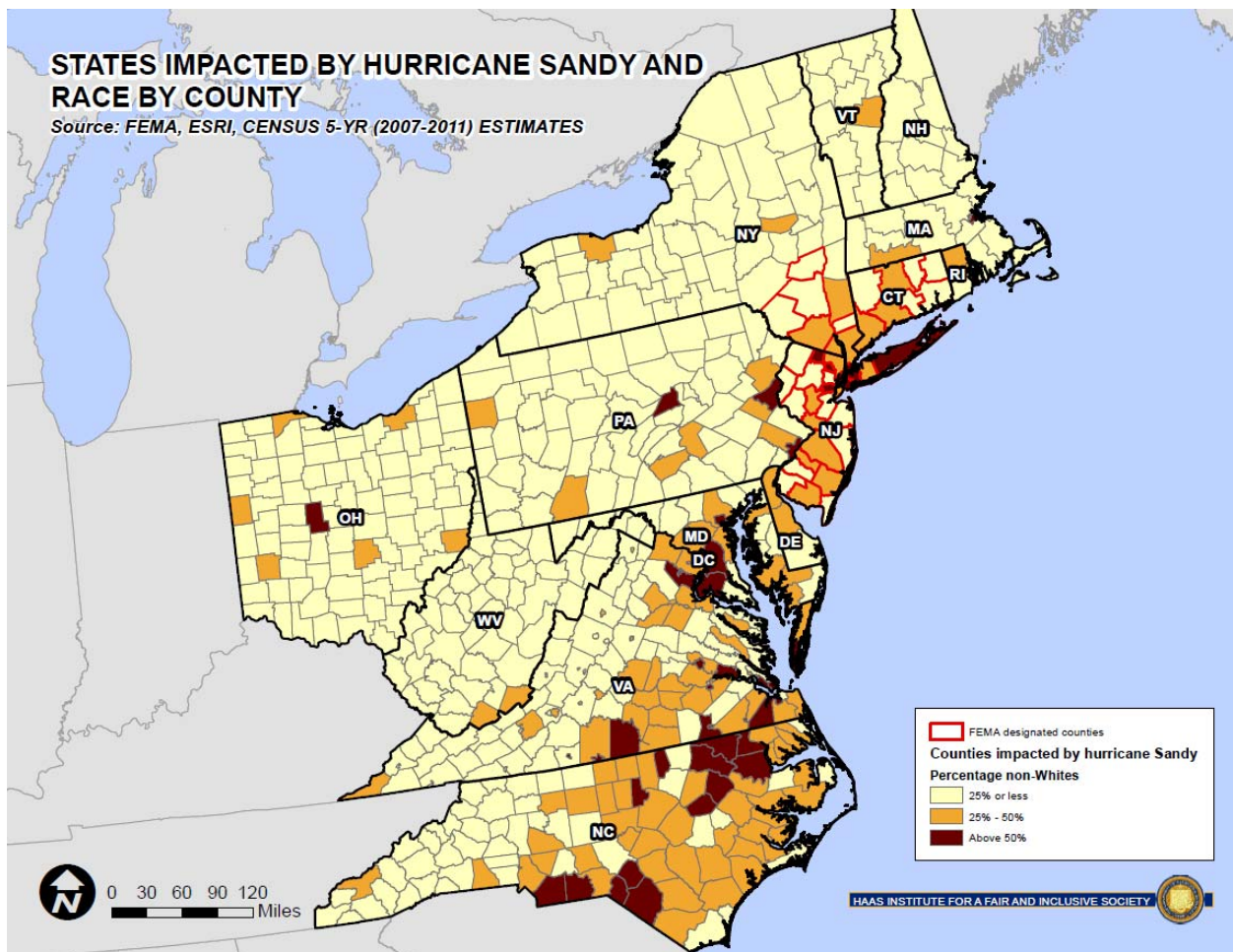
# Examining the Impact of Hurricane Sandy on Marginalized Populations

*The Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society at UC Berkeley*

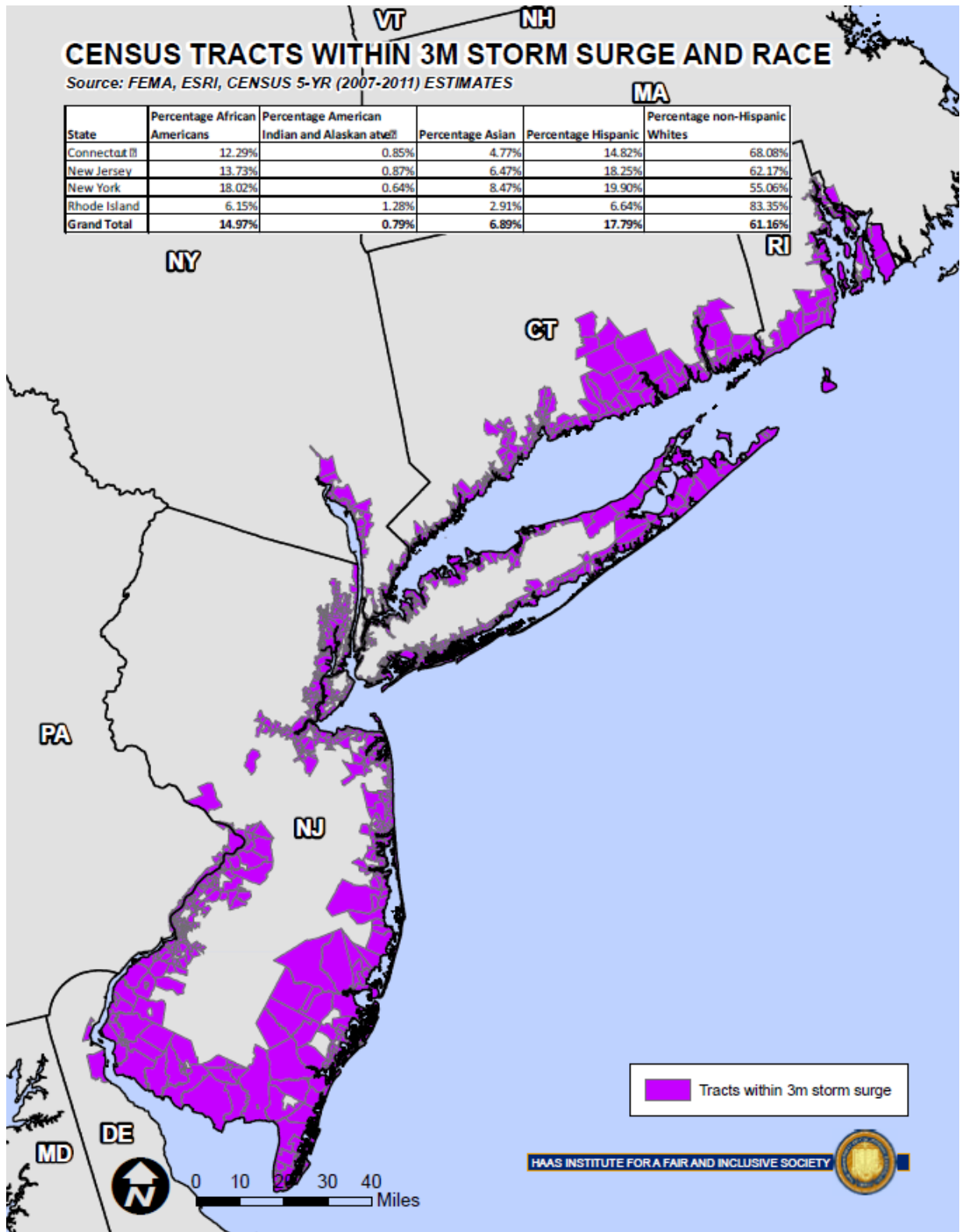
Natural disasters can affect all of us, but they leave a particularly devastating impact on our most vulnerable and marginalized populations and communities. The disproportionate impact and devastating flooding and loss of life that followed Hurricane Katrina vividly illustrated this pattern. Evacuation plans premised on car ownership failed to account for families who could not rely on that mode of transportation. Far too often, these communities lack the resources to rebuild and recover as quickly as well-insured and wealthier neighborhoods.

The Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society is examining the impact, cleanup and recovery following the devastation of Hurricane Sandy. Hurricane Sandy was a tropical storm that destroyed many communities on the eastern seaboard and left thousands homeless.

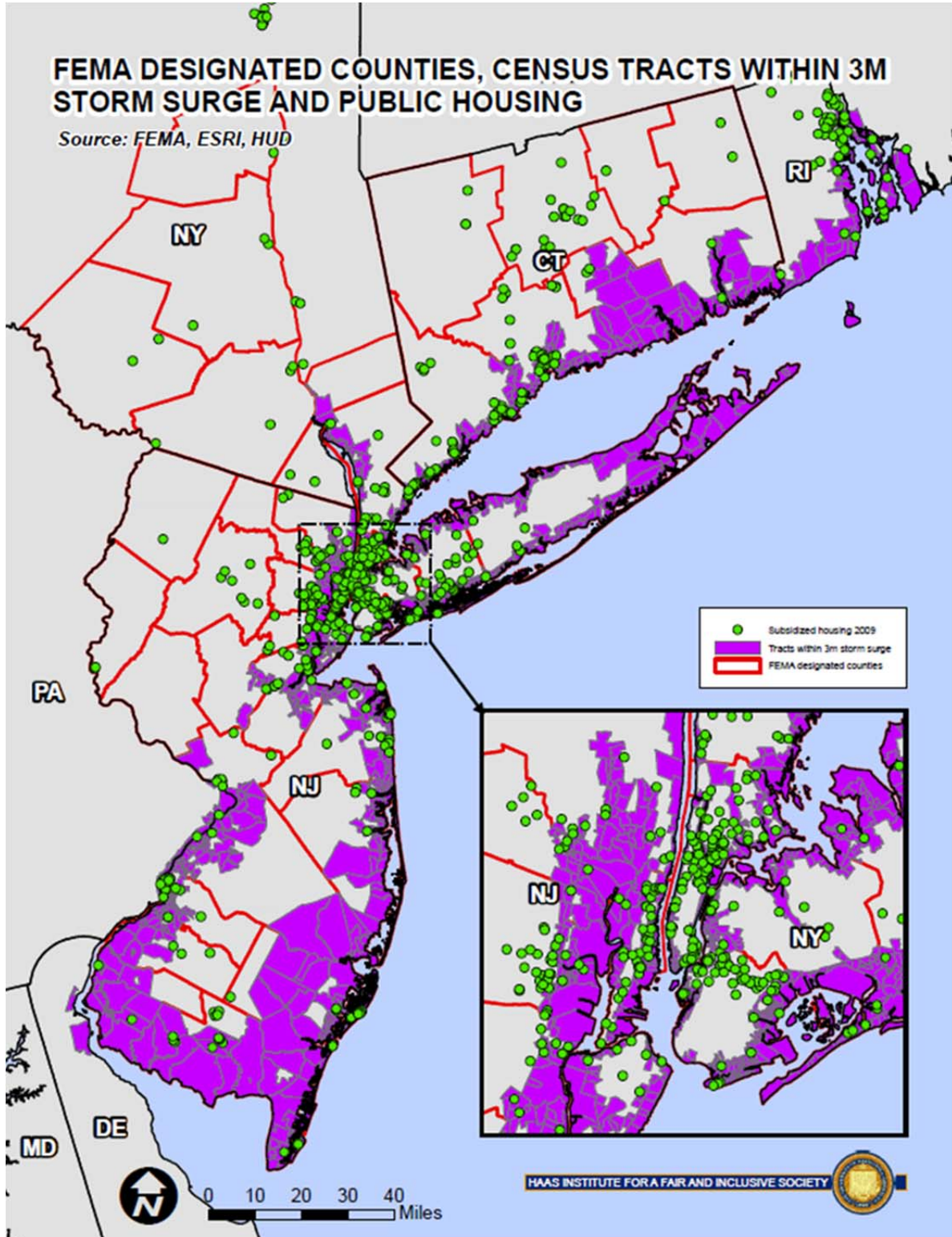
The following map illustrates the states with counties designated as impacted by Hurricane Sandy. As you can see, most of these counties (bordered in red) have substantial non-white populations relative to the general state-population:



When examining the impact using a smaller geographic unit, census tracts rather than counties, we see a clear disproportionate impact by race of the storm surge:



Blacks and Latinos disproportionately reside in census tracts within three miles of the storm surge. In addition to a direct racial impact, many public housing and subsidized housing resident were disproportionately impacted by the storm surge. The following map illustrates the impact for these families.



These impacts will pose a challenge not only for the rebuilding process, but for families who have been dislocated as a result.

| <b>States</b>      | Projects within FEMA designated counties | Subsidized units within FEMA designated counties | Projects in census tracts within 3m storm surge |
|--------------------|--|--|---|
| <b>Connecticut</b> | 89                                       | 11547  | 44  |
| <b>New Jersey</b>  | 230                                      | 40717  | 125   |
| <b>New York</b>    | 184                                      | 134176   | 48  |
| <b>Total</b>       | 503                                      | 186440   | 217   |

| <b>States</b>      | Subsidized units in census tracts within 3m storm surge | Percentage of highly impacted projects | Percentage of highly impacted subsidized units |
|--------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Connecticut</b> | 6000  | 49.44%                                 | 51.96%   |
| <b>New Jersey</b>  | 20325   | 54.35%                                 | 49.92%   |
| <b>New York</b>    | 35210   | 26.09%                                 | 26.24%   |
| <b>Total</b>       | 61535   | 43.14%                                 | 33.01%   |

In Connecticut and New Jersey, roughly half of the impacted census tracts' public housing units and subsidized housing units were affected by the storm surge and storm damage. Both the disaster planning and rebuilding processes must account for the needs of these families and their communities. It is not just that these families and communities often suffer the most as a result of natural disasters; it is that these families often have the greatest needs before and after a natural disaster.

A targeted universalism approach may be useful to consider as part of future disaster planning. This is an approach that seeks universal goals, but is sensitive to the unique circumstances of particular groups to achieve those goals. If the goal is to ensure the safety and well-being of all residents before a natural disaster hits, that might require extra resources and attention to our most vulnerable populations to ensure no one is left behind.

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