

**The Feminization of Poverty in Miami:
Building a Femme Agenda for Women & Femmes of Color**

A Report to the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights in advance of his December 2017 Official Visit to the United States

Submitted by:



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COMMUNITY
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I. Reporting Organizations

Miami Workers Center (MWC) is a community organization dedicated to organizing women of color and moving forward a Femme Agenda.¹ Advocacy Partners Team is a non-profit women's law firm that focuses on worker rights and gender justice.² Community Justice Project is a movement lawyering practice supporting grassroots groups organizing for racial justice and human rights in South Florida, including MWC.³

II. Issue Summary

As the Special Rapporteur has indicated in recent reports,⁴ the indivisibility of human rights demands that we not only look at the symptoms of poverty but also its root causes, like longstanding historical discrimination, structural racism and systematic political exclusion--violations of civil and political rights that have prevented certain groups of people from rising out of their conditions of poverty. The converse is also true for historically marginalized groups: poverty directly impacts the incidence and quality of violations of their civil and political rights.

Women and femme-identifying⁵ people compose one such group. Compared to men, women have less access to income, wealth, health care, housing, education, and political representation. Women/femmes disproportionately carry the burden of poverty; they are less likely to have their basic needs met and more likely to be systematically denied resources, opportunities, and choices. This gender dimension to poverty, also known as the "feminization of poverty,"⁶ is not coincidental. It is the direct result of policies and practices that exclude, exploit, and oppress women/femmes. For women/femmes of color, this dynamic is even more pronounced.

In order to end the feminization of poverty in Miami, the Miami Workers Center (MWC) is advancing a Femme Agenda to organize and empower women and femmes. Developing this vision requires an intersectional analysis, one that considers how people's various identities and backgrounds (e.g. gender, gender identity, race, class, sexual orientation, immigration status, and disability) shape their experience of poverty. Adopting an intersectional lens helps identify solutions that center the experiences of those most impacted. With this lens, we see that women of color disproportionately bear the burden of poverty, with each additional axis of identity potentially further complicating an individual's ability to overcome poverty.

In this report, we will discuss the various dimensions of poverty impacting women/femmes in Miami and how these dimensions affect the realization and enjoyment of women's human rights. We will also recommend policies and practices from the Femme Agenda for ending the feminization of poverty.

III. The Feminization of Poverty in Miami

¹ <http://www.miamiworkerscenter.org/>.

² <http://www.advocacypartnersteam.org/>.

³ <http://communityjusticeproject.com/>.

⁴ <http://undocs.org/A/72/502>.

⁵ Miami Workers Center uses the terms "femme-identifying people" and "femmes" to include all persons along the gender spectrum who identify with traditionally feminine expressions of gender identity.

⁶ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, *The Feminization of Poverty, Fact Sheet No. 1*, <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/session/presskit/fs1.htm>.

A. Dimensions of Poverty

MWC focuses on how poverty disproportionately impacts women and femmes, particularly those of color. Like the Special Rapporteur, MWC views poverty as a “multidimensional phenomenon” that cannot be measured exclusively by a person’s income.⁷ Conventional measures of poverty, based on federal poverty guidelines, fail to capture the complexity and depth of poverty. MWC understands that federal poverty guidelines are a measure of absolute deprivation; they do not adequately capture the “living wage” people need to enjoy basic economic security and self-sufficiency. MWC’s expansive definition of poverty also accounts for the various ways—economic deprivation, social exclusion, and political marginalization—that people experience poverty. MWC believes that poverty, as a multidimensional phenomenon, affects every aspect of a person’s life, and prevents the full enjoyment and realization of human rights.

In Miami, poverty is a persistent and growing problem. Of the top 25 most populous metropolitan areas in the United States, Miami has the second-lowest median household income and the second highest percentage of people living in poverty.⁸ This problem disproportionately affects women and femmes of color. Compared to the overall poverty rate for men (18.5%), 21.7% of women in Miami live in poverty.⁹ While 12.3% of White women in Miami live in poverty, 31.1% of Black women and 17.8% of Hispanic women in Miami live in poverty.¹⁰ In addition, women/femmes of color are more likely to live in “liquid asset poverty,” lacking sufficient savings to cover basic life expenses for three months.¹¹ Compared to 28% of Miami’s White population, 79% of Miami’s Black population and 74% of Miami’s Latino population live in liquid asset poverty.¹²

Poverty also disproportionately impacts single female heads of households. Half of single female heads of households in Miami earn \$18,500 or less per year, and 30% of single female heads of households earn less than \$15,000 a year.¹³ According to the Family Economic Self-Sufficiency Standard, 86% of single female headed families in Miami live below the self-sufficiency standard.¹⁴ Compared to men, female headed households are more likely to live in poverty because “[t]hey are paid less than men, they are

⁷ United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, *Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights*, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Poverty/Pages/SRExtremePovertyIndex.aspx>.

⁸ United States Census Bureau, *New American Community Survey Statistics for Income, Poverty and Health Insurance Available for States and Local Areas* (Sept. 14, 2017), <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2017/acs-single-year.html?intcmp=s1-acs>.

⁹ FIU Metropolitan Center, *The Status of Women in Miami-Dade County 2016*, 4, <http://www.miamidade.gov/auditor/library/status-of-women-2016.pdf>.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Jerry Iannelli, *Most People of Color in Miami Have Little Savings*, Study Says, Miami New Times (Oct. 19, 2016), <http://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/most-people-of-color-in-miami-have-little-savings-study-says-8859214>; Corporation for Enterprise Development, *Racial Wealth Divide in Miami* (Oct. 2016), https://prosperitynow.org/files/resources/Racial_Wealth_Divide_in_Miami_RWDI.pdf.

¹² *Id.* at 5.

¹³ Women’s Fund of Miami-Dade, *The Portrait of Women and Girls in Miami-Dade County: Portrait of Women’s Economic Security*, 4, https://risep.fiu.edu/research-publications/workers-rights-econ-justice/women-minority-workers/2009/portrait-of-womens-economic-security-in-greater-miami/portrait_wes_2.pdf.

¹⁴ *Id.*

more likely to be concentrated in low wage jobs and if they have children, their employers likely do not provide the flexibility or support critical for moms to achieve economic security.”¹⁵

B. Intersections of feminized poverty with economic and social rights

Poverty impacts women, particularly women of color, in every dimension of their lives. As part of the Femme Agenda, MWC focuses on three particular areas that intersect with economic and social rights: housing, health, and employment.

1. Housing

Renters in Miami are severely cost-burdened. According to Forbes, Miami is the worst city for renters in the country.¹⁶ In fact, “96.4% of the area’s rental market is out of reach to people in Miami’s lowest income bracket.”¹⁷ Across metropolitan markets, the Miami metropolitan area has the largest percentage of worst case housing needs in the country (60.9%).¹⁸

In Miami, “the shortage of affordable housing means that women with lower incomes spend a higher percentage of their income on housing.”¹⁹ Approximately 65% of single female headed families that rent pay more than 30% of their income on housing.²⁰ For communities of color, the housing crisis is worse. According to one study, 71% of Black renters and 69% of Latino renters in Miami are cost-burdened, paying 30% or more of their household income on rent and utilities.²¹

Hurricane Irma, which passed through Florida in early September 2017, hit low-income communities particularly hard, worsening their housing conditions and causing homelessness in some cases.²² In one such case, elderly and infirm residents of federally subsidized buildings were forced to sleep in the parking lot of their building in the hot Miami weather for over a week because their landlord declared that their buildings had become uninhabitable.²³ An influx of displaced people from Puerto Rico due to

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ Samantha Sharf, *Miami Is The Worst City For Renters In 2017, Beating Out Manhattan And San Francisco*, Forbes (March 8, 2017).

¹⁷ Jerry Iannelli, *Just 3 Percent of Miami Two-Bedroom Apartments Are Cheap Enough to Qualify for Rental Assistance*, Miami New Times (Oct. 16, 2017).

¹⁸ Nicole Elsasser Watson, Barry L. Steffen, Marge Martin, David A. Vandenbroucke, *Worst Case Housing Needs, 2017 Report to Congress*, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of Policy Development and Research (Aug. 2017), 12, <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/Worst-Case-Housing-Needs.pdf>. (HUD defines “worst case needs” as “renters with very low incomes—no more than 50 % of the AMI—who do not receive government housing assistance and who pay for more than one-half of their income for rent, live in severely inadequate conditions, or both.”).

¹⁹ Women’s Fund of Miami-Dade, *supra* note 13 at 5.

²⁰ *Id.*

²¹ Corporation for Enterprise Development, *supra* note 11 at 9.

²² Thomas Kennedy, *South Florida Immigrants And Communities Of Color Still Struggling To Recover Post-Irma*, Huffington Post (Sept. 21 2017), https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/south-florida-immigrants-and-communities-of-color-still_us_59c3f275e4b0ffc2dedb5bbc.

²³ Catalina Ruiz Parra, *Tenants Of Public Housing Evacuated Because Of Hurricane Irma Now Live In The Parking Lot*, Miami Herald (Sept. 17, 2017), <http://www.miamiherald.com/news/weather/hurricane/article174265251.html>.

Hurricane Maria has also strained Miami's temporary housing stock.²⁴ This does not bode well for the long term, as Miami already had a serious affordable housing problem before these hurricanes affected the region. This problem will only intensify if the federal government moves forward in the future with cuts to Housing and Urban Development's budget, originally part of Donald Trump's tax plan earlier this year.²⁵

2. Health

Florida ranks 50th in the country for its share of non-elderly women with health insurance (78.3%), which is significantly below the national average of 85.4%.²⁶ Compared to White women (81.8%), Hispanic women (63%) and Black women (72.7%) are more likely to be uninsured.²⁷ In Miami-Dade, the overall percentage of uninsured women is even lower than the state average (63.6%), ranking it in the bottom four counties in Florida.²⁸ Such a high percentage of uninsured women has an impact on women's reproductive health.²⁹ Florida's decision not to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act has contributed to this lack of health care coverage among women. Of the 2.9 million adults in the United States in the insurance coverage gap, 20% live in Florida.³⁰ Low-income children's health is also at risk. Approximately 340,000 children in Florida are enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).³¹ If CHIP is not renewed this year, these children--and the 8.9 million across the country--could end up losing their health care coverage.³²

Sex education in schools is another health issue impacting young people, particularly youth of color and LGBTQIA youth, who are often at risk of sexual abuse, violence, and trauma. Miami-Dade County Public Schools is the fourth largest school district in the United States, but it has still not adopted a comprehensive sex education policy for students.³³ Miami Workers Center believes that comprehensive sex education is a fundamental human right and can help normalize consent, decrease child sexual abuse, shift rape culture, destigmatize non-normative gender identities and expressions, and instill positive values around sexual health and bodily autonomy.³⁴

²⁴ Richard Luscombe, *Arrival of Puerto Ricans Post-Hurricane Maria Could Have Big Impact on Florida* (Oct. 12, 2017),

<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/oct/12/florida-puerto-rican-influx-hurricane-maria>.

²⁵ Lorraine Woellert, *HUD Budget Slashes Housing Programs, Drawing Protests from Advocates*, Politico (May 19 2017).

<https://www.politico.com/story/2017/05/19/hud-budget-cuts-housing-programs-238610>.

²⁶ Julie Anderson and Cynthia Hess, *The Status of Women in Florida by County: Poverty & Opportunity*, The Institute for Women's Policy Research (2016), iv,

https://womensfundmiami.org/2015site/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/The-Status-of-Women-in-Florida-by-County-Poverty-Opportunity_fullreport.pdf.

²⁷ *Id.* at 6.

²⁸ *Id.* at 24.

²⁹ FIU Metropolitan Center, *supra* note 9 at 35.

³⁰ Julie Anderson and Cynthia Hess, *supra* note 26 at v.

³¹ Joan Alker and Karina Wagnerman, *Children's Coverage in Florida: A Closer Look at Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program*, Georgetown University Health Policy Institute (Sept. 2017),

<https://ccf.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Florida-CHIP-brief-10-05-rev-2.pdf>.

³² The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, *Extending Federal Funding for CHIP: What is at Stake?* (Oct. 17, 2017), <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/fact-sheet/extending-federal-funding-for-chip-what-is-at-stake/>.

³³ Currently, students are being taught abstinence-only sex education. This is a viable method for students who are asexual or actively abstaining from sex, but it does not cover the needs of those students who might want to engage, or are already engaging, in sex.

³⁴ Lisann Ramos, *Let's Talk About Sex Ed In Miami-Dade, Say Activists* (Jan. 27, 2017), Health News Florida, <http://health.wusf.usf.edu/post/lets-talk-about-sex-ed-miami-dade-say-activists#stream/0>; Miami

3. Employment

I. Domestic Workers

In Miami, domestic workers are particularly impacted by the feminization of poverty. According to the National Domestic Workers Alliance, there are nearly 100,000 domestic workers in South Florida, the majority of whom are low-wage immigrant women of color.³⁵ Approximately 86% of these workers report experiencing wage theft.³⁶ Some of these workers, like Melissa,³⁷ a MWC member, migrate to the United States on B-1 visas³⁸ and often suffer abuse, exploitation, and human trafficking. Melissa's employers recruited her from her home country by fraudulently misrepresenting the terms of her employment agreement. Upon arriving to Miami, she was forced to work excessive hours in abusive work conditions and paid significantly below the legally required minimum wage. Her passport was confiscated and her movements were constantly monitored and restricted.

For some undocumented workers like Ana,³⁹ another MWC member, the experience of abuse and exploitation is further compounded by the threat of immigration enforcement and the retaliatory acts of employers. As a domestic worker, Ana suffered wage theft, emotional abuse, intimidation, threats of legal reprisals, denial of health care and other workplace abuses. Yet, despite being certified⁴⁰ by the U.S.

Workers Center, Comprehensive Sex Education,
<http://www.miamiworkerscenter.org/index.php?page=sex-education>.

³⁵ Brenda Medina and Enrique Flor, *Some domestic workers face double abuse*, Miami Herald (Sept. 22, 2015), <http://www.miamiherald.com/opinion/op-ed/article154752819.html>.

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³⁷ Member's name has been changed to protect confidentiality.

³⁸ United States Citizenship and Immigrant Services (USCIS), *B-1 Temporary Business Visitor*, <https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/temporary-visitors-business/b-1-temporary-business-visitor> (Through the B-1 temporary business visitor visa program, an eligible "personal or domestic servant" can migrate to the United States to work for a specific employer for a limited time. In order to receive a B-1 visa, the "personal or domestic servant" and employer must sign a written employment contract.)

³⁹ Member's name has been changed to protect confidentiality; Brenda Medina, *This Immigrant Was Certified as a Victim of Human Trafficking. But She Could Still Be Deported*, Miami Herald (Oct. 26, 2017), <http://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/immigration/article181143796.html>; Jennifer Hill and Marcia Olivo, *When Immigration Becomes a Pathway to Exploitation*, Ms. Magazine (Oct. 17, 2017), <http://msmagazine.com/blog/2017/10/17/immigration-becomes-pathway-exploitation/>.

⁴⁰ Department of Homeland Security, *U and T Visa Law Enforcement Resource Guide for Federal, State, Local, Tribal and Territorial Law Enforcement, Prosecutors, Judges, and Other Government Agencies*, https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/U-and-T-Visa-Law-Enforcement-Resource%20Guide_1.4.16.pdf. (In order to apply for a U visa, an applicant must request and receive a certification from a certifying agency or official, which includes "all authorities responsible for the detection, investigation, prosecution, conviction or sentencing of the qualifying criminal activity." Certifying agencies include, but are not limited to, law enforcement agencies, prosecutor's offices, judges, child and adult protective services, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Departments of Labor, and "Other Federal, State, Local, Tribal, or Territorial government agencies that have criminal, civil, or administrative investigative or prosecutorial authority." These agencies must certify that the applicant suffered a qualifying criminal activity, has information concerning the qualifying criminal activity, and was helpful or is likely to be helpful in the detection, investigation, prosecution, conviction, or sentencing of the qualifying criminal activity. In order to apply for a T visa, an applicant should, but is not required to, receive a declaration from a certifying agency, demonstrating that the applicant was a victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons and has complied with any reasonable requests from law enforcement in an investigation of prosecution of human trafficking. Certifying agencies for T visas include "all authorities responsible for the detection, investigation, prosecution, conviction, or sentencing of human trafficking" including, but not limited to, law enforcement agencies, prosecutor's offices, judges, Departments of

Department of the Labor as a victim of human trafficking, Ana was held in immigration detention and denied bond for more than four months because of a false and retaliatory accusation from her employer.

Currently, domestic workers like Ana are particularly at risk of abuse and exploitation as a result of scaled back protections, aggressive immigration enforcement, and employers emboldened to retaliate with impunity. Although the U and T visas provide a helpful form of immigration relief for survivors of qualifying criminal activity and human trafficking, respectively, the current avenues for certification are limited, inefficient, and difficult to navigate. Florida is one of the few U.S. states without a State Department of Labor, which means that U and T visa applicants have limited avenues for requesting certification. Because of the increased collaboration between law enforcement and immigration enforcement, many applicants are reluctant to request certification from law enforcement agencies. The U.S. Department of Labor is underfunded and understaffed, so requests for certification are often delayed. Additional certifying agencies are needed that can more effectively respond to the needs of survivors.

Lastly, one of the few wage theft protections for workers in Miami, the Wage Theft Ordinance, lacks any real enforcement or recovery mechanism, which means that workers, like Sofia,⁴¹ a MWC member, often win hollow judgments that they cannot subsequently collect.

II. Other Workers' Issues

Additional problems for workers exist. Florida's state legislature has used preemption to prevent cities and counties from passing local minimum wage laws, paid sick leave, and other benefits.⁴² Recent reports have revealed that employers and insurance companies have been exploiting a 2003 amendment to Florida's workers compensation law to get undocumented workers deported in order to avoid paying workers compensation claims.⁴³

In the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, workers in South Florida who were unable to work, or have been unable to return to work, have faced significant barriers to accessing the state-run Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) program.⁴⁴

IV. Intersections with Civil and Political Rights

A. *Women's poverty increases vulnerability to gender-based violence*

Labor, and "Other Federal, State, Local, Tribal, or Territorial government agencies that have criminal, civil, or administrative investigative or prosecutorial authority related to human trafficking.")

⁴¹ Member's name has been changed to protect confidentiality.

⁴² National Employment Law Project, *On Preemption Of Miami Beach's Minimum Wage Ordinance*, National Employment Law Project, (March 28, 2017), <http://www.nelp.org/news-releases/on-preemption-of-miami-beach-minimum-wage-ordinance/>.

⁴³ Howard Berkes and Michael Grabell, *Florida Lawmakers To Review Law Targeting Injured Undocumented Workers*, National Public Radio (Aug. 24, 2017), <http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/08/24/545688331/florida-lawmakers-to-review-law-targeting-injured-undocumented-workers>; Michael Grabell and Howard Berkes, *They Got Hurt at Work. Then They Got Deported*, ProPublica (Aug. 16 2017), <https://www.propublica.org/article/they-got-hurt-at-work-then-they-got-deported>.

⁴⁴ Rob Wile, *Florida Makes It Nearly Impossible to Claim Unemployment Assistance After Irma*, Miami New Times (Oct. 19, 2017), <http://www.miamiherald.com/news/florida-makes-it-nearly-impossible-to-get-unemployment-benefits-after-irma-9759262>.

Economic insecurity increases women's vulnerability to gender-based violence, as many women are forced to remain in or return to unsafe and dangerous living situations with their abusers for lack of other options that could assure economic stability for themselves and their families.

This dynamic is exacerbated for undocumented women, whose immigrant status often limits their earning power and therefore their ability to achieve economic independence. Furthermore, abusers may use an undocumented woman's fear of deportation as a shield against her reporting abuse.⁴⁵ Though the U and T Visas were devised to address this issue, there still exist barriers to women's ability to access this mechanism, as discussed briefly above.

B. Poverty reduces civic and political participation

Currently, women are underrepresented at all levels of government. Lack of meaningful access to political power limits the extent to which policy-making reflects women's priorities and human rights. And yet, people struggling to make ends meet can rarely find the time and resources to engage with decisionmakers and organize in their communities. Women who may have children or other dependents face additional challenges to being able to participate in spaces where decisions about their lives and bodies are being made. At the same time, the right to organize free of fear of retaliation is limited, particularly for certain classes of workers such as domestic workers or farmworkers who are left out of traditional labor protections. This prevents these workers from being able to organize and gain power to improve their economic status.

C. Overcriminalization of impoverished communities stunts economic mobility

Overcriminalization of Black and Brown men in low-income communities is one factor that places additional burdens on women of color, who must struggle to meet the financial needs of her household on their own. Not only must they work to support their families, but they must also bear the cost of bail, court fees, commissaries and any other costs that come with involvement in the criminal justice system. In addition, strict admissions policies that do not allow people with records to live in public housing or subsidized housing create risk of eviction and other burdens.

D. Vulnerability of trans women of color

It is important to note that trans women of color are disproportionately impacted by physical violence, discrimination and structural oppression at every intersection. Transgender people of color are legally denied access to housing, education, healthcare and employment opportunities.⁴⁶ In 30 states, it is legal to have your employment terminated for being transgender.⁴⁷ Trans women are nearly 50x more likely to be impacted by HIV.⁴⁸ HIV rates are even higher among trans women of color. Nearly one in five Black trans women are living with HIV.⁴⁹ Over 40% of trans women attempt suicide.⁵⁰ Trans women of color are

⁴⁵ Marcia G. Yerman, *Sexual Assault And Undocumented Women In Trumpland*, Huffington Post (June 4, 2017), https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/sexual-assault-and-undocumented-women-in-trumpland_us_5934429ce4b062a6ac0ad0d5.

⁴⁶ Trans Women of Color Collective, *Universal Periodic Review Working Groups Advocacy Docs*, US Human Rights Network, 32.

⁴⁷ Out & Equal Workplace Advocates, *2017 Workplace Equality Fact Sheet* <http://outandequal.org/2017-workplace-equality-fact-sheet/>.

⁴⁸ Griensven et al., *HIV Surveillance and Prevention in Transgender Women*, *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, 13 (3), 185-186 (2013).

⁴⁹ James et al., *The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey*. Washington, DC: National Center for Transgender Equality, 8 (2016).

disproportionately impacted by high rates of criminalization and over-policing.⁵¹ Trans people are nearly four times more likely to have a household income of less than \$10,000 per year.⁵² This number is even higher for trans people of color.⁵³ The vast majority of Trans women that have been murdered in 2017 have been Black trans women.

V. Impact of US' Failure to Ratify Certain Human Rights Treaties (ICESCR, CEDAW, CRC, CRPD)

Ratification of the major international human rights treaties certainly sets a normative standard for rights-based policymaking that addresses needs of historically marginalized groups, including economic, social and cultural rights. If the U.S. ratified the major international human rights treaties (other than ICCPR, CERD and CAT), state and local governments would have a reference point for standards they should strive to meet for their constituents. And yet, the message these local authorities have gotten from the sum of the U.S.'s actions to undermine these treaties and thwart efforts to hold it accountable is that the rights contained within them are seen as cosmetic and auxiliary, not rights to be formally guaranteed and protected.

In an effort hold itself to the standards laid out in CEDAW despite the federal government's failure to ratify the treaty, the Miami-Dade County Commission passed an ordinance in 2015 to adopt the spirit of CEDAW locally.⁵⁴ However, the lack of adequate resources to ensure compliance have limited the County's ability to meaningfully implement it.

VI. Suggested Locations to Visit

The recent devastating hurricanes that ravaged Houston, TX, Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands have made circumstances all the more dire for already vulnerable populations in those places. We specifically ask for a visit to Miami, Florida, to both explore the dimensions of poverty in South Florida as they have been laid out in this report and those submitted by the University of Miami. Site visits to the Lower Florida Keys, Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands would certainly be preferable to truly take stock of the issues there, but to the extent that those populations have representation in Miami,⁵⁵ we hope that the Special Rapporteur will be able to meet with them.

VII. Recommendations⁵⁶

Housing

1. Pass inclusionary zoning to ensure that new developments are including units affordable to extremely low and very low income individuals.

⁵⁰ Haas et al., *Suicide Attempts among Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Adults*. Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute and American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (2014).

⁵¹ Grant et al., *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. Washington: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 158-172 (2011).

⁵² Center for American Progress and Movement Advancement Project, *Paying an Unfair Price: The Financial Penalty of Being Transgender in America*, 3 (2015).

⁵³ *Id.*

⁵⁴ See Miami Dade County Commission for Women, <http://www.miamidade.gov/advocacy/library/2016-status-of-women-recommendations.pdf>

⁵⁵ Joe Light, *Puerto Ricans Displaced by Hurricane Maria Could be Relocated to U.S. Mainland*, Bloomberg (Oct. 29, 2017),

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-10-29/hud-explores-temporarily-housing-puerto-ricans-on-u-s-mainland>.

⁵⁶ See Appendix A for potential questions..

2. Ensure that policies that allocate funds into an Affordable Housing Trust Fund include meaningful community representation in any boards making fund allocation decisions.
3. Mandate that a portion of Affordable Housing Trust Fund monies be dedicated to rehabilitation of existing affordable housing stock with conditions on rental rates to ensure that low-income individuals have access to habitable and affordable housing.
4. Pass legislation at the state level requiring that landlords secure their properties in preparation for hurricanes.
5. The Federal Government should allocate more money to the Housing and Urban Development agency to provide more housing assistance to meet the need for affordable housing.

Health

6. Congress should renew the Children's Health Insurance Program.
7. Congress should preserve subsidies and protections under the Affordable Care Act.
8. Florida's Governor and State Legislature should approve Medicaid expansion.
9. The School Board of Miami-Dade County should adopt a comprehensive sexual education policy that is responsive to the needs of students of color and LGBTQIA youth.

Employment

10. Miami-Dade County should create and fund a labor monitoring and enforcement program to provide outreach, training, and assistance to workers on wage theft and other issues.
11. Miami-Dade County should partner with community groups, including the Florida Wage Theft Task Force, to create an additional local certifying agency for U and T visa applications.
12. Miami-Dade County should commit long-term funding for the implementation of the Miami-Dade County Commission for Women's recommendations and programs in its December 2016 report,⁵⁷ under the county's CEDAW initiative.
13. Florida's state legislature should pass an anti-retaliation statute for workers.
14. Miami-Dade County and the State of Florida should implement and enforce pay equity protections for women workers.

⁵⁷ See *supra* note 54.

Appendix A

Potential Questions⁵⁸

1. What are the measures that City of Miami/Miami-Dade County is taking to hold landlords accountable for maintaining housing in substandard conditions, thus endangering the health and well-being of residents?
2. Given that Hurricane Irma has exacerbated the housing crisis in Miami municipalities, what steps are local Miami governments taking to pass a law similar to the City of Miami Beach ordinance⁵⁹ that ensures that landlords bear the cost of relocating tenants who are displaced due to housing conditions and gives local government the authority to make repairs and claim the funds back from the landlord?
3. What actions is the State of Florida taking to pass legislation to assist vulnerable populations with hurricane preparedness, particularly with respect to housing and other basic needs?
4. Provide information on how Miami-Dade County's progress in implementing the 2016 recommendations by the Miami-Dade Commission on Women, including allocating funds to periodically review the status of women in the County pursuant to the obligations it undertook by passing an ordinance adopting the principles of CEDAW?
5. What measures are being taken by the Miami-Dade School Board to adopt a comprehensive sex education policy for students?
6. What steps are the County Mayor and the Board of County Commissioners taking to establish a local certifying agency that can provide certification for U and T visa applications?
7. What are the County Mayor and the Board of County Commissioners doing to strengthen the Miami-Dade County Wage Theft Ordinance? What steps are being taken to protect workers against wage theft and expand recovery and enforcement mechanisms?

⁵⁸ Reporting organizations recommend that the Special Rapporteur meet, as a priority, with Miami-Dade County officials, including the County Mayor; City of Miami officials and members of the Miami-Dade School Board, in addition to representatives of Miami's community organizations and advocates. We also recommend meeting with those displaced as a result of hurricanes that have ravaged Caribbean countries over the last few months.

⁵⁹ See Sec. 58-362, Code of the City of Miami Beach, https://library.municode.com/fl/miami_beach/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=SPAGEOR_CH58HO_ARTIVREHO_DIV2BUUNHUHA_S58-362OWDURERE