Even before Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico was dealing with a major crisis—its abysmal rate of child poverty, which in 2016 was 56%. This means that almost 6 out of 10 children in Puerto Rico are growing up in conditions that limit the opportunities they will have to succeed as adults. Multiple studies have shown that children who grow up in poverty are less likely to complete school, have worse health outcomes, and earn less as adults when compared to their peers who do not grow up in poverty. As a result, child poverty has a crippling effect on society and the economy. It has been estimated that child poverty costs the United States $500 billion per year in lost economic activity, criminal prosecution and health costs. Child poverty is driven by the economic security of a family, which in Puerto Rico is compromised by low labor participation, job insecurity, and poor compensation. Tackling these underlying issues will be key to ensuring that all children in Puerto Rico live in families with economic security and can develop to their full potential.

6 OF EVERY 10 CHILDREN
LIVE IN POVERTY

IMPACT OF CHILD POVERTY
Less children finish school vs children living in families with economic security
Worse overall health
Lower wages once reaching adulthood

SOCIAL COST OF POVERTY
$500 BILLION

LOW-INCOME WORKING FAMILIES

38% 22%
Puerto Rico United States
Families with children and an annual family income less than twice the federal poverty level, where at least one of the parents worked 50 weeks or more.

CHILDREN WHOSE PARENTS LACK JOB SECURITY

57% 29%
Puerto Rico United States
Children from families where parents worked less than 35 hours per week, for 50 weeks in the last year.

28%
of children live in low-income households, where none of their parents are employed

PARTICIPATION IN THE WORKFORCE 2017

40% Puerto Rico
VS.
63% United States

MEDIAN INCOME IN FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN: 2016

$40,469
Married couples

$16,539
Single father

$8,417
Single mother

70% of single mothers with children live in poverty.

POVERTY BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL ACHIEVED IN FAMILIES

32% 24% 9% 35%
High School Diploma Less than high school Associates or Some College Years College Degree or Higher

STATUS OF EMPLOYMENT IN FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN: 2016

Married- Couples:
Both in the workforce 62%
Both have full-time employment 37%
At least one is unemployed 28%

Single Mothers:
64% in the workforce
77% employed
36% out of the workforce