



# CIRCLE OF HEALTH INTERNATIONAL

## Hurricane Maria Response Program

### **PERSIST: Providing Emergency Response Services in Settings of Trauma**

It's hurricane season. As we know all too well here at COHI HQ in Austin, Texas, natural disasters like hurricanes disrupt healthcare services, electricity, and food distribution placing vulnerable women and children directly in the eye of a storm in a unique and dangerous way. Those living in Puerto Rico have too many stories now of the ways that storms like Hurricane Maria can ravage a community, leaving those already vulnerable at increased risk and scared.

COHI's team is ready to respond. [We've been doing this work](#) around the world in natural disaster settings [for fourteen years and provided care to over three million women and children in that time](#). We know first hand, from working in Louisiana during [Hurricane Katrina's recovery](#), to all of our work with displaced and refugee women around the world that the federal and state government are not likely to prioritize the needs of those most vulnerable: homeless women and children, families living in domestic violence shelters, and those whose immigration status is not in alignment with the government agencies providing support services. Local non-profits will be doing this work, and COHI is ready.

COHI aims to raise \$100,000 in the first phase of recovery to provide support for:

- To conduct a rapid health needs assessment focusing on identifying the needs of women and children through the hiring of a team of local women as researchers;
- To provide direct clinical maternal, reproductive, and newborn health care prioritizing applicants who are licensed OB/GYNs, midwives, RNs, NPs, and Pediatricians.
- Emergency housing and transportation for vulnerable women and children who've lost their homes and vehicles in the storm, who now need funds for labor and delivery support and medical care for medically fragile kids;
- Medical supplies for refugee and migrant communities, domestic violence shelters, and LGBTQ homes and centers as they are often not prioritized in traditional aid distribution;
- Medical care and counseling for these vulnerable populations impacted by the storm who don't have funds to pay co-pays and other out of pocket related medical costs.

We are hopeful that as the water and wind clear, COHI will have the support from donors like YOU to be there for those most vulnerable here in Puerto Rico. Women and children in Puerto Rico are in need, and we invite you to join us in our collective and long road to recovery. Together we can ensure that these individuals left behind by slow federal relief efforts, poverty, and geography have what they need to not just survive, but to thrive.

