

October 9, 2019

Adi Martínez-Román
Senior Policy Analyst – Puerto Rico
Oxfam América

Via email: adi.martinezroman@oxfam.org

Dear Ms. Martínez-Román,

Foundation for Puerto Rico (FPR) is a non-profit organization with the mission of transforming Puerto Rico into a destination to the world through sustainable socioeconomic development strategies. After Hurricane María, we worked tirelessly in the emergency response with the creation of the “Hurricane María Relief Fund”, facilitating response and coordination of recovery initiatives providing basic needs to our communities & critical and sustainable infrastructure in the island. In 2018, FPR became a partner to the Department of Housing in the administration of the Whole Community Resilience Planning Program funded by CDBG-DR funds. Our objective with the Program is to develop comprehensive community resiliency plans, the benefits of which will allow communities to develop policies, planning, and management capacity that best meet their needs.

As we are directly involved in recovery efforts, we see firsthand the challenges faced in the process and share your objectives of ensuring transparent, accountable, equitable, and effective use of federal funds in Puerto Rico. Moreover, we share the belief that to achieve this, Congress must promote the participation of civil society leaders in Puerto Rico in this process.

Therefore, we strongly support the inclusion of Puerto Rico’s civil society in working directly in the federal coordination of recovery funds and with all federal and local agencies that play a role in Puerto Rico’s recovery. This working group, conceptualized through ample outreach and engagement of stakeholders should:

- Advise federal efforts, ensuring proper use of federal funds, including compliance with all applicable laws, policies, and regulations, and ensuring a focus on equitable resiliency throughout the recovery.
- Oversee the existence of effective processes, prioritizing participatory processes during the planning and implementation phases.
- Oversee and require actions to ensure transparency and accountability to the Federal government and to the people of Puerto Rico.
- Remain accountable to the groups that they represent, ensure that the voices of those most affected are heard.

FPR is committed to participating in the discussion and consultation with groups in both in Puerto Rico and in the Puerto Rican diaspora to ensure an equitable recovery. We look forward to collaborating in this important initiative for Puerto Rico.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Annie Mayol". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and a long, sweeping tail.

Annie Mayol
President & COO
Foundation for Puerto Rico