



Fundación de Mujeres  
en Puerto Rico, Inc.  
Puerto Rico Women's Foundation, Inc.

## Report: 2025 Annual Assembly

# WEAVING KNOWLEDGE FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

*Memory, Resistance, and Transformation  
Through Feminist Wisdom*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**01**

EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY

**02**

CONTEXT AND  
OBJECTIVES

**04**

SIEMPREVIVAS  
RUM

**06**

COLECTIVO ILÉ

**08**

OBSERVATORIO  
DE EQUIDAD DE  
GÉNERO

**10**

LESSONS  
LEARNED AND  
EMERGING  
PERSPECTIVES

**12**

CALL TO ACTION  
AND NEXT STEPS

**13**

BEYOND THE  
2025 ANNUAL  
ASSEMBLY

**14**

INSIDE THE 2025 ASSEMBLY: HIGHLIGHTS AND COLLECTIVE MOMENTS

If you couldn't join us, here you can experience the magic of the 2025 Assembly. Enjoy the photos and videos that capture its emotion, community, and purpose.



# Executive Summary

The **Annual Assembly** of the *Fundación de Mujeres en Puerto Rico* aimed to bring together leaders, researchers, and community organizations to shed light on, and strengthen feminist research as a tool for social transformation. The assembly, entitled *Investigación feminista para el cambio sistémico* [Feminist Research for Systemic Change], had the purpose of exploring how feminist research can document reality, identify effective solutions, and guide concrete actions to promote sustainable systemic changes.

**In times of growing inequality, violence, and misinformation, feminist research stands out as a key tool for informing and transforming public policy and improving living conditions in our communities.**

The *Fundación de Mujeres en Puerto Rico* has invested in generating data from and for communities, recognizing the intersecting factors that particularly affect women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals. We make this investment intentionally because we understand that rigorous, gender-informed evidence is a powerful compass for influencing public policy.

Access to data allows us to clearly identify the problems we face and, at the same time, pave the way for solutions that can address both the root causes and the symptoms of inequality. Data is central to driving sustainable systemic changes in Puerto Rico, where access to information is often limited or nonexistent.

At the same time, we acknowledge that **data can save lives**. In this way, **feminist research becomes an act of remembrance, resistance, and vision for the future**. This is why, beyond numbers and figures, we also present the voices of survivors, of racialized youth, of communities that have sustained this country when the State has turned its back on them. Investing in and documenting this reality is an act of justice.

**Feminist research is a political act:** each data point, each voice, and each story collected is a piece of justice and memory. This work becomes even more urgent in a context where evidence-based knowledge is increasingly devalued, and ignorance is embraced as a deliberate wager to uphold systemic oppression.

Among the main findings of our annual conference were the studies presented by SIEMPREVIVAS RUM, Colectivo Ilé, and the Observatorio de Equidad de Género. These studies respectively demonstrated how the systematization of a support model for survivors of gender-based violence, the development of an antiracist methodology and research framework, and the responsible collection of statistical data strengthen the well-being of women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals, make structural inequalities visible, and generate inputs for evidence-based public policy.



## Context and Objectives

The annual conference of FMPR 2025 took place on Friday, August 29 at the Fundación Banco Popular, with live-streaming via Zoom and Facebook. It was organized and convened by the *Fundación de Mujeres en Puerto Rico*, the **leading philanthropic foundation with a gender-focused approach and the only in Puerto Rico dedicated exclusively to gender equity**. Its goal is to support feminist movements that promote the leadership of women in all of their diversity, along with girls and gender-diverse individuals.

The annual conferences of FMPR began in 2020 with the aim of fostering stronger alliances with grantee-partners through transparency and dialogue. Starting last year, the conferences were opened to the public to give greater visibility to the efforts of the Fundación and its grantee-partners.

In recent years, they have focused on investing in women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals; strengthening feminist and community organizations; institutionalizing support and collaboration with grantee-partners; building strategic alliances to practice feminist philanthropy; and sharing of knowledge.

The main goal of the 2025 conference was to bring together leaders, researchers, community organizations, media, and public officials to highlight and strengthen feminist research as a tool for social transformation. The conference took as its starting point the theme *Investigación feminista para el cambio sistémico* [Feminist Research for Systemic Change], with the goal of exploring **how gender-focused feminist research can document reality, identify effective solutions, and guide concrete actions to promote sustainable systemic changes through public policy**.

During the presentation of “Study on the Profile and Impact of Community Organizations Providing Services to Cisgender and Transgender Women and Girls, and Transfeminine Persons in Puerto Rico” conducted by Estudios Técnicos [Technical Studies], the Attorney Anitza María Cox Marrero shared that Puerto Rico faces unprecedented challenges in social, economic, and environmental spheres.

Within this context, she also emphasized what is already well known: that cisgender and transgender women and girls, as well as transfeminine people, are among the populations most deeply affected by the repercussions of the country’s current challenges. For this reason, **research on organizations that work with these communities through a gender and social justice lens is especially vital, as it helps strengthen and sustain the efforts that are essential to their well-being and future**.

Some of the questions that served as a starting point for the conference were the following:

- How can we use **feminist research** to strengthen our efforts and build a transformative, integrated agenda?
- How can we use data to articulate the **concrete actions** we want to implement?
- What kind of **data** do we need to keep moving forward?
- How can we **organize** so that the findings from these studies translate into the changes we want to see in our communities?

The “Study on the Profile and Impact...” shows that organizations serving cisgender, transgender, and gender-expansive women and girls collectively support approximately 15,000 individuals per year and possess deep expertise in culturally appropriate services. Despite this, the sector continues to confront persistent structural barriers.

Some of the notable challenges include limited access to funds, lack of diversification in funding sources, and limited access to other material and human resources, such as physical spaces and professionals with the necessary knowledge and commitment to serve on the Board of Directors.

Moreover, the organizations analyzed in the study report an average annual income of \$307,500, which is approximately \$42,000 below the median income of the wider nonprofit sector (\$350,000).

Despite this financial disadvantage, certain entities—such as shelters supporting survivors of domestic violence—achieve notable impact, with an average cost-benefit ratio indicating \$3 in cost savings for every dollar invested.

This structural disadvantage in the fiscal health of organizations that serve women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals is a key reason why it is necessary to highlight the work and impact of these organizations through rigorous research.

With this in mind, the objectives of our conference were as follows:

- To **understand** the value of the work done by organizations that provide services to cisgender, transgender, and gender-expansive women and girls through data and rigorous research.
- To **demonstrate** the importance of community-based research so that the communities impacted by inequities inform the development of high-impact solutions based on their own direct experiences.
- To **change the narrative** around how the work of these organizations is perceived, including their relevance, central role, and monetary cost in ensuring the well-being of our communities.
- To **influence** public policy that can achieve systemic changes through an evidence-based approach.

## Community Voices and Research Highlights

# SIEMPREVIVAS RUM: A Feminist Model for Violence Prevention in Universities

**SIEMPREVIVAS RUM** presented a systematization report covering 15 years of research, offering insights to support, educate, and transform the lives of survivors of gender-based violence.

**This program, founded in the late 1990s, focuses on participatory research with a replicable model of integrative services incorporating a gender lens and academic training.**

The presented study included a sample of 35 structured interviews with students, volunteers, and participants from various academic levels, as well as university staff. It also included a discussion group with members of SIEMPREVIVAS RUM during the systematization process and analyzed observations on the support work.

**The main characteristics of the presented model include:**

1. survivor-centered services,
2. a non-pathologizing approach to surviving gender-based violence,
3. horizontal relationships with participants, and
4. support groups.

It was noted that this model helps improve the conditions of women and gender-expansive individuals through various strategies, such as court accompaniment, strengthening of self-esteem through care practices, and the creation of support networks.

The interviewees highlighted as good practices that the program provides services without bureaucratic limitations, offers a support network adapted to the realities of the participants, and includes psychological services to their children.

**Overall, the model proved to be an essential tool for safeguarding the well-being of survivors and their children.** The relevance of the systematizing the model enhances systemic change through replicability. It can also serve to prompt public policies for the State's education system, based on knowledge whose impact has already been validated through the practices studied.



The conclusion further notes that the systematization clarified how the SIEMPREVIVAS RUM model, through its integrated education and service program, supports the University of Puerto Rico—Puerto Rico's principal higher education institution—in fulfilling its mission of offering educational experiences to the community.

The systematization report demonstrates that the program has been a point of reference in Puerto Rico in combining psychosocial accompaniment, academic training, and community work. Among the main results, successful practices of collective support were identified that strengthen the resilience of survivors, as well as the program's ability to train professionals with a feminist sensitivity who now lead organizations and projects throughout the country.

The study also highlighted the challenges of institutional sustainability and State support, emphasizing the need for stable resources to continue providing services. Moreover, it validates that the integration between the University and the community generates a replicable model that not only addresses individual emergencies but also transforms social and educational structures to confront gender-based violence at its roots.

#### *Key Takeaways:*

- The interviewees highlighted as good practices that the organization provides services without bureaucratic limitations, offers a support network adapted to the realities of the participants, and includes psychological services to their children.
- A replicable, community-centered model as a tool that can safeguard the well-being of survivors and their children, while also promoting systemic change.
- The development and study of replicable models can help inform public policy, drawing on knowledge whose impact has already been validated by the community and by research.
- The study also highlights the challenges of institutional sustainability and State support, emphasizing the need for stable resources to continue providing services.

## Community Voices and Research Highlights

# COLECTIVO ILÉ: Toward Statistical Visibility for Afro-Descendant Youth

In their presentation, Colectivo Ilé shared a study about structural racism among Afro-descendant youth (ages 18-24) and offered concrete public policy proposals that take into account the intersection of race and gender.

The study was motivated by the fact that, although data on youth well-being exist, they do not include ethno-racial variables. Using a **decolonial methodology**, the study seeks to identify how Afro-descendant youth define well-being for themselves and to better understand the situation of the youth in Puerto Rico. Among the study's main contributions is generating knowledge to address the statistical invisibility of Black youth in Puerto Rico.

**As Colecivo Ilé emphasized, recognizing the importance of statistical visibility is essential for communities made vulnerable by gaps in data about inequality.**

Moreover, the study aims to explore aspects of youth well-being based on their experiences and voices. Its objectives include supporting and strengthening community-based work, as well as promoting diverse strategies to advance social transformation in favor of Black and Afro-descendant populations.

In doing so, the study seeks to answer the following **research questions**: How do youth theorize and define well-being for themselves? How do racism and racial discrimination affect the well-being of Black youth between the ages of 18 and 24 in terms of access to education, employment, housing, and health services? What social and cultural support do Afro-descendant youth experience? What are their support systems?

The methodologies used include collective dialogues grounded in decoloniality and popular education, as well as online questionnaires.

### *Key Takeaways:*

- To consider how the processes of restoration and healing, which will not come from the State, can be supported by feminist organizations and social movements.
- To develop and implement public policies that reduce the criminalization of youth in various spaces, such as schools or shopping centers.



*“Our focus is not only on creating and developing public policy for the state, but also on enabling organizations to use these findings and collaborate in generating the data we develop. This research responds to the need to generate knowledge in the face of the existing statistical invisibility of data and research on the Afro-descendant population in Puerto Rico.”*

-Miriam F. Morales Suárez

## Community Voices and Research Highlights

# OBSERVATORIO DE EQUIDAD DE GÉNERO:

## A Historical Debt Owed to Children Orphaned by Femicide in Puerto Rico

The Observatorio de Equidad de Género is an organization dedicated to generating data that support the development of evidence-based public policies and to educating the public about the violence experienced by women.

The study presented during the annual assembly seeks to understand the State's commitment to children who have experienced the trauma of femicide. In the current context, it was found that **orphanhood due to femicide remains invisible**, there is no robust system for registering surviving children, and there is little research on the topic; in particular, there are no qualitative studies that capture the voices and stories of survivors.

It was also noted that Puerto Rico does not have a public reparations policy like those in other Latin American countries, and consequently, there are no protocols to support children who survive femicide.

This reality has resulted in a **lack of services for secondary victims** of femicide. The methodology used included analyzing news articles about each femicide, creating a database, and cross-referencing it with official data when available to nonprofit organizations, since such data are not always accessible.

**The study found that between 2019 and 2025, a total of 459 women were victims of femicide, leaving 156 children orphaned.**

As part of the study's next steps, the Observatorio will carry out a new phase titled **"Silenced Voices: Impacts of the Violent Death of Mothers on Children and Youth in Puerto Rico."**

This stage of the research seeks to make children's experiences visible, raise awareness in public policy, and promote the development of trauma-informed services. It will use a mixed-methods approach, combining the analysis of statistical data with narrative accounts.

### *Key Takeaways*

**01**

Puerto Rico's **historical debt to children** orphaned by femicide is twofold: they were institutionally rendered invisible and denied a dignified, comprehensive, and transformative form of **reparation**.

**02**

The current context **requires** political will, budgetary resources, research, and a paradigmatic shift.

**03**

Only in this way can Puerto Rico **break the cycle** of intergenerational violence, heal the wounds of childhoods marked by **femicide**, and lay the foundations for a more just, safe, and **gender-violence-free society**.



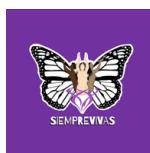
*"In Puerto Rico, we have a historical debt to the children orphaned by femicide. First, they were institutionally invisibilized and denied dignified and transformative reparation. We must listen to their voices, because they have been silenced by pain, stigma, and institutional negligence, and because their stories are testimonies of resistance, dignity, and truth. Only through deep listening can we build policies that repair, accompany, and transform"*

**-Stephanie Figueroa Figueroa**

# Lessons Learned and Emerging Perspectives

**A recurring theme throughout the presentations was the lack of visibility and recognition of issues related to gender equity in Puerto Rico.**

Consequently, all the studies concluded, one way or another, with strategies to make visible the various problems affecting women, so that public policies can be developed to eradicate these inequalities within our communities.



In the case of SIEMPREVIVAS RUM, the need to systematize and replicate an evidence-based, impactful model within the university community became evident, given that female and gender-expansive students do not have access to this type of service through other institutional spaces.



Colectivo Ilé also emphasized the importance of making racialized data visible in order to promote the well-being of Black youth through an Afro-feminist approach.



The Observatorio identified that the current number of children who are victims of feminicide has reached 156, and stressed the lack of data on these cases and their experiences, which is necessary to influence robust public policies that address their specific needs.

All the studies highlighted the need to continue a feminist research agenda that allows for identifying the root causes of problems and generating evidence-based solutions, which can contribute to the development of public policies that drive systemic change toward gender equity.

The main takeaway from the consensus was the absence of a State policy addressing gender equity, and how this contributes to a lack of awareness within various government institutions regarding the needs of vulnerable populations.

In SIEMPREVIVAS RUM's presentation, it was emphasized that the University of Puerto Rico system must recognize both the necessity and impact of its services in order to provide institutional support to the program.

In Colectivo Ilé's case, it was noted that public institutions that collect data on youth well-being do not include ethno-racial variables, which are essential for addressing the needs of Black youth in a culturally appropriate manner.

Finally, the Observatorio de Equidad de Género highlighted that the judicial system in Puerto Rico does not adequately collect data on children who survive femicide. This not only hampers the work of nonprofit organizations engaged in reparative efforts, but also results in a lack of trauma-informed and appropriate services for children who survive femicide.

**All of these studies open new avenues for innovation in public policy focused on gender equity, presenting relevant and feasible models for implementation.**

While there is still a long way to go, all three studies use data and evidence-based practices to propose public policies that address core problems faced by women and gender-expansive individuals in our communities.

In SIEMPREVIVAS RUM's case, a replicable program has been designed that could be implemented in any university system.

Colectivo Ilé's study will support and strengthen community-based work and the diversity of strategies to assist Afro-descendant populations.

The Observatorio de Equidad de Género will use the results of their study to propose public policies that promote processes of restoration and healing for children who survive femicides.

Beyond data and evidence-based practices, all of the studies also aim to advance necessary reparative work needed to foster a process of healing in the face of the violence that women and gender-expansive individuals experience in their daily lives in Puerto Rico.



# Call to Action and Next Steps



## Donors

Although organizations serving women, girls, and gender-expansive individuals carry out work that is central to social well-being, they remain at a significant disadvantage when it comes to financial resources allocated to them. As noted in the study referenced at the beginning of this report, organizations focused on gender equity have an average income that is \$50,000 below the median for the sector as a whole. For this reason, we recommend that philanthropic organizations and other donors invest with a gender lens and help reduce this investment gap.



## Advocates

To reach consensus and advance a shared agenda based on existing data and evidence-based practices, we recommend creating coalitions and partnerships to build greater support for key changes in public policy aligned with the mission of various NGOs dedicated to gender equity.



## Policymakers

We recommend the use of data to inform the development of public policies that align with the problems faced by communities and with solutions that have shown to be effective or that are grounded in the lived experiences of those communities. Advocacy at the local level is also necessary to ensure that the State allocates funds for this type of work, especially since gender-based violence figures continue to rise. We understand that such an investment in the work of organizations focused on gender equity, as previously mentioned, results in significant savings for the State; in some cases, up to \$3 in costs avoided for every dollar invested in the organization. Similarly, we recommend establishing partnerships and consensus with organizations that work directly with communities, since they are already familiar with the problems and the most effective solutions based on their firsthand experience.

# BEYOND THE 2025 ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

Looking ahead, our strategy places research at the heart of equity. We understand the collection of rigorous, feminist-informed data as a tool that guides our philanthropic decisions while also paving the way for public policies to respond more effectively to the realities of our communities. This research provides solid evidence to transform structures, amplifies voices that have been historically ignored, and strengthens the capacity of feminist organizations to lead lasting change. For the Fundación de Mujeres en Puerto Puerto, research is not an isolated academic exercise but a strategic investment that drives social innovation, generates tangible savings for the State and, above all, lays the foundation for a more just, sustainable, and prosperous country.



## Future publications

The publications of the research by SIEMPREVIVAS RUM, Colectivo Ilé, and the Observatorio de Equidad de Género at the annual conference will be available on our website: [www.fmnpr.org](http://www.fmnpr.org)



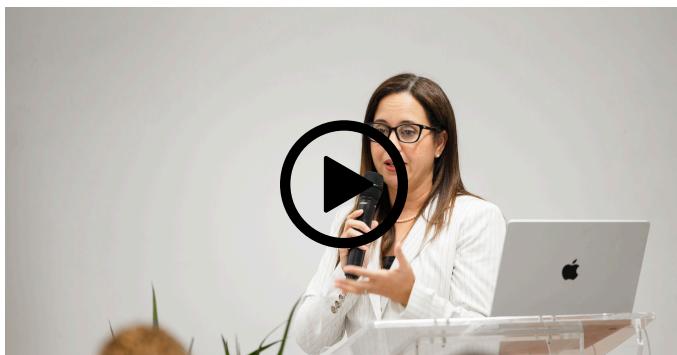
# Inside the 2025 Assembly: Highlights and Collective Moments

If you couldn't join us, here you can experience the magic of the 2025 Assembly. Enjoy the photos and videos that capture its emotion, community, and purpose.



## Welcome Remarks

*This segment features the welcome remarks delivered by the Co-Chairs and the Secretary of the Board, joined by the Executive Director.*



## Part I

*Study on the profile and impact of community organizations that provide services to cisgender women and girls, transgender women, and transfeminine people in Puerto Rico.*



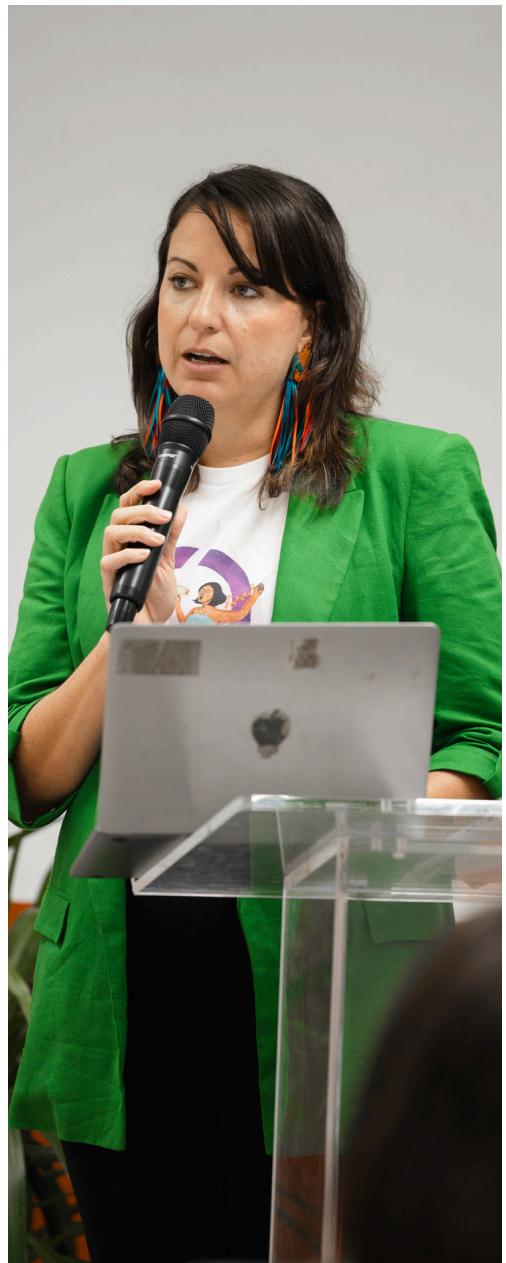
## Part II

*Women Leaders Panel: Colectivo Ilé, SIEMPREVIVAS RUM, and the Gender Equity Observatory of Puerto Rico present their research initiatives.*

**The full 2025 Assembly videos are now available on our YouTube channel, with subtitles in both English and Spanish. This way, we continue expanding access to the ideas, stories, and voices that inspired this year's edition.**

<https://www.youtube.com/@fmnpr>

# Photo Gallery



# Photo Gallery



# Photo Gallery



# Photo Gallery





We want to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who made the Fundación de Mujeres en Puerto Rico's 2025 Annual Assembly possible. To our allies, sponsors, and collaborators who supported this initiative—thank you. And above all, to the feminist leaders who shared their projects and research with courage and clarity, opening new pathways toward equity. Your commitment and vision are the driving force propelling this collective movement forward.

The research connected to this document will be published on our website. Visit us and sign up for our newsletter so you don't miss it.

## Thank You!

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