

Thriving in the Inland Empire:

Women & Well-Being through the Lens of Vital Conditions

FIRST
LOOK

The **IECF Women's Giving Fund** commissioned a study by the **UCR Center for Community Solutions** to explore what helps—or holds back—women's ability to thrive in the Inland Empire (Riverside + San Bernardino counties). Drawing upon **data from an original survey and publicly available sources**, we **examine women's well-being through the lens of vital conditions**, revealing variation in women's lived experience, where our region excels and where challenges persist. This report provides a first look at key insights, with the full findings to be unveiled at an exclusive event on June 3rd. Scan the QR code to learn more about the study and register for the event. Space is limited.



THRIVING, STRUGGLING & SUFFERING IN THE IE

The Cantril Ladder measures well-being by asking people to **rate their lives today and in five years on a 0–10 scale**, and then sorts them into three groups based on their answers: thriving, struggling, or suffering.

In the Inland Empire, most women are struggling—they are getting by but are uncertain about the future. Prior research finds that people who are struggling are more likely to experience financial stress, unstable resources, and emotional strain, highlighting the need for policies and investments that strengthen the vital conditions for well-being in our region.

36% of women in the IE are **THRIVING**

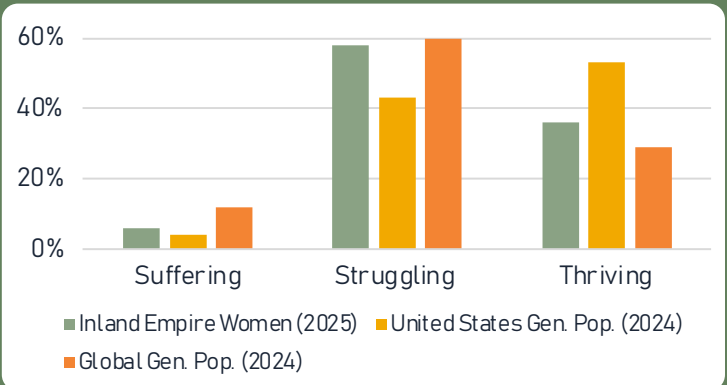
58% of women in the IE are **STRUGGLING**

6% of women in the IE are **SUFFERING**

Survey (n=1000) of Riverside and San Bernardino county residents over the age of 18 who identify as women. Survey developed by UCR CCS and administered by Dynata, 1/28/25 – 2/3/25.

HOW DOES THE IE COMPARE TO THE US & THE WORLD?

Women in the Inland Empire are **less likely to suffer** than the global population average, but with **58% struggling**—well above the U.S. rate (**43%**)—there's room to boost well-being. Investing in vital conditions that foster thriving communities could help close the **thriving gap (36% IE vs. 53% U.S.)** and create a more vibrant Inland Empire.



United States & Global values are taken from the Gallup Life Evaluation Index, 2024 and are inclusive of men and women.

THE RIVERSIDE / SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY OPTIMISM GAP

Around the world, people typically expect their future to be brighter than their present, which is reflected in a positive “swing” in their Cantril Ladder scores. **Most women in the IE report a positive swing**—meaning they are optimistic about their future well-being and life's opportunities—but the counties diverge in that **women in Riverside County are more likely to have a negative view of their future than those residing in San Bernardino County.**

36%
of women in
Riverside County
anticipate being
worse off in 5
years

9%
of women in
San Bernardino
County anticipate
being worse off in
5 years









Center for Community
Solutions

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We pair our survey findings with publicly available data that offers a wider lens on women’s well-being in our region. Secondary data provided by the **American Community Survey (2023)** and **California Health Interview Survey (2019-2023)** is free to use, generally representative, and can be sorted into the Vital Conditions Framework **to compare Riverside and San Bernardino counties—to each other and to Orange and Los Angeles counties—across key conditions for thriving**. Although the Vital Conditions Framework includes a category for Thriving Natural World, this domain is excluded from our analysis. Because the natural environment impacts everyone, the available data does not provide impactful insights specific to women, rather reflecting trends for the entire population. This snapshot highlights some of the most revealing patterns tied to vital conditions. Please scan the QR code below for graphs of these data.

					
Belonging & Civic Muscle	Basic Needs for Health & Safety	Humane Housing	Meaningful Work & Wealth	Lifelong Learning	Reliable Transportation
38% 41% SB County Riv County OC: 25% LAC: 30% of Regional Women Reported They “Definitely” or “Probably” Had Confidence to Contact Elected Officials	38% 40% SB County Riv County OC: 56% LAC: 46% of Currently Uninsured Regional Women Remain Uninsured Due to Cost	86% 88% SB County Riv County OC: 88% LAC: 80% of Regional Women Feel Safe in Their Neighborhood “Most” or “All” of the Time	\$25,804 \$26,992 SB County Riv County OC: \$26,357 LAC: \$24,067 Median Income for Regional Women with Less than a High School Education	30% 44% SB County Riv County OC: 53% LAC: 53% Percentage of 3-4 Year Old Girls Enrolled in School (Public or Private) in the Region	29 min. 30 min. SB County Riv County OC: 25 min LAC: 30 min Average Commute Times for Regional Women
79% 75% SB County Riv County OC: 80% LAC: 80% of Regional Teen Girls Believe They Can Make a Difference	78% 78% SB County Riv County OC: 80% LAC: 79% of Regional Women Have a Usual Source of Health Care	97% 93% SB County Riv County OC: 96% LAC: 94% of Regional Women Have Stable Housing	12% 9% SB County Riv County OC: 6% LAC: 7% of Regional Women Work in the Transportation + Warehousing Sector	16% 16% SB County Riv County OC: 13% LAC: 19% of Regional Women Aged 25+ who Have Less than a High School Diploma	86% 82% SB County Riv County OC: 77% LAC: 75% of Regional Women Use an Automobile to Go to Work

The **Center for Community Solutions** is a research center at the **UCR School of Public Policy** with a mission to contribute to the region’s growth by conducting community-engaged research that addresses critical policy questions, fostering knowledge exchange between research and practice, and developing the next generation of policy leaders.

Scan the QR code to register for *She Counts* on **June 3rd, 12pm-1:30pm**, and be among the first to explore new data on IE women, hear from experts, and connect with local leaders over lunch! Space is limited.

