

Workshop Notes

**Climate & Heat Health Task Force Public Workshop #4
Workers Exposed to Heat – Feb 15 2022
10:30 AM - 12 PM**

**Main Room (Multi-lingual group) – Group 1
Facilitator: Oscar Londoño, WeCount!
Notetaker: Chelsea Clark, The Miami Foundation**

Attendees:

- Oscar Londono, ED, WeCount
- Chelsea Clark, Resilience Officer, The Miami Foundation
- Interpreters (x4)
- WeCount members – group of members, outdoor workers committee
- Robert Hevia
- Esber Andiroglu, UM professor
- James Murley, Miami-Dade County
- Albert Gomez, community member

1. How can we raise awareness amongst employers and employees about the risks and best practices, tools and resources?

- WeCount members (WC) – we want to be listened to in the things that we say because we suffer a lot
- Albert Gomez – things that get measured get done. Defining a workforce heat index across employers throughout South FL would be a great undertaking
- WC - we are here at this meeting because we want for a law to be passed that gives us protection, water, shade, rest every 2 hours – we are people that work in the fields – the heat is too strong and that's why there are many people passing out. If we don't fight, we're not going to be able to achieve anything. – Passing laws that protect workers. How to raise awareness to improve practice – the important point of being here is that we're being listened to. We need the law because it's important for all workers, but if we are demanding because we have felt the impacts of heat in past years – we need all actions to be taken into practice. We want to feel the support of higher authorities and need actions to back it up.

2. What are some potential pilots or other solutions that we could implement locally to encourage and support employers and workers in preventing excessive heat exposure?

- Chelsea – need for mass communications campaign – how do we make sure that even in a hot place like MDC, that it's not normalized
- Albert Gomez – instead of focusing on barriers, can we incentivize employers to register the workplace average operating temps to help define our county wide operating picture. How we can first extend this to MDC employees, and then expand to private companies.
- Esber Andrioglu – The work schedule of those that are working outside – breaking up the typical workday to partially outside, and then adding a session during each shift to get a break from the heat inside + get education about the issue. Taking the hottest hours of the day and plugging in an indoor activity for information sharing – incentivizing employers to create these types of opportunities. Can accomplish the much needed break and cool down period + mixing it up with communication and connection.
- WC – I've worked in this country for years and I've seen a lot of workers abuse. I've not been a victim to employers, but I'm here to help advocate to end employee abuse. We have value in this country, and there are a lot of employers who don't value us. They see us as disposable. One employer once told me that because we're undocumented, he could call immigration and pick us up if we don't want to work.
- WC – I'm indigenous and a farmworker, and I want to say that this is an emergency – it's too much excessive heat for us working in the fields. My son rides his bike to school and because of the excessive heat, he passed out in the bathroom. Imagine us working in the fields, we can no longer tolerate this. We don't have health insurance so we grow old sick – we get skin cancer in the sun. I've come to realize that our mental health is affected. We all become ill and we are all concerned at this point. I am respectfully urging that politicians help us because we cannot tolerate this anymore. If I pass away, what will happen to my five kids – they will be on their own – their father was deported so it's just me providing for their education.
- WC – There are many indigenous people here who don't understand Spanish – people need interpretation in their dialects. Often people don't know what's going on so they allow themselves to be exploited – sometimes not allowed to go to bathroom and people don't know how to understand their employers. We need more interpretation for indigenous people – we are often neglected with the extreme heat issue. Also need safe clean drinking water + breaks every couple of hours.

3. What comments or concerns do you have about the proposed state legislation? How can we expand support for it?

- Esber Andiroglu – Having a similar conversation with the employers as a starting point (similar to the WeCount members sharing thoughts) – understanding from their perspective what the needs are and what their wishes may be – if it’s regulatory guidelines or incentivizing. I’m sure they are equally concerned about their employees and are looking to protect their employees while also improving workforce productivity which could be endangered by extreme heat in the years ahead. May consider inviting grocery store chains for participation in this effort.
- Albert Gomez – hard ask to the County to set an operating standard around managing heat with their high risk employees based on their job description and environment and implement it at the County with a timeline now.

4. What other stakeholders do we need to include in these efforts?

(Didn’t get to this question)

Group 2

Facilitator: Jane Gilbert

Note Taker: Julia Marturano (UM) Name: Julia

Attendees:

- Meenakshi Chabba
- Beyssa Buil - Climate Reality Leader
- Alex Harris - Miami Herald Climate Writer
- Dr. Cheryl Holder - Need to understand the body to make the right choices
- Michelle Aleman - Office of Budget
- Omar Leon- Miami Beach Urban Forester
- Deborah Dion - SF AFICIO
- Sandra St. Hilaire - Office of Resilience
- Zelalem Adefris - Catalyst Miami
- Destini Smith - Catalyst Miami
- Allison Higgins - City of Key West
- Jeanette Ruiz - Miami Climate Alliance
- Carrie Roach -represent Network of Justice Ministers
- Laura Levey-
- Esteban Wood- Policy and civic engagement lead at WeCount!
- Lynee Turek- PhD student, heat and housing

1. How can we (the County and many partners) further raise awareness amongst employers and employees? Best Practices or tools to put these in place

- Set up videos for workers to provide information to stay healthy in the heat.
- Systematic Approach - incorporate clinicians, county resources, union to start messaging

- Public service announcements with experts and voices of those being affected
 - Local media
 - Bring awareness
- Bring in conversations in regular meeting spaces – what are the barriers?

2. What are some pilots or local solutions we can employ?

- Ways to hold accountability
- Florida Landscape Organization - Worker Safety Program - accreditation/certification
- Workers under fair foods program, 3 times work protections in place
 - More experiences of heat stress, physical, emotional, cognitive performance
 - Affects alertness, judgment which can lead to accidents
- Raise work protections you will get results
- Serious regulations and protections as a community – we do not have a department of labor in state of florida, cannot rely on OSHA
- Insurance companies should collaborate, a lot of workers do not have health insurance
- County policy standpoint – change time workers can work
- Need to target those in charge of workers – policy enforcing protection
- Abusive employers: Miami beach passed progressive policy on building code for climate change, maybe something similar
- Blacklist naughty employers – public shame
- Charles Laprag – agricultural manager – can connect with other important players

3. How can we all do more to support legislation?

- 35 municipalities, get elected officials on board to support protections for workers
- Pairing with clinicians – strategies for the next day

Group 3

Facilitator: Karina Castillo (MDC Office of Resilience)

Notetaker: Ludovica Martella (Program Coordinator, MDC Extreme Heat Task Force)

Participants

- Meghan Donovan, UM Law student, building a policy toolkit which tracks heat impact
- Jen Posner, University of Miami
- Catherine Toms, Senior Advisor for Climate and Health at Health Care Without Harm
- Juanita Ballesteros, Senior Analyst of City of Miami Beach
- Olivia Collins, Senior Program Coordinator, The CLEO Institute
- Mayra Cruz, UM PhD student
- Skye Wheeler, Senior Research, Human Rights Watch

- Joella Dees, Energy Deese works at city of Key west DEFINITELY REACH OUT
- Austin Bozgoz, Atmospheric Science Masters student at UM's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science (RSMAS)
- Motsa Dubios, Concerned Scientist

1. How can we raise awareness amongst employers and employees about the risks and best practices, tools and resources?

- Olivia Collins: Having huge signage in all languages. It helps educating the people. E.g. Montreal sing campaign for trash.
- Mayra Cruz: we should partner with unions of workers. The greater Miami chamber of commerce to include heat awareness among the private sector
- Skye: SCIU (union) managed to get OSCHA to fine an airline company for how they treated their employees. Until the law passes, it is still possible to fine employers. It's important to get companies to sign on the state law that is pending.
- People in municipalities should connect people working with outdoor workers
- Jen Posner: build on the awareness about this.
- Juanita Ballesteros: programs that interact with businesses on a one to one of basis. It requires partnerships with other organizations. Like the plastic-free program. The municipalities should look into this for heat. The city of Miami Beach offered vaxxines to employees on the site, we could look into programs like these to expand awareness on heat.
- Motsa: Chamber of commerce businesses should all have posters and signs regarding heat in places where workers go. Like banks and post offices
- Provide posters or fliers. Business tax receipt in City of Miami Beach.
- EAP (emergency action plan) for businesses that lays out what to do in case of an emergency. A lot of non-profits for example updated these because of Covid so using the new heat season to update those with heat information would be great.

2. What are some potential pilots or other solutions that we could implement locally to encourage and support employers and workers in preventing excessive heat exposure?

- Do trainings to businesses on heat together with the ones on hurricane season campaign so that they know they will not be penalized from the beginning.
- Create pilots that are paid by the County so that it takes the pressure away from the employers

3. What comments or concerns do you have about the proposed state legislation? How can we expand support for it?

- Concerned that there are no penalties for the employers

4. What other stakeholders do we need to include in these efforts?

Skye: More maternal health partners. The Miami Healthy Baby Task Force - ask them what they need from us so that they can provide this information to pregnant women and clinicians working with them. Consortium for healthier babies, stacy miran, retail produce sellers, publix,

Group 4

Facilitator: Galen Treuer, MDC Office of Resilience (OOR)

Notetaker: Perla Monique Aquino (MDC OOR Intern)

Participants

1. Megan Donovan
 - a. Office of Civic & Community Engagement
 - b. Working on extreme heat mapping tool
 - c. Is here to learn
2. Mary Leonce
 - a. Works in mental health and is part of the task force
 - b. Is interested in how heat affects mental health of outdoor workers
3. Pedmalin Occely
 - a. Climate Justice Organizer
 - b. Wants to help support “Que Calor” campaign
4. Claudia Navarro
 - a. Works with “We Count”
 - b. Wants to support campaign for outdoor workers
5. Robert Molleda
 - a. Works with national weather service and is part of the task force
 - b. Wants to provide weather information and help prepare
6. Micah Hundley
 - a. Is part of the Atlantic Council of Resilience
 - b. Is here to learn and share information with the world
7. Paulina Saldariaga
 - a. Works for FIU’s neighborhood health program
 - b. Is here to learn and connect
8. Patricia Gomez
 - a. Works with the MDC office of Resilience
9. Natalia Brown
 - a. Climate Resilience Officer Catalyst Miami
 - b. Wants to help engage with residents of MDC
10. Marta Mareello
 - a. Works with the MDC office of Resilience
 - b. Wants to learn and explore synergies
11. Amy Horton
 - a. Works with MDC office of Management
12. Mahadev Bhat

- a. Is a professor at FIU working on a study that looks into the effects of extreme heat
 - b. Is here to learn
- 13. Bereatha Howard
 - a. Is a communication advocate at the clear institute
 - b. Is here seeking solutions
- 14. Aida Curtis
 - a. Is a landscape architect and is part of the task force
 - b. Is here looking at public projects related to climate change
- 15. Victor Robles
 - a. Is a landscape supervisor for MDC and is part of the task force
 - b. Is here looking for solutions and learning
- 16. Sigrid Martinez
 - a. Works in Fort International Environmental Social Government
 - b. Is here to learn and help
- 17. Beatriz Baldan
 - a. Works in construction, sustainability and resilience
 - b. Is here to learn and ask questions

[Questions 1 & 2 were asked together]

1. How can we raise awareness amongst employers and employees about the risks and best practices, tools and resources?

2. What are some potential pilots or other solutions that we could implement locally to encourage and support employers and workers in preventing excessive heat exposure?

Responses:

- Mary Leonce
 - Walking into offices and providing flyers, education and information
 - Go to the fields, provide flyers, education and information, and see experiences firsthand
 - Ask workers what they need and provide basics for them
- Claudia Navarro
 - Take into consideration all outside workers
 - Looking into heat reduction
 - Marketing and education campaign for everyone
 - Provide water readily and with easy access
- Robert Molleda
 - Talk about dangers and create awareness about where and how to access reliable weather information daily
- Beatriz Baldan
 - Having “lunchbox” talks meaning required safety talks by law
- Mahadev Bhat
 - Compulsive education for all

- Making the ultimate change to result in better management
- Aim for management to investigate the lack of understanding and empathy
- Farmers market education programs
- Natalia Brown
 - Have a goal for leadership and development education and use employers as messengers
 - Construction worker contracts
- Sigrid Martinez
 - Creating awareness at a grand scale
 - Campaign with SDGs and form alliances
 - Involve the consumer
 - Develop an “oasis” within field to generate rest spaces
- Megan Donovan
 - Farmer networks and associations as targets for education
 - Food systems are driven by consumers so you can add labels to product like “non gmo”, “organic”, etc...
 - “Extreme heat safety certified”
- Bereatha Howard
 - Connect with workers
 - Find small solutions for workers afraid to challenge the system while improving
- Marta Marello
 - Mandatory employer permits

[Questions 3 & 4 were asked together]

Responses:

- Beatriz Baldan
 - Are farmers aware of these laws being proposed?
 - Create movement within them
- Claudia Navarro
 - Organize and educate
 - The power structure is important
 - The ethical thing to do
- Mahadev Bhat
 - Two groups of people with power: government and consumer
 - If Government won't do anything, aim for consumers
- Megan Donovan
 - Legislation should include enforcements and incentives
 - Other stakeholders: workers and associates
- Bereatha Navarro
 - Use billboards
- Sigrid Martinez
 - Look for the “benefit for all”
- Paulina Saldariaga
 - Create an anonymous support group to report violations

