

# Resiliency through Partnership

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A Year and a Half Marks Progress Made and Sets the Stage for Long-Term Recovery

GUAYNABO, Puerto Rico — FEMA, local government agencies and other federal partners continue supporting the Government of Puerto Rico's plan for recovery after Hurricane Maria. With more than \$8.5 billion granted so far for Public Assistance, Individual Assistance and Mitigation grants, the island is better positioned to build back stronger.

Important work to key infrastructure and lifelines is ongoing, helping the island during its recovery process while also restoring and empowering communities.

Below are some examples of projects currently underway for the island's long-term recovery.

## Restoration of Water Systems

FEMA has awarded approximately \$135 million to the Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority, or PRASA, for Hurricane María-related expenses. These funds were for debris removal and immediate measures to save lives and protect public health and property.

PRASA has identified over 5,000 facilities to be repaired or rebuilt, making this a massive undertaking.

FEMA is also working on approving roughly \$2 million in funds for repair works in Non-PRASA water systems. Roughly 90,000 residents rely on community aqueducts, many of which were severely damaged after the storm.

In the Guayabota community in Yabucoa, located in the eastern part of the island, repairs to broken fences, gates and pipes help ensure residents have access to clean drinking water. Under a mission assignment with the Environmental Protection Agency, community systems like this one are continually assessed and



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supported and promote the importance of community resiliency.

### New Ways to Rebuild

So far, FEMA has disbursed over \$745 million for home rental, repairs and replacement costs. But even with several housing programs up and running, and volunteer organizations eager to lend a helping hand,

the scarcity and high prices of construction materials delayed the process of getting people back in their homes. More needed to be done.

The Voluntary Agencies Leading and Organizing Repair program, or VALOR, was created for nonprofits to receive materials and equipment to perform minor home repairs. FEMA has provided \$12.6 million for home construction materials that volunteer agencies have used to repair 3,300 homes on the island. The successful implementation of this program in Puerto Rico has opened the door for its use in other disasters.

### Recovery in the Hands of Every Survivor

Puerto Rico residents, regardless of whether they registered for assistance with FEMA, who still face disaster-related unmet needs have a network of resources to help get them back on their feet. FEMA and the Government of Puerto Rico have established community recovery centers throughout the island as a place where residents have access to federal and local recovery specialists, disaster case managers and volunteer organizations.

FEMA has awarded nearly \$70 million for disaster case management in Puerto Rico, providing survivors with a single point of contact to facilitate access to a broad range of resources. There are over 600 disaster case managers available to meet with survivors across the island in community recovery centers.

Over 100,000 people have visited and continue to visit CRCs, helping create more resilient communities and establishing ties with local nonprofits and volunteer organizations.

### Repaving the Road to Recovery



FEMA has provided over \$54 million in funding to repair hurricane-damaged sites including roads and bridges in Puerto Rico. These sites, owned by the state and municipalities, are under mission assignment with the Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division and include repairs to bridges in Utuado, one of the hardest hit areas on the island.

In collaboration with the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority and Puerto Rico's Central Office of Recovery, Reconstruction and Resiliency, or COR3, over 106,000 street lights across the island will be repaired or replaced at an estimated cost of \$35 million.

With emergency work complete, permanent work underway and communities coming together to develop innovative solutions tailored to their long-term recovery needs, Puerto Rico will be better positioned to withstand whatever comes next. Recovery is the longest phase of a disaster and FEMA is committed to rebuilding a stronger Puerto Rico.

For more information on the Hurricane María recovery, visit [fema.gov/disaster/4339](https://fema.gov/disaster/4339).

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Disaster recovery assistance is available without regard to race, color, religion, nationality, sex, age, disability, English proficiency or economic status. If you or someone you know has been discriminated against, call FEMA toll-free at 800-621-FEMA (3362) 711/VRS - Video Relay Service). Multilingual operators are available. (Press 2 for Spanish). TTY call 800-462-7585.

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