



DEPARTMENT OF  
**HOUSING**



# **CDBG-DR**

# **Action Plan**

## **Public Comments**

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## I. Introduction

Public comments related to the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Action Plan were received during the public comment period which initiated on January 24, 2024 and concluded after thirty (30) days on February 23, 2024. As part of the development of this Action Plan, the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) held a total of two (2) public hearings, one required as part of the citizen participation effort detailed in the Federal Register Notice Vol. 88, No. 96 (May 18, 2023), 88 FR 32046.

In the development of this disaster recovery action plan, PRDOH consulted with disaster-affected citizens, stakeholders, local governments, public housing authorities, and other affected parties in the surrounding geographic area to ensure consistency of disaster impacts identified in the plan, so it and the planning process was comprehensive and inclusive.

Additional efforts provided by PRDOH included a qualitative analysis approach was developed through targeted on-site visits, collecting information through a digital survey and interviews to capture photos and locations of citizens who could not attend the public meetings and could provide details of unmet needs across the Municipalities included in the MID Area.

For the benefit of the reader, we have summarized the written comments submitted. The comments cited, in some instances, were rephrased as a result of the translation process. The personal identification information in the comments has been hidden to protect the privacy of the person submitting the comment. To obtain additional information, please refer to the text of the comments submitted.

Citizens may contact PRDOH to request the complete translation the comments or the alternate ways or formats to access them including the responses provided by PRDOH. The requests can be done:

- By phone at 1-833-234-CDBG or 1-833-234-2324
- By e-mail at: [infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov](mailto:infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov)
- Online at: [http:// https://recuperacion.pr.gov/contact](http://https://recuperacion.pr.gov/contact) or at <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/contacto>
- By mail at:

Puerto Rico CDBG-DR/MIT Program  
P.O. Box 21365  
San Juan, PR 00928-1365

## II. Public Comments

E001

Comment ID: 02/20/24\_email\_Organization of Puerto Rico\_Ayuda Legal

Ayuda Legal

Dear Secretary:

Please receive warm greetings from Ayuda Legal Puerto Rico. As you are aware, we are a community-based legal support organization working on education and advocacy efforts around the post-disaster recovery process and housing rights. On this occasion, we turn to comment on the proposed Draft CDBG-DR Fiona Action Plan (hereinafter, Draft).

The federal government allocated \$166.3 million to Puerto Rico for recovery from Hurricane Fiona, as well as for the flooding events that occurred in 2022.

### I. Scope of Work

According to the allocation notice, the work will prioritize 23 municipalities, with a scope of support and efforts to another 25, for a total of 48 municipalities to be impacted. Although the Department of Housing's effort to increase the number of municipalities originally demarcated is important, we reiterate the urgency of addressing the needs of severely affected municipalities that were also originally excluded from the emergency declarations, as was the case of Loíza. At the very least, infrastructure work in municipalities in the Rio Grande de Loíza watershed, such as Caguas, Canóvanas, or Juncos, should consider the direct and indirect impact they would have on Loíza communities. This is particularly relevant in those projects that address the priorities identified in the Municipal Recovery Plans for water control and management, pumping station installations, water channeling, erosion, and landslide mitigation, as well as reservoir reforestation.

Comment:

### II. Collaboration in relation to the Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program

To increase the impact of this program, collaboration between municipal and non-profit entities that can think about the regional impact of projects should be noted as an important element. Community Resilience Centers should have strategic locations that allow them to serve populations vulnerable to disasters beyond municipal boundaries, as well as serve as a hub for inter-municipal collaboration.

### III. Transparency in Post-Fiona Efforts

On September 27, 2022, updated in December 2022, the federal Department of Housing made public "mega waivers" intended to provide agility and flexibility to housing programs - including CDBG-DR funds - to address the impact of Fiona. For greater transparency, we urge the

Department to publish the outcome of the application of such waivers in its operation, the management of existing recovery funds and even in programs under the Public Housing Administration. While adding to the impact narrative of other projects in the post-Fiona recovery already mentioned in the Draft, as was done with the LIHTC developments, knowing what was done through this mega waiver would allow for a clearer understanding of the unmet needs after Fiona, as well as the impact of the proposed projects.

#### IV. Citizen Participation

Finally, we are compelled to call attention to the handling of the public participation process in the preparation of this Draft. We regret that this process has been rushed and without leaving adequate time to convene and facilitate the participation of the people affected by the disasters.

From the outset, we note that the promotion of the public hearings on the Department's website was done with images with very little information about the participation process and that they did not have alternative text (alt text) for people who require the use of a screen reader, excluding blind people from the notification.

On the other hand, the Department held two public hearings with little publicity and without the conditions for effective participation. The public hearings were announced via email on Friday, January 19, with the first and only public hearing in the metropolitan area on January 24, 2024. This meeting precedes the publication of the Plan. However, it cannot be considered part of the consultation efforts in the preparation of the Draft, as the department released the Draft on January 25. The next public hearing for discussion of the Draft occurred on January 31, in Ponce, just six days after the publication of the Draft; an extremely reduced period to become familiar with the document. We reiterate that real and effective participation is indispensable in the recovery process.

We appreciate the opportunity to express our views on this Draft.

PRDOH  
Response:

The Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) appreciates the participation and comments submitted by Ayuda Legal Puerto Rico (Ayuda Legal) on the draft Disaster Recovery Action Plan for the use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and February 2022 Floods.

Regarding the recommendation to address needs in severely impacted municipalities that were excluded from emergency declarations, we note that under the requirements set forth in Notice 88 FR 32046, PRDOH is responsible for addressing unmet needs or mitigation activities in the Most Impacted and Distressed (MID) Areas identified by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). However, PRDOH will seek that infrastructure work supported by the Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program considers direct or indirect impacts to surrounding communities.

Regarding the suggestion of collaboration between municipal and non-profit entities in relation to the Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program, we emphasize that the implementation of this Program will depend on the strategy designed specifically for the MID areas established and expanded by HUD. For this reason, PRDOH worked and will continue to work collaboratively with various Federal agencies, local agencies, and other stakeholders to ensure that the program developed in the Hurricane Fiona and February 2022 Floods Action Plan effectively addresses the infrastructure needs of vulnerable communities in MID areas.

Moreover, in compliance with 88 FR 32046, 32073, PRDOH posted the Action Plan on its website for public comment within thirty (30) days. In addition, citizens were notified through public notice, press release, through the CDBG-DR/MIT website (<https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/>), eblast, social media, and by holding public hearings. Regarding public hearings, 88 FR 32046, 32073, requires that at least one hearing be held after the action plan is published for public comment and before it is submitted to HUD. The number of public hearings to be held depends on the amount of the CDBG-DR funding allocation. Under 88 FR 32046, if the funding allocation is less than \$500 million, at least one public hearing is required. The funds allocated to Puerto Rico for Hurricane Fiona and the 2022 Floods total \$166,312,000, so the public hearing requirement was satisfied. As highlighted in its commentary, PRDOH held two public hearings, dated January 24 and January 31, 2024, to obtain citizen input on the draft Action Plan. In summary, PRDOH ensured that all citizens had equal access to information, including persons with disabilities (visually impaired, hearing impaired, and limited English proficient (LEP), and persons with disabilities who are not hearing impaired.

Finally, we note that the HUD Memorandum referred to in your letter is linked to CDBG (Entitlements).

PRDOH is committed to implementing the best recovery and mitigation strategies to ensure and develop a more resilient Puerto Rico in the face of future disasters. We appreciate Ayuda Legal's interest and support in the development and execution of the Hurricane Fiona and February 2022 Floods Action Plan.

W001	Comment ID: 01/25/2024_WP_Resident of Puerto Rico_Carlos Anaya
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**Comment:** *Use the funds for the residences that truly need it and for the pluvial system*

**PRDOH Response:** The Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) appreciates your comment. The Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program proposed in the Action Plan considers the common factors of the applicable disasters, which were floods and landslides. Program under the CDBG-DR funds will support activities that increase resilience to disasters

and reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of loss of life, injury, damage, or loss of property, suffering, and hardship to lessen the impact of future disasters. Also, PRDOH will continue to support ongoing efforts of active CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT infrastructure Programs, focusing on community flooding needs in both urban centers and rural communities.

W002

Comment ID: 01/25/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Denisse Lopez

Comment:

At [REDACTED] Street we suffer from flooding. During Hurricanes Maria and Fiona's houses were flooded. The house is in my mother's name and the land is of housing. How can I request a property title and have them help us every time it gets flooded and get a safe place? We have been through many floods since 1989. I will appreciate your attention to it.

PRDOH  
Response:

The Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) appreciates your participation during the public comment period. To address damages caused by Hurricane Maria, PRDOH implemented the Home Repair, Reconstruction, or Relocations (R3) Program under CDBG-DR funds allocated for the disaster recovery of hurricanes Irma and Maria. However, the R3 Program has closed its applications because it has reached the limit of its available financing capacity.

According to the program design proposed in the Disaster Recovery Action Plan for the use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and the February 2022 Floods, the funds will be directed to address unmet needs and support mitigation activities. Specifically, the Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program will seek to address infrastructure in the areas most impacted and affected (MID) by the disasters to prevent and mitigate the impacts of flooding and landslides in the most vulnerable communities. You can access the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) website at [https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/\(English\)](https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/(English)) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/planes-de-accion/plan-de-accion-huracan-fiona-e-inundaciones-2022/> (Spanish) to learn more about the proposed program.

W003

Comment ID: 01/25/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Dario Rolando

Comment:

DBG-DR Hurricane Fiona and Floods February 2022

Dear Directory

Subject: INNOVATION - I offer "House of the Future", self-supplied with renewable energy

Dear people, after so many earthquakes, hurricanes and natural disasters that occurred in various parts of the world and the new trend in the use of Renewable Energy, I saw the opportunity to contribute something to society. After several months of work and waiting, I have already finished: developing, calculating, registering and patenting a House of the Future, which I called PIRAMID-ALL.- Basically it is a pyramidal house, highly resistant to earthquakes and hurricanes. efficient, intelligent (home automation) and self-supplied with renewable energy (Solar + Wind + Solar Thermo).- It also has a power charger for electric vehicles. This house is ideal for: Rural

Tourism, Cabins, social housing, residential, shelters, self-sustainable rural urban developments, isolated or connected areas to the electrical grid, mountainous area, rural, Eco Villages, semi-urban, islands, SUM, therapeutic use and others.- Publications:  
<https://www.parati.com.ar/deco/asi-serian-las-casas-del-futuro-que-diseno-unargentino/>  
<https://caribempresarial.com/inspiran-piramides-a-ingeniero-argentino-para-crearla- House of the future/>  
<https://www.elmundo.es/economía/vivienda/2018/01/05/5a4f3d94e2704e414e8b45d1.html>  
<https://ecoinventos.com/casa-del-futuro-autosuficiente-asustarseid-todos/>  
<http://www.revistaenergia.com/?p=14579>  
<http://inneuquen.info/nota-ancipal/piramid-all-es-la-casa-del-futuro-antisismico-eficacyte-y-autosustentable-con-energía-ías-renovables-olar-aceitequelarmosolar>  
<http://www.rionegro.com.ar/Propiedades/la-casa-del-futuro-de-esta-en-neuquen-GF3025239>  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=9&v=yJGnawB2IS8\(TV Canal9 of Mendoza, Argentina\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=9&v=yJGnawB2IS8(TV Canal9 of Mendoza, Argentina))  
<https://www.pv-magazine-latam.com/2018/02/27/un-ingeniero-Congentino-creala- House of the future>  
 This house is ideal for housing or tourism in rural or isolated areas where there is no services arrive since it is self-supplied with renewable energy, it also has great resistance to earthquakes and hurricanes.-  
 I have registered and approved the patent for this innovative project in several countries, such as: Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Costa Rica and USA.-  
 Note: I am interested in offering this innovative and patented project to all of Puerto Rico, to be developed as social housing, residential, cabin complexes, tourism or the use that you wish.- Greetings PIRAMID-ALL

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 Civil Engineer - [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]

PRDOH  
 Response:

We appreciate your comment. However, the public comment does not provide enough information for the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) to formulate a response. However, we encourage you to contact the PRDOH team by sending an email to [infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov](mailto:infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov), by calling 1-833-234-2324 or TTY 787-522-5950, or by mail: CDBG-DR/MIT Program Puerto Rico, P.O. Box 21365, San Juan, PR, 00928-1365, to request any guidance regarding the programs available under the CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT funds.

W004	Comment ID: 01/26/2024_WP_Resident of Puerto Rico_Carmen Soto
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Comment:

*Hurricane Fiona caused leaks in the zinc roofed part of my home, the lack of electricity caused food to spoil and caused both physical and emotional health damage. I received an incentive from the Government.*



PRDOH  
Response:

Thank you for your comment. According to the program design proposed in the Disaster Recovery Action Plan for the use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and the February 2022 Floods, the funds will be directed to address unmet needs and support mitigation activities. Specifically, the Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program will seek to address infrastructure in the areas most impacted and affected (MID) by the disasters to prevent and mitigate the impacts of flooding and landslides in the most vulnerable communities. You can access the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) website at [https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/\(English\)](https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/(English)) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/planes-de-accion/plan-de-accion-huracan-fiona-e-inundaciones-2022/> (Spanish) to learn more about the proposed program.

W005

Comment ID: 01/26/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Liz Valle

Comment:

*I just have to comment that I requested help due to need and illness and they never helped me and they made a new house for others who didn't need it.*

PRDOH  
Response:

Thank you for your participation during the public comment period for the draft of the Disaster Recovery Action Plan for use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and February 2022 Floods. The comment does not provide sufficient information for the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) to identify which program it is referring to. However, we encourage you to contact the PRDOH team at 1-833-234-2324 or TTY 787-522-5950, by email at [infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov](mailto:infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov), or by mail at the following address: Puerto Rico CDBG-DR/MIT Program, PO Box 21365, San Juan, PR, 00928-1365, to correctly process your comment. In addition, we invite you to review the draft of the Disaster Recovery Action Plan for the use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and February 2022 Floods available on the PRDOH website at <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/> (English) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/planes-de-accion/plan-de-accion-huracan-fiona-e-inundaciones-2022/> (Spanish) to learn about the suggested program.

W006

Comment ID: 01/26/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Carmen Guzman

Comment:

*My structure suffered a lot of damage to the structure in Hurricane Fiona and I qualified for nothing and my structure had its walls cracked and suffered many roof damage*

PRDOH  
Response:

Thank you for your comment. According to the program design proposed in the Disaster Recovery Action Plan for the use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and the February 2022 Floods, the funds will be directed to address unmet needs and support mitigation activities.

Specifically, the Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program will seek to address infrastructure in the areas most impacted and affected (MID) by the disasters to prevent and mitigate the impacts of flooding and landslides in the most vulnerable communities. You can access the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) website at [https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/\(English\)](https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/(English)) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/planes-de-accion/plan-de-accion-huracan-fiona-e-inundaciones-2022/> (Spanish) to learn more about the proposed program.

W007      Comment ID:      01/26/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Carlos Gonzalez

Comment:

*We are PADF-Produca Angeles-del-fin, Inc. from San Lorenzo. Community-based creative industry and we use the arts as impact modalities for transformational projects, resilience, empowerment, effective socialization and everything that has to do with prevention, guidance, education and motivation. We have submitted different proposals to the CDBG-DR Funds: Incubators, Training (although we received scores close to 90, we did not reach the funds.) Community Resilience and we submitted a presentation to MIT Funds. CROMA CREATIVE COMMUNITY RESILIENT CENTER - We have a rented school, but at the moment, it does not have water or electricity installed, we need to rehabilitate the structure and be able to put it into operation to develop our project and provide services to the community, as well as raise and strengthen the creative industries (artistic and cultural) of the region. We are already about to complete three years of probation and we have to give up, despite paying mandatory insurance and deposits, causing our entity to lose money and efforts and at the same time belonging to a population of vulnerabilities, scarcity and limitations, we have not been given due attention. We have knocked on different doors in this regard, being a 501c3 entity and having three decades of uninterrupted experience, in volunteer work and collaborative alliances. More than a comment, we ask attention to our needs and more than ours, to the populations and minority groups that we represent. Thank you [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6\\_oN7K\\_3c0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6_oN7K_3c0) (school for center resilient) <https://www.youtube.com/c/angelesdelfinpr/videos> (organization channel) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPDViO5onZo> (proposal summary in English to Kellogg's Foundation)*

PRDOH Response:

Thank you for your comment. According to the program design proposed in the Disaster Recovery Action Plan for the use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and the February 2022 Floods, the funds will be directed to address unmet needs and support mitigation activities. Specifically, the Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program will seek to address infrastructure in the areas most impacted and affected (MID) by the disasters to prevent and mitigate the impacts of flooding and landslides in the most vulnerable communities. You can access the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) website at <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona->

[and-february-2022-floods/\(English\)](https://recuperacion.pr.gov/planes-de-accion/plan-de-accion-huracana-fiona-e-inundaciones-2022/) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/planes-de-accion/plan-de-accion-huracana-fiona-e-inundaciones-2022/> (Spanish) to learn more about the proposed program.

W008 | Comment ID: 01/26/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Enrique Aponte

Comment: *Hello, In the first round I could not get a ticket. I am a person over 74 years and I only receive \$605. Social security and it doesn't cover my expenses. I would like to get solar panels that would help me a lot in my economic situation. since I live alone. Blessings and thanks.*

PRDOH Response: Based on the information provided on your comment, the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) believes you are referring to the Community Energy and Water Resilience Installations – Household Program (CEWRI-HH), which consists of two subprograms: the Home Energy Resiliency Improvements Subprogram (CEWRI-HERI Subprogram), more commonly known as the New Energy Program, and the Incentive Program (CEWRI-IP Subprogram), more commonly known as the Solar Incentive Program. The CEWRI-HERI Program conducted its final round for tickets on January 31, 2024. PRDOH does not contemplate additional rounds under this Program at this time. However, you can access the PRDOH CDBG-DR/MIT website at <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/welcome/en/home/> (English) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/welcome/home/> (Spanish) for more information on this and other programs.

W009 | Comment ID: 01/26/2024\_WP\_Organization of Puerto Rico\_Ricardo

Comment: *Thanks to this initiative, it was possible to support the company so that it did not cease its operations. Today, we are working hard to continue its development. Thank you so much*

PRDOH Response: Thank you for your comment. We encourage you to stay tuned to the PRDOH [CDBG-DR/MIT website](https://recuperacion.pr.gov/welcome/en/home/) at <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/welcome/en/home/> (English) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/welcome/home/> (Spanish) for more information on this and other programs.

W010 | Comment ID: 01/26/2024\_WP\_Organization of Puerto Rico\_Rainier Ramos

Comment: *I have resorted to requesting help to repair my primary home, or also as be evaluated, and obtain relocation. This home suffered damage that deteriorated it, with limited resources I was only able to demolish it, so that it would not be classified as a public nuisance. Without further comments, I need to be attended to and obtain help for mitigation.*

PRDOH Response: Thank you for your participation during the public comment period for the draft of the Disaster Recovery Action Plan for the use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and the February 2022 Floods. The comment

does not provide enough information for the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) to identify which program you are referring. However, we encourage you to contact the PRDOH team by calling 1-833-234-2324 or TTY 787-522-5950, via email to [infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov](mailto:infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov), or by regular mail at the following address: Puerto Rico CDBG-DR/MIT Program, PO Box 21365, San Juan, PR, 00928-1365 to provide a more detailed description of your request.

W011

Comment ID: 01/31/2024\_WP\_Residente of Puerto Rico\_Alicia Ruiz

Comment:

*I was there since 8 in the morning for an energy ticket and they never picked up the phone to tell us that the tickets had run out. That's terrible. I am a mental health patient and I have been calling since 8*

PRDOH  
Response:

One of the Puerto Rico Department of Housing's (PRDOH) main priorities and responsibilities is to maintain an open communication regarding citizen concerns related to CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT programs. For this, you can contact the PRDOH team by sending an email to [infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov](mailto:infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov), by calling 1-833-234-2324 or TTY 787-522-5950, or by mail: CDBG-DR/MIT Program Puerto Rico, P.O. Box 21365, San Juan, PR, 00928-1365. Additionally, you may file a formal complaint through the link: <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/complaints/> (English) or <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/quejas/> (Spanish). PRDOH will address all complaints received promptly and provide a substantive and timely response.

W012

Comment ID: 01/31/2024\_WP\_Residente of Puerto Rico\_Eduardo Torres

Comment:

*The beneficiaries of these benefits that offer a free solar incentive must be evaluated by the health system, due to their significant need for medications that need refrigeration and electrical effects of daily use to survive, luma has to have a record of low-income people who should also benefit from the free solar incentive or ticket for the free solar incentive, They need to be more organized with a safety plan and order and have rules already written and established in the application centers for a free solar system!!!! thank you! your service with better efficiency, safety and organized would be very important!!*

PRDOH  
Response:

One of the Puerto Rico Department of Housing's (PRDOH) main priorities and responsibilities is to maintain an open communication regarding citizen concerns related to CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT programs. For this, you can contact the PRDOH team by sending an email to [infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov](mailto:infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov), by calling 1-833-234-2324 or TTY 787-522-5950, or by mail: CDBG-DR/MIT Program Puerto Rico, P.O. Box 21365, San Juan, PR, 00928-1365. Additionally, you may file a formal complaint through the link: <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/complaints/> (English) or <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/quejas/> (Spanish). PRDOH will address all complaints received promptly and provide a substantive and timely response.

W013

Comment ID: 01/31/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Hector Chevere

Comment:

*The delivery of tickets for the solar panels today has been a disaster. Connected to the web and a notice appears that you have problems so that the page can open despite reloading the page and when returning to the main page everything was over in just a few minutes. the phone number was busy from the beginning and in the end a recording comes out that everything had finished The in-person system was another disaster. It seems like something shameful to me. Unfortunately, that's how the government works.*

PRDOH  
Response:

One of the Puerto Rico Department of Housing's (PRDOH) main priorities and responsibilities is to maintain an open communication regarding citizen concerns related to CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT programs. For this, you can contact the PRDOH team by sending an email to [infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov](mailto:infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov), by calling 1-833-234-2324 or TTY 787-522-5950, or by mail: CDBG-DR/MIT Program Puerto Rico, P.O. Box 21365, San Juan, PR, 00928-1365. Additionally, you may file a formal complaint through the link: <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/complaints/> (English) or <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/quejas/> (Spanish). PRDOH will address all complaints received promptly and provide a substantive and timely response.

W014

Comment ID: 01/31/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Luis Lopez

Comment:

*I couldn't fill out the application because they were out of stock. I am an older person and need them*

PRDOH  
Response:

Based on the information provided on your comment, the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) believes you are referring to the Community Energy and Water Resilience Installations – Household Program (CEWRI-HH), which consists of two subprograms: the Home Energy Resiliency Improvements Subprogram (CEWRI-HERI Subprogram), more commonly known as the New Energy Program, and the Incentive Program (CEWRI-IP Subprogram), more commonly known as the Solar Incentive Program. The CEWRI-HERI Program conducted its final round for tickets on January 31, 2024. PRDOH does not contemplate additional rounds under this Program at this time. However, you can access the PRDOH CDBG-DR/MIT website at <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/welcome/en/home/> (English) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/welcome/home/> (Spanish) for more information on this and other programs.

W015

Comment ID: 01/31/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Victor Torres

Comment:

*Today's round was a fraud, I have been online since yesterday with 29 hours left to open the tickets and when it reaches 0 it says that the page does not work due to a server error and to come back later*

PRDOH  
Response:

One of the Puerto Rico Department of Housing's (PRDOH) main priorities and responsibilities is to maintain an open communication regarding citizen concerns related to CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT programs. For this, you can contact the PRDOH team by sending an email to [infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov](mailto:infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov), by calling 1-833-234-2324 or TTY 787-522-5950, or by mail: CDBG-DR/MIT Program Puerto Rico, P.O. Box 21365, San Juan, PR, 00928-1365. Additionally, you may file a formal complaint through the link: <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/complaints/> (English) or <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/quejas/> (Spanish). PRDOH will address all complaints received promptly and provide a substantive and timely response.

W016

Comment ID: 01/26/2424\_WP\_Organization of Puerto Rico\_Rosa Santana

Comment:

*In relation to federal funds granted to help Puerto Ricans to acquire solar panels. The only day to apply for one of the four thousand tickets was January 31, 2024. At eight in the morning sharp, I was ready to apply. The website was not available, they were having "Technical Difficulties" and they recommended that I try again later. At 8:25 in the morning the page said that all the tickets had already been awarded. The question is, ? If the page was not available and there were technical difficulties, how could four thousand people apply in 25 minutes? Is there corruption?*

PRDOH  
Response:

One of the Puerto Rico Department of Housing's (PRDOH) main priorities and responsibilities is to maintain an open communication regarding citizen concerns related to CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT programs. For this, you can contact the PRDOH team by sending an email to [infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov](mailto:infoCDBG@vivienda.pr.gov), by calling 1-833-234-2324 or TTY 787-522-5950, or by mail: CDBG-DR/MIT Program Puerto Rico, P.O. Box 21365, San Juan, PR, 00928-1365. Additionally, you may file a formal complaint through the link: <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/complaints/> (English) or <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/quejas/> (Spanish). PRDOH will address all complaints received promptly and provide a substantive and timely response.

W017

Comment ID: 2/04/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Desine Rivera

Comment:

*I want to know how you can help me get a home.*

PRDOH  
Response:

Thank you for your comment. According to the program design proposed in the Disaster Recovery Action Plan for the use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and the February 2022 Floods, the funds will be directed to address unmet needs and support mitigation activities. Specifically, the Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program will seek to address infrastructure in the areas most impacted and affected (MID) by the disasters to prevent and mitigate the impacts of flooding and

landslides in the most vulnerable communities. You can access the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) website at [https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/\(English\)](https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/(English)) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/planes-de-accion/plan-de-accion-huracan-fiona-e-inundaciones-2022/> (Spanish) to learn more about the proposed program.

W018

Comment ID: 02/11/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Samuel Ortiz

Comment:

*My comment is to ask that if there are or open funds they include me, my house is made of zinc and since Hurricane Maria and Fiona it has been affected by leaks and I need to repair the roof to put an end to the leak... thank you*

PRDOH  
Response:

The Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) appreciates your participation during the public comment period. To address damages caused by Hurricane Maria, PRDOH implemented the Home Repair, Reconstruction, or Relocations (R3) Program under CDBG-DR funds allocated for the disaster recovery of hurricanes Irma and Maria. However, the R3 Program has closed its applications because it has reached the limit of its available financing capacity.

According to the program design proposed in the Disaster Recovery Action Plan for the use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and the February 2022 Floods, the funds will be directed to address unmet needs and support mitigation activities. Specifically, the Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program will seek to address infrastructure in the areas most impacted and affected (MID) by the disasters to prevent and mitigate the impacts of flooding and landslides in the most vulnerable communities. You can access the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) website at [https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/\(English\)](https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/(English)) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/planes-de-accion/plan-de-accion-huracan-fiona-e-inundaciones-2022/> (Spanish) to learn more about the proposed program.

W019

Comment ID: 02/18/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Kianna Figueroa

Comment:

*Greetings: We would like to know if you will be opening another round for proposals to improve English language proficiency. Thank you*

PRDOH  
Response:

The Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) appreciates your participation during the public comment period. To address damages caused by Hurricane Maria, PRDOH implemented the Home Repair, Reconstruction, or Relocations (R3) Program under CDBG-DR funds allocated for the disaster recovery of hurricanes Irma and Maria. However, the R3 Program has closed its applications because it has reached the limit of its available financing capacity.

According to the program design proposed in the Disaster Recovery Action Plan for the use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and the February 2022 Floods, the funds will be directed to address unmet needs and support mitigation activities. Specifically, the Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program will seek to address infrastructure in the areas most impacted and affected (MID) by the disasters to prevent and mitigate the impacts of flooding and landslides in the most vulnerable communities. You can access the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) website at <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/>(English) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/planes-de-accion/plan-de-accion-huracan-fiona-e-inundaciones-2022/> (Spanish) to learn more about the proposed program.

W020 | Comment ID: 01/31/2024\_WP\_Resident of Puerto Rico\_Julia Libran

Comment: *Since Hurricane Fiona my house has serious leak problems, the help from FEMA was not enough to cover it. I am currently taking care of my father who is 95 years old, it is very difficult for me. I am worried about a fall due to a leak in my roof that is getting worse every day. Please help us*

PRDOH Response: Thank you for your comment. According to the program design proposed in the Disaster Recovery Action Plan for the use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and the February 2022 Floods, the funds will be directed to address unmet needs and support mitigation activities. Specifically, the Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program will seek to address infrastructure in the areas most impacted and affected (MID) by the disasters to prevent and mitigate the impacts of flooding and landslides in the most vulnerable communities. You can access the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) website at <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/> (English) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/planes-de-accion/plan-de-accion-huracan-fiona-e-inundaciones-2022/> (Spanish) to learn more about the proposed program.



### III. Public Hearings

HUD guidance at 88 FR 32046 prescribes for CDBG-DR grantees the number of public hearings that must be convened based on the amount of the grantee's allocation. PRDOH adheres to the guidelines for allocations under \$500 million, requiring at least one (1) public hearing in the HUD-identified MID Area and a public comment period of thirty (30) calendar days. PRDOH published this action plan on <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/> (English) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/planes-de-accion/> (Spanish) for a 30-day public comment period. Citizens were notified through a public notice, CDBG-DR/MIT website, eblast, social media, and public hearings. Moreover, PRDOH held two (2) Public Hearings during the public comment period as follows:

- Public Hearing #1 – San Juan, PRDOH Headquarters at Avenida Barbosa 606
- Public Hearing #2 – Ponce, Leopoldo Bonilla Vélez Session Room, Municipal Legislature

All comments are available, in their entirety and in the language and format in which they were submitted, at [Action Plan - Hurricane Fiona and February 2022 Floods - CDBG \(pr.gov\)](#) and in Appendix C-1 of the Action Plan.

For the reader's benefit, the comments submitted have been summarized, in Spanish and English, in this document. The comments cited may be paraphrased as a result of the translation process or for conciseness. Personally identifiable information has been removed from the comments to protect the commenter's privacy. Please refer to the text of the comments submitted for additional information.

# 1st Public Hearing

PHSJ001 Submitted by: Juan Carlos Consuela

Related to: American Militar Academy

Comment: *Good afternoon or good evening, I do not know what time it is now. First of all, congratulations to the Department of Housing for everything they have done with these funds to help Puerto Rico, not only with the disasters that we are talking about now, but also with Hurricane Maria. My name is Juan Carlos Consuela, I represent...I am the chief executive officer of the Ramon Barquin Educational Corporation, doing business as American Military Academy. It is a non-profit corporation, non-profit college, that has benefited from the match that they have allocated for Hurricane Maria from FEMA funds. My participation is to promote and invite the Department to take the same initiative for the damages caused by Hurricane Fiona, just as they did for Hurricane Maria, so that they may benefit countless private nonprofit schools that need the match, in order to continue contributing to the social interest of educating young Puerto Ricans. Again, congratulations and I hope that this petition will be heard. Thank you.*

PRDOH Response: Thank you for your comment. According to the program design proposed in the Disaster Recovery Action Plan for the use of CDBG-DR funds in response to Hurricane Fiona and the February 2022 Floods, the funds will be directed to address unmet needs and support mitigation activities. Specifically, the Community Flood Recovery and Mitigation Program will seek to address infrastructure in the areas most impacted and affected (MID) by the disasters to prevent and mitigate the impacts of flooding and landslides in the most vulnerable communities. You can access the Puerto Rico Department of Housing (PRDOH) website at [https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/\(English\)](https://recuperacion.pr.gov/en/action-plans/action-plan-hurricane-fiona-and-february-2022-floods/(English)) and <https://recuperacion.pr.gov/planes-de-accion/plan-de-accion-huracan-fiona-e-inundaciones-2022/> (Spanish) to learn more about the proposed program.]

PHSJ002 Submitted by: Vanesa Colón

Related to: Centro de Periodismo Investigativo

Comment: *Greetings. Vanesa Colón, Center for Investigative Journalism. I have a question about the process, when suggestions are made by the public, by the people, what is the process in the sense of, do you accept the...do you write down the suggestion? But, then, who decides if that suggestion is going to be included in the action plan, prior to submitted to HUD for review?*

PRDOH Response: There are several, it is a multi-stage process. First, all those comments are compiled, a list is made of all the comments and so on, and they are categorized by type of comment, the aspect that each comment addresses, if it is an infrastructure issue, if it is an operational issue, and so on. A response is made to each comment. There are comments, and I am not saying that this is the case, but I am going to explain the range of possibilities that I, at least, have been evaluating at different times. There are comments that are not related to the subject, and the person is simply thanked for participating. If it is a Housing issue, well, it is referred to the Housing page, and so on. We organize and address all that, and if the person left their e-mail, we send them an e-mail with that response. In the case that it is a matter that that does have to do with the public hearing, we evaluate if it complies with the national objectives, if it complies

with the purpose of the funds. On many occasions, right, we... I present the main conditions that HUD establishes to use funds. There are other additional conditions, which are federal regulations and so on. If it complies, then it is approved. If it does not comply, well, we explain to the person: "This does not comply with such and such", and so on. In the same way, an email is sent. If they comply, then it goes to the Working Committee for evaluation. Every Action Plan has a group of people who have been working on it. And if it is about a specific program, the information is passed on to that program for their opinion. There are times the program says: "Look, this is already being taken care of in this way, or this is an issue that cannot be taken care of because of x and y. You do not comply with x or y. And if it is a matter that really goes through the whole process, it is put into the plan, it is logged, sorry, but it is marked as a change that is being made and then it goes to a discussion and consideration by Undersecretary Diaz, and Secretary Rodriguez. They are the ultimate authority to approve what is submitted to HUD or not.

PHSJ003	Submitted by: Ricardo Herrero
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Related to: *Citizen*

Comment: *My name is Ricardo Herrero. I am an engineer. Obviously, I don't have any problem with damage from flood. But the question I have is, Only people who had problems flood, who do not live in flood zones, are those eligible for this help? If the flood occurs in a site that is already a flood zone, where it should not have construction but there is construction, is that still eligible?*

I think you are talking about another program. No, not in this case is not about this. We will create, the intention is to create a program, and it is that we are presenting in the Action Plan, create a program to allocate funds to municipalities to serve communities. The problems of flooding in communities. They have to be communities that flood or have landslides, which had flood damage and landslides. In the case there are no reports of damage for these events in a community it would not apply, it would not be possible. We have to serve those communities, and they have to be LMI, which means that at least 70% of the community is within the brackets that HUD considers, within the categories that HUD considers, moderate- and low-income level, excuse me. There can always be some exceptions, some peaks. But 70% has to be under them. And the other conditions that I mentioned of fund utilization requirements.

PRDOH Response: Yes. I mean, Puerto Rico is seventy and... I don't remember the exact number. But, about 77% of the developed area in Puerto Rico is floodable. Historically, we built in the alluvial valley, and that is why most of the municipalities... in fact, the Municipality of Toa Baja had to move the plaza, and the mayor's office, and so on, due to the amount of flooding, that they had 100 years ago. So, almost everything that we have developed in Puerto Rico, everything that is Carolina, Bayamón, Cataño, that whole area will have more... the greater the population we have in Puerto Rico, almost all of San Juan, Carolina is on a wetland, it is a flood-prone area. That does not exempt. Yes, we have a program that seeks to rebuild homes. And under this reconstruction of homes, one of the requirements, of the public policy that exists, is that we do not want to repair a home that is in a risk area, that in the next event the family will suffer again. And for that specific program, the policy is, the public policy is to try to relocate those families – if other insight measures cannot be taken within the lot – to avoid that flooding. But not that... that is the program we have for DR. The rest of the programs, like this one, that deal with general infrastructure, yes, general infrastructure can be done in flood-prone areas. And what is sought is that, when a new infrastructure is repaired or built, the best practices of green infrastructure, erosion management and current management using permeabilization that are not... that are used, correct, cement or materials are used, that are permeable. Managing edges with vegetation, that kind of thing. Because we recognize that there are areas in Puerto Rico that do

not have the money to relocate them. I mean, and it is a reality. Furthermore, there is also no time for that. We have much more need than the money that is coming to us. We had it in María, we had it during the hurricanes, and we have it now, in Fiona, and in the floods. But little by little we have to force ourselves as a society to make better projects and decide where we are not going to invest more because it is not cost effective and where it is and move in that direction.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Hearing

PHP001	Submitted by: Orlando Delgado
Related to:	Municipality of Ponce
Comment:	<p>You are going to be guided by the already prepared City Rev program that is running, because it is related to some mitigation measures or projects that can be executed in properties that are declared public nuisances, that are in total abandonment. Is the expropriation of this type of property for the execution of a runoff water management mitigation project going to be considered in these guidelines as an eligible activity, or could it be considered? And would the same be true for those properties that the zoning and everything leads that is a commercial property?</p>
PRDOH Response:	<p>As a general rule, the Department of Housing does not use recovery funds to expropriate. If the municipality can expropriate, we could pay for the rest of the project. We can purchase the property as a sale, and our money can be used there. But since it is a housing property and we are a housing program, we do not expropriate homes. If it is a property that is industrial or something like that, and it is going to be necessary under the project, there we could talk.</p>
PHP002	Submitted by: Rebeca Alvarado
Related to:	Citizen of the Betances Community in the Municipality of Ponce and member of the ARCLA organization
Comment:	<p>Good night. My name is Rebeca Alvarado Charlottei. I am a community leader of the Community Betances, and I chair the ARCLA organization. In little that I could hear, that you spoke, I saw that everything what was talked about was bridges, landslides, of streams, of streets, highways. And the rehabilitation of the homes that Fiona destroyed, Where are they?</p>
PRDOH Response:	<p>I'm going to take a little time here to explain. I want to explain calmly. I would like to talk more generally about his case. We have...the amount of data we have...we have data, quite a bit of data about general damage that occurred because of Fiona. There aren't as many specific damages in terms of single-family or multi-family or commercial properties, or so on. That is part of the situation that we are addressing because, well, many people do, what we are seeing, and this comes from the document that we worked on of the action plan to help the people who suffered from the earthquakes, which are funds for six municipalities in the southwest of Puerto Rico. In fact, Ponce is part of that... of CONSUR and the CONSUR offices are here in Ponce. From that moment on, after Irma and María, many people – for different reasons – did not have property title, they had received funds under Georges and did not pay their insurance, or they did not use the money they were given for Georges for what they</p>

said they were going to use them. They lived in houses, or have multi-family houses...multi-family properties, multi-family or mixed-use housing structures. There are many reasons why when they went and brought to FEMA the need they had, FEMA did not cover them because FEMA covers very specific requirements, and what we understand is that these people are discouraged from continuing to notify that need or that damage they had. So, if the municipalities do receive that information, and the federal government does not receive it and as if... what I explained earlier, we have some damages, FEMA covers up to here, and this difference is what the funds give us, but that is the difference reported by FEMA. If the real differences are up here, then all this is not counted. So, when the earthquakes occurred, the main municipality or leader in that call was Ponce. We had some damages reported, and when we sat down with the municipalities the mayor told us: "No, I have twice as much damage than that." Well, let's sit down and talk because they are not reported. When we came to look, in fact, they were commercial properties, multi-family properties, mixed-use properties – below business, above housing – or people who did not have title to the property, and so on. And why didn't they inform FEMA? Why didn't they complain? "Because the last time I complained and they didn't give me anything. So, why am I going to waste my time now, complaining?" The reality is that it is not a waste of time, because it lets us, the federal government, know the unmet need that exists, unsatisfied, and that is where these funds apply. Given that, for that reason we are understanding that there is a lower percentage of people, or the amount of data on affected people is not being collected, as we received for María. Now, as part of the investigation process that is carried out to grant funds, it is not just that a person tells us: "I had damages", and it is that these damages can be documented that they occurred due to an event that happened, in this case Fiona, in September 2021. Most likely, when that time comes we will be in September 2024. When the time comes to ask people for data to go investigate. If those properties are documented because they were visited by FEMA inspectors, and so on, that the damages occurred for that event, it is much easier. If they are not documented, it complicates the possibility of giving them funds because we have very strong regulations in question, in matters of abuse, double compensation and, is waste, abuse and duplication of benefits, are the three terms.

PHP003	Submitted by: Carmen Pacheco
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Related to: *Citizen of Ponce*

Comment: *My recreational area and some houses that slid, actually relocated them, but FEMA never paid them anything. We are living with four families in that state. The information asked to the Emergency Management to the municipality did not have them and did not approve. We have the damage certifications.*

PRDOH Response: *Now, when the Public Hearing is over, we can have a meeting. Here is part of my team, to take information and coordinate and visit. I need that data. I need that data to be able to justify damage.*

PHP004	Submitted by: Nillmarie Amill
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Related to: *Ponce Neighborhood Housing Services*

Comment: *Good afternoon everyone. My name is Nilmarie Amill, and I come representing Ponce Neighborhood Housing Services, which is a nonprofit organization. Nothing, simply, truthfully, I want to ask the question related to whether this will be working with the need for housing affordable.*

PRDOH Response: *No. Not what we are presenting now. Until now, what we present, well, what we are proposing, is an infrastructure program to serve flooding and landslide problems. However, what I had presented that they are clarifying here that there are some cases, and we want to document, let's see how we can address this situation. Affordable housing doesn't fit... it's not there entering at this moment. We can sit down and talk. I am in the best position to listen to all of the ideas that come, propose in the document what is needed, but it's not being contemplated. But if you want to talk, we can meet and discuss the matter.*

PHP005 Submitted by: Carmen Maritza Rodríguez

Related to: *Citizen of Community Tiburones in the Municipality of Ponce*

Comment: *Tiburones Community, from Ponce, it is between two rivers. The Inamón Community, which is the one affected by the airport, and Jacagüea, which belongs to Juana Díaz. Unfortunately, we are between two rivers. It is a community that affects us, more so in Jacagüe, which belongs to Juana Díaz, than in the airport. In other words, it affects both of us, because if you leave through the airport or through #1, we cannot pass. But then, Jacagüe, which is further away, needs a major cleanup of that river, because it really is... since 2003, around there, which was a cleanup that was done in one part, and these days it was done like 200 meters, that didn't do anything. Two hundred and fifty meters, something like that. But that doesn't matter to us...and it is, really, well clogged.*

PRDOH Response: *I'm going to tell you something that was not mentioned in the presentation. I'm sorry about your community. We do not have specifically identified communities. Yes, Ponce is within the MID area. The intention we have, and it is how we have worked on the programs, is that we have a table, which is the one provided by FEMA, of the damages. This damage table calculates how much damage there was per municipality. There is the table of the municipality... in this case, 48 municipalities, there are 78, but there are 48 municipalities, and we see the damages that are reported for each of the municipalities and the unmet needs, and so on. These damages are calculated as a percentage of the total for all of Puerto Rico, of the 48 municipalities, what percentage each municipality had. And the \$166,000,000.00, after the 5% of administration is removed, that information is used to distribute that information as equitably as possible in the municipalities. Do you have the information she is giving? Perfect. Okay. We can talk.*

PHP006 Submitted by: José Soto Pacheco

Related to: *Citizen*

Comment: *Good night. I am José Soto Pacheco. From the Municipality of Mayagüez. I am merely a homeowner, and I also have a concern because I am in the insurance business, and I have many clients who were affected, who could not recover damages because they are not part of the contract cover. For example, one of the exclusions that all policies have is landslide. And so, I have come here*

because I have many clients who could not collect, and they have asked me what remedy there is. And so, these days I was seeing the activity that you carry out here, which I think there will be only two, because one here and another in San Juan, and San Juan I think was on the 23rd. I expected to see more people from my municipality, maybe the representatives, but I don't see any. What is it, that my municipality does not fall within the 48?

Yes, the municipality of Mayaguez is part of the MID area. Not for what we're proposing here, because the federal register, which is the rule, the document where HUD publishes what we can use, was talking about homes. He's talking about homes. It is the same situation that happened to us with the earthquakes, which from what I explained just now, apparently, because not enough information was received about damage to non-residential properties, and therefore it was not included. We are limited either to infrastructure, that there is infrastructure data in this case aimed at protecting communities, or to single-family properties. That's another situation, what he mentions are multi-family properties. What are condos, walk-ups and that kind of thing, multifamily are not included.

PRDOH  
Response:

Typically, FEMA covers... FEMA is insurance, it's state insurance. And it depends on the type of insurance that the person has, and it depends on a person's income, FEMA covers them more than the insurance that doesn't cover them. And those are FEMA tables that depend on jurisdictions and other conditions. There I would have to see directly, if the zip code where the events occurred and the type of insurance that person had, if FEMA and the family condition of that family, if they qualify for a fund above, or not. But every event is different. FEMA's regulations change every three months, they change quite a bit, so I don't know what the condition is now. We, for us, it doesn't matter whether safe or unsafe. We receive funds that are essentially subjugated to help almost always, the vast majority of the time it is 70%. It could be a little bit more, it's never going to be less. 70% of the aid we give has to be to families that are LMI, Low Moderate Income. Typically, these families almost never have insurance. Our help is supplementary to what other agencies have already given you, and so on. And if a person received funds from FEMA or another agency, or insurance, and used it correctly, then there's no problem for us to provide them with additional help on top of that, right, to cover the unmet need of what that fund didn't cover.

PHP007

Submitted by: José A. Martínez Román

Related to: Working committee of Riveras de Bucaná III

Comment:

Good afternoon. My name is José Alberto Martínez Román. I am a member of the Working Committee of Riveras de Bucaná III. We appreciate the opportunity you give us to bring to your attention the needs of our community that arose as a result of Hurricane Fiona.

The rains brought by Fiona came to exacerbate the already existing problem of paving our streets. As of today, we are waiting for the Municipality of Ponce to take affirmative action aimed at the repaving of our streets. Rainwater also completes the deterioration begun by the rains of previous years to each apartment's intercom system to open the gates. The metal railings of the balconies that already had a noticeable deterioration due to the humidity of the nearby river, and with the sea breeze blowing from the south, finished corroding. Some of them to the point that to this day they represent a danger to the residents. And you may ask, why don't

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*the residents repair them? The answer is simple, and already mentioned, the residents do not have the economic resources, that our community is governed by the condominium law that prohibits the change of the façade of the condominium.*

*We recently received a visit from FEMA, State Housing and the Municipality of Ponce, as part of the Bricks project proposal where, among other things, it was mentioned that the two shelters closest to our community, the Las Monjitas school, and the Tomás Carrión Maduro school, were closed, leaving us without nearby shelters in case of any event. We, in our community, need our roofless court to be roofed and enclosed with walls, and provided with cots and other necessary materials, and for the community kitchen to be equipped with industrial equipment, to become a resilience center, or rather, a shelter, that would house residents of La Coroza, Riveras de Bucaná I, II, and III, and other surrounding areas that may reach our facilities.*

*In summary, our residents, although they have the capacity to recover from catastrophic events – need the support of government agencies and the municipality, when it comes to recovery. In the name of Riveras de Bucaná III we have brought these needs to your attention, not so that they remain on paper, but rather so that the solution arrives and arrives soon. Thank you so much.*

PRDOH  
Response:

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This program allows, I didn't mention it, but I put the slide for you to see. And there's another program that we have, there's a set aside for municipalities... My best memory, it's not my area, as I recall, it was like \$86,000,000.00 for the municipalities. I don't remember well, but I can verify you, that it's for resilient community centers. If you ask me, and with the information that... You must have a lot more information than I do, and just from what I'm hearing here, if you ask me, I think it's a good project for your community given that you have condominiums. Based on the limitations that I mentioned and the reasons that you are telling me of the damages that they had, it is difficult to install panels that cover the condominium such as generator, batteries and so on. I would explore and read Irma and Maria's Action Plan, which talks about the CRPs, you can talk to the municipality or you can contact us to provide you with more information, which is handled by the Infrastructure part, the Infrastructure area but I make the connections. Sorry, I'm going fast. I would explore the option of, under this program that we're proposing, or that existing one, to work on a resilient community center for those four communities. You're talking about two schools that are abandoned. You can work, you can set up those schools that are already in place, you have to see the condition of those structures, but you can put money in there and put your hands in there. That subprogram, so to speak, that initiative, resilient community centers, gives you a lot of money... I don't dare say a maximum amount because I haven't heard it, but whatever it takes, to create a community center that can be used for many reasons but has proper bathrooms.

That is to say, bathrooms with showers, that a bedridden and disabled person can bathe, a kitchen for the population that could be sheltered or served by that kitchen, as a school canteen, not a two-burner stove and a refrigerator... Uh, and the space with material, with the equipment of beds, cots, non-perishable meals, and so on, so that it is in place. You can use the school, the different classrooms, or whatever place it is for other activities, for when an event occurs, because the community itself already has a place and simply, the bedridden people, the elderly, those who live there cook and provide for themselves. It doesn't exist. I know that there are municipalities that have participated, or other entities that have applied for funds. I don't know the status of that because, really, it's not the funds I manage. It is a Community Resilient Center. It's under... it was originally set aside, and now it's under City Revitalization. There is a set aside that is like a sub-program within the rehabilitation of the city, and it is for the same reason, because there is already a structure, so you don't have to spend money on creating a new structure. Community Resilient Centers under City Revitalization, and I think it was



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like eighty-odd million for municipalities, for municipalities and other entities. I don't dare say exactly, but that... who can apply for it. The idea is to facilitate that, because... Look at how I see it from the planning side, and we can have this discussion. It's not the place to do it, but we can have that discussion. A pipeline project where you're telling me, with the rivers you're mentioning that are nearby, maybe it's complicated, maybe it's too expensive.