


# HURRICANE MARÍA

# OCPR

*in Action*



After the passage of Hurricane Maria, at the Comptroller's Office, we took the initiative to use all our resources to investigate the state in which the municipalities and government entities were and verify the needs of our citizens. We pursued this with the purpose of collaborating with the central government to address the crisis that our people still face. In addition, we want to obtain information that we can later use in our audit processes. For this, we created the Hurricane María Project.

## OUR STAFF

After making sure that all our colleagues in the Office of the Comptroller were well, we decided to send them to all the municipalities and all the governmental entities that offer essential services to the People. In addition, many were volunteers in non-profit entities.

## HOW DID WE START?

Our executive staff met several times, even before there was no electric power service, to coordinate the efforts and prepare a questionnaire that would serve as a guide to obtain information that would allow us to know the state of the Country. This questionnaire was distributed among our auditors and, in this way, we started with the Project.

*“We will go to each agency and municipality to see firsthand what is happening.”*

COMPTROLLER

Commonwealth of Puerto Rico  
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER  
MESSAGE OF THE COMPTROLLER



The Hurricane María Project was created to have, firsthand, information about the conditions in which the Government was and how it handled this emergency. We wanted to make sure that the necessary services were offered to the citizens and that the aid had the widest possible reach and was both just and fair.

During our visits, we observed the need that our people is still experiencing, and we had the opportunity to help alleviate it, even if it was a little. I confess that sometimes I felt with my hands tied. We knew that Puerto Rico was going through so many situations, and that there were many people willing to help; but, because of reasons related to communication, bureaucracy, or not knowing how, those individuals could not bring their help to the People. This experience gave us the opportunity to be a means to channel aid and services, which filled us with great satisfaction, joy, and hope.

I thank all my colleagues in the Office of the Comptroller for all their effort and dedication.

*German E. Blázquez*  
COMPTROLLER



## WHERE DID WE GO



From October 16 to December 15, 2017, we visited:

DEMOGRAPHIC REGISTRAR'S OFFICES

43

LOCAL OFFICE OF DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AFFAIRS

76

MUNICIPALITIES

78

50

TREASURY'S COLLECTION OFFICES

80

PUBLIC CORPORATIONS

1,113

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

82

AGENCIES AND DEPARTMENTS




Office of Human Resources Administration and Transformation (OATRH)



Broken bridge in Palma Sola, Canóvanas



Cruz Ortiz Estella School in Humacao



Bridge in Añasco



Radio Station, University of Puerto Rico at Río Piedras

## WHAT DID WE DO?

*We interviewed citizens, the mayors, and the top officials or authorized representatives at the agencies, departments, and public corporations.*

# MUNICIPALITIES

We made **468** visits to the donations collection centers and **344** to the debris consolidation centers.

*In a visit made by the Comptroller to a collection center in a municipality, she was informed that they had to dispose of all the supplies, since, in that center, there were rodents due to the pet food that was stored there. The Comptroller gave instructions to the entire PROC staff to advise the mayors into not storing the pet food in the same place as the supplies.*

**We ensured** that the distribution of supplies was just and fair.

**We helped** in the packaging and distribution of supplies.

**We channeled** psychological support through ASSMCA, orientation sessions by FEMA, and medical support, at the request of officials, employees, and citizens.

**We provided** advice on how to correctly document emergency hiring.



**55**

CITY HALLS SUFFERED DAMAGE



**567**

ROADS OR BRIDGES IN 75 MUNICIPALITIES\* COLLAPSED



**164,157**

HOUSES IN 55 MUNICIPALITIES\* LOST THEIR ROOFS



**61,249**

HOUSES IN 62 MUNICIPALITIES\* WERE AFFECTED



**36,975**

TARPS WERE DISTRIBUTED IN 62 MUNICIPALITIES\*



**70**

MUNICIPALITIES FORMALIZED CONTRACTS FOR DEBRIS COLLECTION



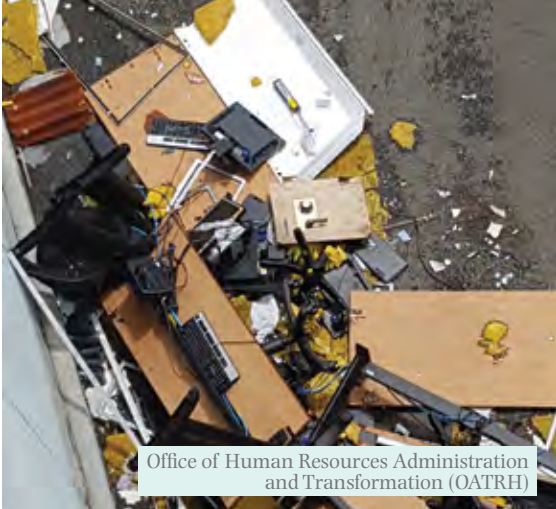
\*The remaining municipalities could not provide us with the information



# DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES



Municipal Revenue Collection Center (CRIM)



Office of Human Resources Administration and Transformation (OATRH)

Of the **82** entities we visited, **31** had significant damage and **67** prepared damage reports. Some of these damages were detachment of walls and ceilings and broken glass and windows. Some suffered structural damage, due to which they had to cease operations.

Of the **45** entities that have programs to serve citizens, **44** executed them, such as the Department of Agriculture, the School Food Authority, the Department of Housing (Section 8), the National Guard Trust, and the Women’s Advocate Office.

## TREASURY’S COLLECTION OFFICES

We visited the Treasury’s collection offices twice, one visit at the beginning and another at the end of the Project, and these were the results:

	FIRST VISIT	SECOND VISIT
Offices Visited	50	50
Offices in Operation	28	44
Offices in Operation	9	19
Partial Services	19	25

## REGIONAL OFFICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AFFAIRS

We visited the regional offices twice, one visit at the beginning and another at the end of the Project, and these were the results:

	FIRST VISIT	SECOND VISIT
Offices Visited	76	76
Offices in Operation	48	74
Offices in Operation	27	48
Partial Services	21	26

## DEMOGRAPHIC REGISTRAR’S OFFICES

Offices Visited	43
Offices in Operation	29
Offices in Operation	13
Partial Services	16



Francisco Pietri Mariani School in Adjuntas



Casiano Cepeda Pre-Vocational School in Río Grande



Facundo Bueso School in San Juan



Tomás Carrión Maduro School in San Juan



José B. Barceló Oliver in Adjuntas



Rosa Costa School in Yabucoa

## SCHOOLS

We visited **1,113** community schools with the collaboration of personnel from the Department of the Treasury and obtained the following results.

- 136** were closed during our visits
- 613** reduced school hours
- 179** were used as shelters
- 524** had structural damage
- 983** had reductions in enrollment
- 302** had a decrease in the number of employees
- 66** did not have drinking water
- 318** had fungal problems
- 715** had leaks
- 622** did not have electric power
- 213** had debris in the yards

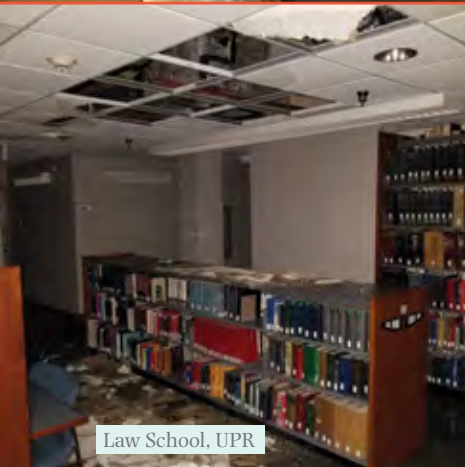




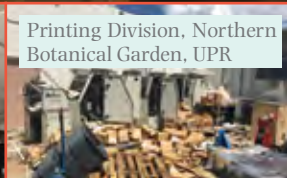
Ports Authority



Facundo Bueso Annex, University of Puerto Rico at Río Piedras (UPR)



Law School, UPR



Printing Division, Northern Botanical Garden, UPR



Radio Station, UPR



I-Robotics Education Workshop, UPR



UPR Theater

# PUBLIC CORPORATIONS

Of the **80** public corporations we visited, **20** suffered significant damage and **51** prepared damage reports. Some of the damages were leaks, broken lamps, fallen ceiling panels, and severe structural damage such as broken electrical systems and walls, collapsed roofs, and destroyed offices.



## COMMUNITY WORK

### ELDERLY TASK FORCE

As part of our efforts to help in this emergency, the comptroller's office personnel joined the Elderly Task Force, which was created by the Federal and State Governments, and had a representation from the private sector. This group was dedicated to offering support to the elderly population. For this, necessity items were collected, such as water, canned food, and diapers for adults, among others. The group managed to visit **839** centers, for a total of **16,330** impacted people.

In addition, irregular situations were identified that required the intervention of the Department of Justice and that led to the filing of charges against owners of long-term care homes.

### VOLUNTEERISM

Thirty of our colleagues were volunteers in municipalities, government entities, and non-profit entities. Some of these entities were United for Puerto Rico, Sister Isolina Ferrer Center, Municipality of Naranjito, and AEMEAD.

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## COLLABORATION WITH THE

# DACO

Department of Consumer Affairs

At the request of the Secretary of Consumer Affairs, we collaborated in the oversight of the orders to freeze the prices of basic necessities and the profit margin of gasoline, diesel, and liquefied gas. In this endeavor, we visited **365** gas stations and **248** stores, and we issued **58** infringement notices.



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