

BOTTOM UP DESTINATION RECOVERY INITIATIVE

Case Study: Punta Santiago



Bottom Up Destination Recovery Initiative

Since its inception, Foundation for Puerto Rico (FPR) has proposed a Visitor Economy strategy for Puerto Rico. After hurricanes Irma and Maria, this approach is more relevant than ever as many on the Island continue to migrate to the U.S. mainland, resulting in a smaller tax base and diminishing demand for products and services. This has particularly affected many small towns in Puerto Rico, where local business owners rely heavily on community residents to sell their products and services. As a result, these communities need a different, innovative, and inclusive plan to bring in visitors and thus create new economic opportunities.

Precisely, the Bottom Up Destination Recovery Initiative is a short-term economic recovery strategy with a sustainable model, supporting communities to become more resilient and active resources in the creation of tourism attractions and experiences. This community-based recovery program aims to strengthen local communities to spur their own recovery and build the infrastructure required for growth. The goal is to help communities recover quicker by creating a Community Destination Economic Development Plan to help increase the local tourism offers and foster the extension of the average length of stay. As a result, economic development in the communities is improved through better commercial operations, new businesses, job creation, workforce development, and a growing tax base. This program is self-sustainable, where the community and local government learn to maintain and further develop the program once the phases of resource identification, general guidelines, co-design, execution, and evaluation by FPR are completed.



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Foundation for Puerto Rico seeks to unleash the Island's full potential as an active participant in the world economy with sustainable programs that drive social and economic development. From knowledge to action, our goal is to transform Puerto Rico into a destination for the world. We want more people to visit, live, work, and invest in Puerto Rico, resulting in multimillion economic growth for the island.

Foundation for Puerto Rico is a non-profit organization since 2011 with a 501(c)(3) public charity designation.

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TO OUR DONORS



CONPRMETIDOS

Our most sincere appreciation for
your trust and support. This would
not have been possible without you.

Message from the Chairman of the Board



Founder, Chairman of the Board & CEO of Foundation for Puerto Rico

“The only way to predict the future is to have power to shape the future”. Nothing is truer than these words from Eric Hoffer. The future is built from a vision. To do this, we must determine what we need to achieve, and then chart the path that will get us there. If we do not have a clear vision or a good plan, we will fail at reaching the desired destination. That is why it is vital to design our future with deep reflection.

Since 2011, Foundation for Puerto Rico (FPR) has established a clear vision of transforming Puerto Rico into a destination for the world. Our Island has so much to offer, from our natural and cultural resources to our most important asset – our people - making our possibilities of integrating ourselves into the global economy endless. For decades, Puerto Rico has been struggling to overcome the economic crises provoked by a diversity of man-made and natural elements. It is clear to us that, in order for our local economy to grow, we cannot rely on traditional revenues. If we want to thrive, we need to generate net-new forms of revenues. Tourism represents for Puerto Rico the greatest opportunity for economic growth in the short to medium term.

Following the aftermath of hurricanes Irma and Maria, as well as the earthquakes in the south region of the Island in 2020, Puerto Rico needs more than ever to outline its future course around new, inclusive, and sustainable economic development strategies that include disaster mitigation models. Our economic future depends greatly on Puerto Rico’s ability to be resilient in the face of any adversity that gets thrown our way. Given this challenge, FPR designed and pioneered an innovative, “Asset-Based Community

Development” program strategy, which led the way to the creation of the Bottom Up Destination Recovery Initiative (Bottom Up). This program allows us to re-imagine our future and to take Puerto Rico out of the downward economic spiral of the last decade. The recommendations and solutions that come out of this effort will only be achievable if we become far more open to deep and broad collaborations between the government and the private sector, and between businesses and communities, including state, municipal and federal government, local, international and relief organizations.

Our local communities, no matter how small, must have a clear long-term strategy that considers their common assets and determines how they can best leverage them to bring renewed economic activity and create new opportunities for their regions. FPR is working hand in hand to help communities achieve this with thoughtful and innovative strategies, so that they can collaborate on the design and development of models that, either independently or collectively, have an impact island wide. For this effort to have an exponential impact, it is essential that these projects are aligned with a destination plan: a key shared vision and roadmap of sustainable and inclusive projects that will stimulate the local economies of these communities from within.

FPR is committed to doing whatever is necessary to catalyze and accelerate Bottom Up projects, whether by convening players and bringing everyone to the same table, acquiring and intermediating knowledge, providing a platform for collaboration, or serving as a funnel for resources, funding, and talent. What you will read in the following pages is just an example of how communities around the Island can achieve economic and social development given the right tools, but most importantly having a vision for the future. I hope you will enjoy this case study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JB', written in a cursive style.

Jon Borschow
Chairman & Chief Executive Officer
Foundation for Puerto Rico

Message from the President



Annie Mayol, President & COO of Foundation for Puerto Rico

Sometimes, in times of crisis, the best ideas find room to flourish. For us in Foundation for Puerto Rico (FPR), what was one of the most critical moments in our Island's history – the landfall of hurricanes Irma and Maria - ironically made us reflect on what things our Island was lacking to be more resilient.

After the devastation of the 2017 hurricane season, FPR directed all its resources to facilitate response and coordinate recovery initiatives to aid our communities. Our relief and recovery efforts were many, including opening our doors to more than 180 local and international organizations, serving as a fiscal sponsor to other NGOs, distributing more than \$500k in cash grants to help small businesses keep their doors open, and providing immediate support to thousands of families.

After the initial months of emergency relief and visiting many communities in all corners of the Island, it became clear that a strong plan, resilient infrastructure, and cohesive collaboration would speed up recovery to better sustain natural disasters and achieve economic growth. That is how the Bottom Up Destination Recovery Initiative (Bottom Up) was born. In January 2018, FPR began swiftly piloting the Bottom Up in Orocovis, and by the summer we were successfully replicating the program in Punta Santiago, Humacao. As we will see in the following pages, the results of our work in Punta Santiago makes us feel proud about our program, but even prouder of

this community, who seized this opportunity to create a sustainable economic development plan for their community. From knowledge to action, we are honored to present the results of our second Bottom Up pilot.

We want to share the lessons learned in Punta Santiago with all stakeholders and showcase the importance of scaling an "Asset-Based Community Development strategy" to achieve an efficient long-term recovery for Puerto Rico. We want to thank our sponsors, Unidos por Puerto Rico and ConPRmetidos, our partners, P.E.C.E.S. and our collaborators, Skift Foundation, for helping us make this a reality and for their commitment to transform Puerto Rico into a resilient destination for the world.

As we continue to move forward with sustainable programs for Puerto Rico's long-term social and economic growth, we are hopeful and guided by a transformation that we can only accomplish through a collaborative effort of all sectors. FPR's motto says: "There is no future in rebuilding the past." True to those words, we are working tirelessly to create a stronger, more resilient, and diverse future for our communities across Puerto Rico.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Annie Mayol". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Annie Mayol
President & Chief Operating Officer
Foundation for Puerto Rico



Executive Summary



As a result of the previous work conducted by Foundation for Puerto Rico (FPR) around the Visitor Economy's potential for the Island, and the challenges with recovery and long-term economic stagnation, FPR developed the Bottom Up Destination Recovery Initiative (Bottom Up). The program needed to be tested in actual communities to assess the validity of the framework. As result, FPR selected three locations to pilot this program, Orocovis, Punta Santiago in Humacao and the region of Aguadilla / Isabela. The first pilot was Orocovis, which began in January 2018 and ended in March 2019. The second pilot was Punta Santiago in Humacao from May 2018 to October 2019. This document describes the results of each impact area in the second pilot, the engagement strategies, actions taken, achieved program objectives, lessons learned and recommendations.

In Punta Santiago, the main strategy used to speed up recovery was a partnership with a local well-known nonprofit organization, P.E.C.E.S. The program invested as well in technical support to help small businesses and to increase interest in new Visitor Economy ventures by establishing an incubation program with seed funding to spur new businesses in the community. FPR also facilitated a series of community meetings with the participation of local leaders for the co-creation of a destination plan that defines strategies and projects to help eradicate long-term economic stagnation.

The resiliency objectives were tackled through investments in community-based organizations and leveraging small businesses to improve physical infrastructure. Punta Santiago now has more capacity to produce potable water, new resilient Wi-Fi hotspots for residents in case of an emergency, and more resilient public lighting. Investments were also made to build local capacity and leadership to make recovery and development sustainable over the long-term. In sum, with more stable businesses, improved resiliency, stronger local organizations, and a robust destination assessment and branding exercise, Punta Santiago is better equipped to continue with the phase of destination planning and development.

As FPR moves to expand the Bottom Up in other regions of the Island, there are some important lessons learned from this second pilot. First, initial program investments are critical to accelerate recovery objectives and are effective at getting early buy-in from community stakeholders, which is key if you want sustainable results. On the other hand, investing "now" is not always the best option, as any project investment requires constant evaluation and scenario planning to maximize its impact. Having the discipline to make those adjustments during implementation is key for getting the best results.

Within the business development area, based on what was learned during the first pilot, the incubation program was extended and reinforced to first, develop interest and participation among the local residents and second, to provide supplementary capacity workshops that lead to the strengthening of current small business owners skills.

Finally, local NGOs needed sufficient support, not just financial, but with technical assistance as well. Absence of technical capacity limits the impact these organizations can have on their community. The stronger the local organizations, the better the program results. With a re-energized social capital network in Punta Santiago, FPR began to work with local stakeholders on a new blueprint to develop the Community Destination Economic Development Plan. FPR hopes for these programs to be replicated in many communities across Puerto Rico, enabling new economic opportunities to many on the Island and a more resilient future for all.

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CHAPTER 1

Background: Foundation for Puerto Rico



Foundation for Puerto Rico



Since its inception, Foundation for Puerto Rico (FPR) has proposed the Visitor Economy as an economic development strategy for Puerto Rico. The FPR vision is for Puerto Rico to become a unique, desired, and accessible destination; that inspires millions of people from all over the world to visit. Puerto Rico has many assets and resources that allow the Island to create a wide network of authentic experiences. These range from its natural resources to its history, art, culture, and fine cuisine. They are all available in a compact, convenient, and accessible destination; both in proximity and affordability, equipped with state-of-the-art digital and physical infrastructure, among other advantages.

In 2016, FPR launched a vision document identifying some of the key areas of improvement around the Visitor Economy¹. FPR believes that if tourism is prioritized and a visitor economy strategy is properly executed, Puerto Rico could

double the size of the Visitor Economy and add billions of dollars to the local economy in a short time frame, which is what the Island needs right now to speed up recovery. Besides driving tourism consumption from the metropolitan area to the rest of the Island, communities could develop a sustainable model that provides new economic opportunities for residents.

After hurricanes Irma and Maria, this approach is more relevant than ever as many on the Island continue to migrate to the U.S. mainland resulting in a smaller tax base and a diminishing demand for products and services. This has particularly affected many small towns in Puerto Rico where community business owners rely heavily on residents to sell their products and services. As a result, these communities need an innovative and inclusive plan that attracts visitors and creates new economic opportunities.

1 "Visitor Economy: A First Step Towards Transformation". Foundation for Puerto Rico. October 2016.

HURRICANES IRMA AND MARIA



As seen with Irma and Maria, hurricanes and tropical storms are among the most powerful natural disasters due to their size and destructive potential. While many of these events are relatively rare in frequency, their impact in a community can last years. For these reasons, it is critical for recovery plans to include pre-disaster planning and mitigation, preparation strategies, and resilient economic development approaches as indispensable components. Therefore, FPR began to think of a recovery program that could meet two main objectives: speed up recovery in remote locations and build more resilient communities over the long term. Having agreed on a set of principles to guide the program design, FPR created the Bottom Up Destination Recovery Initiative.

Bottom Up Destination Recovery Initiative



INTRODUCTION

The Bottom Up Destination Recovery Initiative is a 12-month economic development program that supports communities in becoming active participants in their recovery and long-term planning. The program seeks to strengthen local communities to spur their own recovery and build the resilient infrastructure required for growth. The program is designed to deliver results in phases, enabling progress to be tracked and measured in the short-term, thus providing valuable insight for future engagements. The first phase focuses on short-term recovery and the second phase on long-term planning and development. The first phase is comprised of four (4) impact areas:

- *Basic Needs and Infrastructure*
- *Business Support*
- *Social Capital*
- *Tourism*

After an initial 6-month recovery process, the leaders of the destination assemble to create a

Local Destination Management Plan to increase the number of visitors and tourism expenditure in the destination. The main objective of the Plan is to increase employment and economic opportunities for residents.

THE PILOTS

Once the Bottom Up program was designed, it needed to be tested in an actual community to assess the validity of the framework. Given the diversity in Puerto Rico, FPR chose three distinct locations to evaluate the program under different environments:

- *Orocovis*
- *Punta Santiago, Humacao*
- *Aguadilla and Isabela*

In January 2019, FPR completed the first pilot in Orocovis. The results were included in a case study report².

2 "Orocovis: Local Destination Management Plan". Foundation for Puerto Rico. March 2019.



By the time we finished the 12-month implementation in Orocovis, part of our team was already working in Punta Santiago, Humacao. There are very important differences between the first two locations. Although Orocovis has several Visitor Economy assets, it seemed to lack integration within the ecosystem, due mainly to the absence of strong local institutions working on stakeholder engagement. Thus, the pilot in Orocovis allowed FPR to learn about the challenges of building a strong coalition of local stakeholders from the ground up.

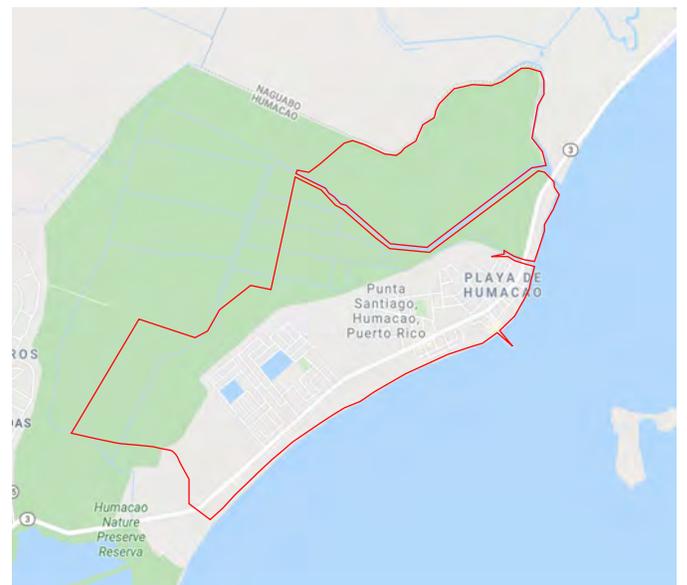
Unlike Orocovis, Punta Santiago offered FPR the challenge to work with a strong and well-established nonprofit organization named Programa de Educación Comunal de Entrega y Servicio (P.E.C.E.S.). In the Punta Santiago pilot, FPR wanted to compare agility and viability of the program in a community that has a strong local NGO versus one that doesn't. Given the varied composition of communities in Puerto Rico, different approaches for recovery and development needed to be created.

Punta Santiago



OVERVIEW OF THE DESTINATION

The municipality of Humacao is located amongst the East Coast Valleys of Puerto Rico. Extending over 44.8 square miles, it borders with the municipality of Naguabo on its North, Yabucoa on its South, Las Piedras to the West, and the Passage of Vieques to the East. A significant amount of its topography is flat and does not exceed 100 meters above sea level at any point. Its points of elevation are located in the southwest and northwest of the territory. According to the 2010 census, the general population was 58,666 Humacaeños. The territory is composed of thirteen neighborhoods: Antón Ruiz, Buena Vista, Candeleró Abajo, Candeleró Arriba, Cataño, Collores, Humacao Pueblo, Mabú, Mambiche, Mariana, Río Abajo, Tejas, and Punta Santiago.



Punta Santiago is located on the East coast of Humacao. The community boasts a rich fishing culture. Their fresh products are sold to many of the local restaurants along the Highway No. 3 which are believed to surpass the hundreds. Also, Punta Santiago is home to the Natural Reserve of Humacao, a biodiverse ecosystem, which offers numerous recreational activities.

The entrance and the exit points of Punta Santiago are limited to two bridges by means of Highway No. 3. The community is surrounded by sea, rivers, lagoons, and the Natural Reserve estuary. A dike also surrounds the community on the northwest side. Despite the great natural resources in the area, the location and circumstances of the community make it one of the most vulnerable and at-risk coastal neighborhoods in the area, particularly when exposed to a natural disaster such as a hurricane or tsunami. According to the American Community Survey (ACS), Punta Santiago has a population of 5,042 people, a median age of 41, and a median household income of \$20,363. Between 2015 and 2016, the population of Punta Santiago declined from 5,514 to 5,042, or 8.56%, and its median household income declined from \$21,690 to \$20,363, a 6.12% decrease.

Like in Orocovis, small businesses are one of the pillars on which the community is built, and serve as its meeting points. A couple of months after the hurricane, no more than 15 businesses were open in Punta Santiago. A year later, more than 40 businesses were open in the community. To put this in context, Punta Santiago is a community divided by two bodies of water (lagoons in the north, and the ocean in the south) connected by two small bridges. In other words, it is a small island inside of Puerto Rico.

From end to end, the community has 2.4 miles, where one can find 65% (30) of the businesses within less than a mile. The broad array of businesses located in the area includes tire centers, clinical laboratories, fish markets, marine centers, and restaurants; the gastronomy sector is the one with the largest offering. Considering this is a community on the shore, its economy is mainly

ocean-based and relies on fishermen and their catch, making Punta Santiago one of the best places in Puerto Rico to find fresh seafood.

Punta Santiago was one of the most affected communities in Puerto Rico, receiving up to 155mph winds and unprecedented rising sea levels, leaving much of the community underwater and causing sewage problems. As the sea flooded the community, the sewers became clogged with sand, causing them to overflow. This resulted in multiple issues regarding waste management, debris removal, and other public health safety concerns.

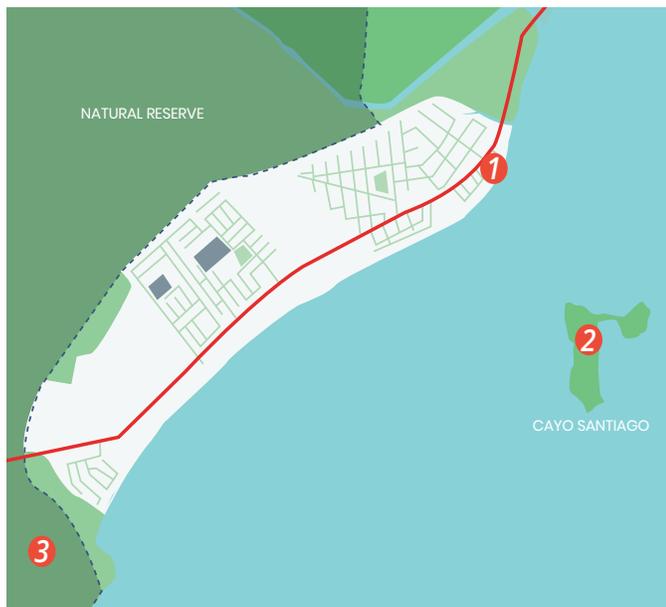


SELECTING THE MAIN GEOGRAPHIC AREAS FOR RECOVERY INVESTMENTS

FPR's design team decided to focus its investments on the main assets of Punta Santiago. These critical targets have great potential to generate considerable impact in the overall development of the destination within a shorter timeframe with key investments.

In contrast to Orocovis where the main impact areas were concentrated within commercial clusters, FPR selected the following top tourism assets within Punta Santiago on which to focus investments:

- 1 · *The Fishing Village*
- 2 · *Cayo Santiago Biological Field Station (CSBFS)*
- 3 · *Efraín Archilla Diez Natural Reserve*



Each of these tourism assets is an essential component of the visitor economy in Punta Santiago, as well as influential for building social capital and achieving collaboration, both of which are vital for this program. Due to damages caused by hurricane Maria, none of the assets were ready for visitors, which translated to economic stagnation for the region. Therefore, the FPR team was determined to invest most of the Bottom Up resources on them.

Once these tourism assets were selected as impact areas, the operational field team began working on assessing each one in order to create a plan that could bring all of them to pre-Maria conditions.



The Fishing Village, Humacao



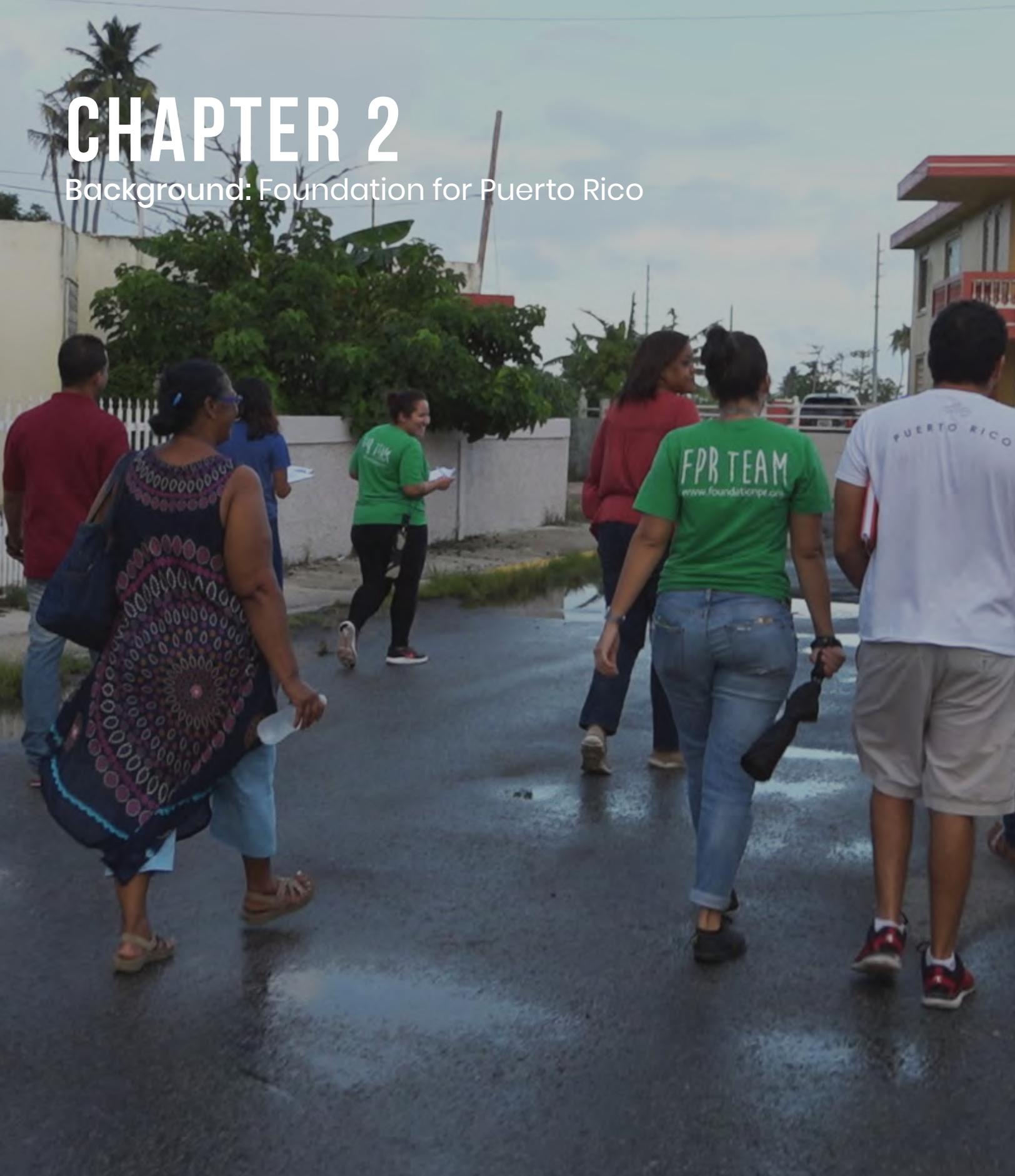
Cayo Santiago Biological Field Station, Humacao



Efraín Archilla Diez Natural Reserve

CHAPTER 2

Background: Foundation for Puerto Rico



COMMUNITY SURVEY & STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

LOCAL LEVEL:

P.E.C.E.S.

The Natural Reserve: Reserva Natural Efraín Archilla Diez

Cayo Santiago Biological Field Station (CSBFS)

Pescadores Unidos de Punta Santiago Humacao Inc.

Asociación Recreativa de la Playa Humacao

Community Security Council

Centro de Servicios Múltiples

STATE LEVEL:

·Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (D.R.N.A.)

·Fortaleza para Ti

·Para La Naturaleza

·US Forest Service

·National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

·Protectores de Cuencas

Once settled on the geographic areas to be impacted, FPR moved the entire operational field team to Punta Santiago. As in Orocovis, this accelerated the data gathering exercises and contributed to building strong relationships with the local community. One of the most important and immediate components for the implementation phase was the Community Needs Assessment since it helps in the decision-making processes for community investments. Within the first few weeks in Punta Santiago, the operational field team performed community surveys, collecting necessary data to build an economic and social profile of the community. These compilation exercises were carried out consecutively from May 16th to May 20th, 2018. Among other things, this activity allowed the operational field team to become familiar with the realities of the communities and increase the level of awareness of the Bottom Up initiative in Punta Santiago.

A three-page questionnaire was used to obtain data on the socioeconomic profile of the inhabitants of Punta Santiago. A total of 187 responses were obtained, in which the sectors of Villa Palmira (20), Verde Mar (73), Parcelas Vieja (30), Parcelas Nueva (39), La Ola (11), Poblado (6), and Marina (8) were represented. All the community areas were covered, allowing FPR to obtain valuable data based on a non-statistically representative survey. According to the data gathered, the Villa Palmira sector has an upper middle-income profile and the houses located there are mostly used as vacation homes. On the other hand, Verde Mar is the largest residential area of Punta Santiago, consisting of more than 1,400 homes.

There were several distinct characteristics in these communities. For example, 61% of the people surveyed were women and 73% of the participants were the head of the household. About 54% were over the age of 60, a large number relative to the rest of Humacao where the percentage of people over 60 is around 20%. Nearly 62% of the respondents stated that no one is currently employed in their household.³ On the other hand, 32% of the respondents had an associate degree or higher education, which is barely higher than the national average of 30.4%. The results were consistent with the information gathered in Orocovis: these communities had an older, educated, and unemployed workforce.

³ The unemployment rate at a national average is 16.4%.



Interestingly, when asked to state the top social problem in their community, around 70% agreed that it was unemployment and lack of job opportunities. Another finding was that 71% of the respondents stated that they had never received services from an NGO. From the Visitor Economy related questions, 85% of the people surveyed considered Punta Santiago a great tourist destination and 98% stated that it would be beneficial for Punta Santiago to receive more international visitors. Only 23% of the respondents frequently visited gastronomical businesses in the region. Surprisingly, 47% of the people surveyed have never visited the Natural Reserve, which is one of the most important attractions in Punta Santiago. Institutions like the local parish and a community center were consistent in organizing recurring events to address both the physical and emotional wellbeing of residents. Another finding was that Punta Santiago has the elements of a city in and of itself. Having their own zip code, they often talked about Humacao as if it were another country. They proudly refer to themselves as *playeros*. As Janet González, from Asociación Recreativa de Playa Humacao, Inc., explains: “We are *playeros*, we do not quit. We strive. We might be a small neighborhood, but we have enormous passion.” A strong sense of identity was palpable from the very beginning.

Besides being an important data gathering tool, surveys gave the team a deeper understanding of the community. Although the survey did not make any direct reference to this topic, most locals insisted on narrating traumatic experiences lived during the

hurricane as well as the aftermath, which could suggest high levels of emotional distress. Some seemed detached from their current circumstances, others were optimistic, but most displayed poor motivation and low morale.

Another important implementation component was the key stakeholders mapping exercise because it facilitated the selection process of main assets for investments and provided a comprehensive picture of the needs and opportunities as well as stakeholder diversity in Punta Santiago. The initial field assessment consisted of both individual and group meetings with key stakeholders, which helped the operational field team navigate the community. This exercise was designed under the premise that successful projects require both the inclusion of local stakeholders as well as the integration of outside partners that can facilitate collaborations and alliances.

In order to avoid effort duplication, the operational field team held a multisectoral meeting in early May 2018. It consisted of a round table discussion between private and public-sector entities as well as community-based organizations. Participants included P.E.C.E.S. staff, members of the local fishermen’s association “Pescadores Unidos”, the CSBFS, Fortaleza para Ti, the regional director of the Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources (DRNA for its Spanish acronym), employees from the Natural Reserve and a representative of the microenterprises operating in the region. The goal was to understand exactly how each party was addressing different aspects of Punta Santiago’s recovery.

PROGRAMA DE EDUCACIÓN COMUNAL DE ENTREGA Y SERVICIO (P.E.C.E.S.)

Part of what this pilot project aimed to test was the benefits of having an established local NGO working alongside the operational field team. P.E.C.E.S. is a very well-respected NGO from Punta Santiago that provides education, counseling, and entrepreneurial services to communities in Puerto Rico's southeastern region in order to foster socioeconomic development for its residents. P.E.C.E.S. was founded in 1985 and serves more than 25,000 people every year through a variety of initiatives. P.E.C.E.S. would serve as Bottom Up's link to the community as well as facilitators of new initiatives.

In Orocovis, the municipal government's role was critical for a successful planning process and both the mayor and his staff were fully committed.

In Punta Santiago on the other hand, the municipal government's role was minimal, in part by design and in part due to community dynamics. Yet given P.E.C.E.S.'s prominent role in the community, we sought their support for the implementation of the program. Not many communities in Puerto Rico have a leading and influential organization like P.E.C.E.S., which overextended its capacity engaging in relief and recovery efforts after the hurricane. Given the degree of the devastation in Punta Santiago, P.E.C.E.S. became a central command center for recovery. This came alongside new responsibilities, including managing donations, supplies and new grant agreements; all of which significantly expanded the scope of their work and staff after the storm.



Impact Investments

BASIC NEEDS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Basic Needs

The Basic Needs and Infrastructure component is part of the first phase given the importance of physical infrastructure for economic recovery. Small businesses, which are the backbone of a local economy, were unable to jumpstart their operations given challenges with electricity, telecommunications, clean water, and debris removal. As a result, they were not able to open during the evenings due to lack of public illumination, clean water for cooking, or internet for processing electronic payments. Therefore, quick investments needed to be made to improve the resiliency of local infrastructure to minimize business interruption due to future events.

Based on the results of the initial assessment, one of the most pervasive problems faced by Punta Santiago after hurricane Maria was access to drinking water. To mitigate some of the water quality issues identified, the operational field team collaborated with the ENACTUS chapter at the University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras Campus (UPR-RP), the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Oxfam to conduct several water quality tests at small businesses, NGO facilities, and main tourism assets. Water samples were also collected from the dock, local beach (Balneario), river mouth, and several points of the Natural Reserve. With regards to businesses, owners were trained to carry out the "safe-home" water quality tests. This kit detects over 20 pollutants. Based on the studies carried out on July 21st and July 22nd, all 20 gastronomic businesses in the area showed a high chlorine and Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) content which changes the flavor and color of the water. Although its consumption is non-lethal, such water quality levels can affect customers' perception of the business.

FPR donated 51 water testing kits and trained the following 19 business owners for their proper use: El Limón, Daniel's Sea Food, Centro Comunal de Playa Humacao, Pescadería, Paseo Playero, La Reserva

Café, Kreamy, Regata, Olas, El Son de la Playa de los Rosarios, Mar y Tierra, Pesk2, La Fondita, Panadería La Familia, Mamie Colie, Supermercado La Favorita, Armando's Place, Taco's Place, El Playerito. Additionally, 23 community members or individuals were trained on water testing.



As part of the needs study, we identified a series of businesses and assets lacking a water storage system. In collaboration with Por Los Nuestros, we installed 11 cisterns in Punta Santiago for a total capacity of 1,616,950 gallons of water per year. Five of these 250-gallon cisterns were donated by Por Los Nuestros, while FPR covered the transportation and installation expenses. They were donated to P.E.C.E.S.' offices and sustainability center, Pablitos Pinchos, the Municipal Library, and a health center. The other six 530-gallon cisterns were donated by FPR to Olas, Delicias del Mar, Mamie Colie, Laboratorio Clínico, Centro de Servicios Múltiples, and the Community Center of Punta Santiago. The field team supported in all cistern installations.



To address Punta Santiago's access to potable water, FPR donated 18 six-gallon capacity Berkey filter systems to various entities and businesses for a total of near 4,099,860 gallons of potable water per year. The Berkey system has the capacity of producing around 26 gallons of purified water per hour, using eight cartridges of activated carbon with a life expectancy of 3,000 gallons each. The filters were donated to Barefoot Travelers; Mamie Colie; Caribbean Primate Research Center; Paseo Playero; Delicias del Mar; Olas; Supermercdo La Favorita; Pablitos Pinchos; Morillo Cycle; Flor de Maga Gift

Shop; Water Sports and Eco Tours; La Reserva Café; El Limón; El Son de Playa de los Rosarios; Panadería La Familia; and P.E.C.E.S.' office, school, and sustainability center. Facing an emergency such as Hurricane Maria, these entities can now provide adjacent communities with access to 11,232 gallons of clean water per day, enough for 5,616 individuals.



Infrastructure

Based on the findings in the initial assessment, another issue in Punta Santiago was the state of physical infrastructure (electric power, waste management, and telecommunications). There was no public illumination when the operational field team moved to Punta Santiago, which led to armed robberies and break-ins. This made security a priority to the residents who did not feel safe during the evenings. In the middle of the project, the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA) restored electricity in the community, which reduced the risk of incidents and accidents. However, electric infrastructure was still fragile and unstable, therefore, FPR donated and installed solar lamps in small businesses, nonprofit organization facilities, and main tourism assets, creating a more resilient public lighting system in the community for the future.

A total of 100 solar lamps in 39 businesses and public spaces were installed throughout Punta Santiago to provide security and protection for the community. Business owners were also able to reduce their energy consumption because the solar lights provide the necessary outdoor illumination in the evenings. These solar lights have a modular design and can be uninstalled for safe keeping and reinstalled after a natural disaster. Additionally, a restricted donation of \$90,000 was made to P.E.C.E.S. to install solar panels and batteries at their community school, which served as a command center after the hurricane.



In addition, 11 businesses and locations in Punta Santiago were visited and evaluated by Verifica PSC-Ingeniería Eléctrica, a local engineering company that consults on sustainable practices. These businesses were selected by FPR due to their strategic location in Punta Santiago, which makes them more accessible to the community during periods of emergency. The objective of this assessment was to identify the viability of a solar energy system with storage capabilities and estimate costs and requirements on each site. These business owners were given recommendations on how to retrofit their facility so it could operate during and after an emergency without the Puerto Rico Electrical Power Authority (PREPA).

Another significant problem in Punta Santiago was lack of access to internet. For this, FPR relied on HughesNet satellite system, which guarantees internet connection when other companies fail. This modular equipment (\$1,000 market value) could provide the necessary connectivity to process electronic transactions and provide hotspots to facilitate communications after an event. This would not only help residents communicate with their loved ones, but also allow them to quickly register for federal assistance, which was a critical issue during the disaster. In addition, this system can be used the day after an emergency such as Hurricane Maria.

Businesses and assets that showed interest in the equipment were informed about the provider's data plans, since the business owner would be responsible for the monthly payments. For those entities that considered the system beneficial, FPR donated and installed the equipment under the agreement that in case of an emergency, such as hurricanes, general blackouts, and earthquakes, the entities would allow residents to access their internet service for free. A total of 12 Wi-Fi antennas were installed between Armando's Place; Daniel's Sea Food; Delicias del Mar; Taco Rico, Barefoot Travelers; Canos Tire; Playa Auto Part; Green Team Club; Iglesia Punta Santiago; and P.E.C.E.S.' office, school, and sustainability center. Since these entities are part of the community, they are more than committed to serve as resilient locations.

Waste Management

In addition to addressing the main components of basic needs and infrastructure, Bottom Up fostered sustainable practices for waste management among businesses and local organizations.

Based on the study conducted in Punta Santiago's businesses, the operational field team found that the municipality of Humacao does not collect recyclable material. Business owners are not familiarized with recyclable waste handling practices. Small businesses such as Daniel Sea Food benefit from supermarket La Favorita's cardboard compactor, which pays a private company to collect the compressed item. Yet this is not a common practice among business owners.

Environmentally friendly products for restaurants and everyday use are gaining traction, and hopefully will soon replace single-use plastic as the standard for all our disposable needs.

Aware of how a growth in visitors would translate to an increase of waste produced by restaurants, specially of single use plastics, FPR donated 14 compostable kits to various business owners in the region: La Fondita, Daniel's Sea Food, El Son de Playa de los Rosarios, Olas, Paseo Playero, Armando's Place, Taco Rico, Mamie Colie, Kioko de Pescadores (Delicias del Mar), Pescadería T y M, Panadería La Familia, Pablitos Pinchos, La Reserva Café, and Green Team Health Club. The sustainable practice of properly using and disposing compostable utensils, cups, straws, napkins, and to-go containers in local restaurants is key for the protection and preservation of the destination's natural resources.

Regarding waste management in relation to businesses and community resiliency, the Bottom Up field team responded to a serious issue of debris in the community by implementing a sustainable solution. In the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, a massive amount of debris obstructed the main roads of Punta Santiago, but the community was not properly equipped to remove it after the storm. Thus, FPR donated a 193-piece debris removal kit

to P.E.C.E.S. to ensure the community has the necessary Regarding waste management in relation to businesses and community resiliency, the Bottom Up field team responded to a serious issue of debris in the community by implementing a sustainable solution. In the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, a massive amount of debris obstructed the main roads of Punta Santiago, but the community was not properly equipped to remove it after the storm. Thus, FPR donated a 193-piece debris removal kit to P.E.C.E.S. to ensure the community has the necessary equipment to clear the way to key areas and businesses within and outside of Punta Santiago if another natural disaster hits.

"Foundation for Puerto Rico was the first entity to help us. They supported us through the cash grants as well as with technical assistance, the water testing training, and a power assessment study for a better understanding of what would it take to install solar panels in our business. They also helped us complete our first electronic transaction, thanks to the satellite Internet system that they donated to us after several months without connectivity. The absence of public lighting outside our business and throughout our community was alarming. There was no service in the surrounding areas causing a public safety concern. The donation of three solar lamps made a significant difference in nighttime visibility, while reducing electricity costs for our business. FPR's services have been greatly beneficial for us and the entire area of Punta Santiago. Also, the field team that worked every day here became "playeros" and part of the family. They were very supportive, and for that, we are incredibly grateful".

Ivelisse Ramírez (owner of Daniel's Seafood)



BUSINESS SUPPORT

Existing Businessess



The second impact area is Business Support. As stated before, small businesses are the backbone of these communities and are indispensable to drive recovery. That is why the Bottom Up program ensures that current business owners can recover from the current emergency and are better prepared for future events. The Small Business Support component also aims to accelerate growth, rapidly assessing the needs of a community and enabling quick development of new businesses as well as the expansion of existing ones. This is why the program cultivates an entrepreneurial environment among residents, encouraging them to generate ideas and supplying them with technical and financial resources which enable them to develop innovative products and services that help attract new visitors.

A couple of months after the hurricane, no more than 15 businesses were open in Punta Santiago. A year later more than 40 businesses were open. FPR began impacting businesses through the Small Business Cash Grant Program (SBCGP) in December 2017, which assisted a dozen small businesses in Punta Santiago with immediate cash and technical assistance offered by Centro para Emprendedores (CPE). Over \$38,000 in cash grants and 60 hours of technical assistance were provided to help stabilize existing businesses. Twelve of the fifteen businesses remained open after receiving the grant and technical assistance and 92% of the business owners surveyed indicated that the cash grant and assistance received helped them maintain their businesses open, extending their hours of operation and increasing sales. After the end of the first phase, average employment was at 74% pre-Maria level.

As in Orocovis, our partner INprende, a private innovation and entrepreneurship incubator, was brought in to help with business development in the area. INprende selected 12 businesses near tourism assets and assessed their needs in the following organizational areas: marketing, sales, operations, human resources, and entrepreneurship. Those businesses were: Armando's Place, Daniel's Sea Food, El Limón, El Son de Playa de Los Rosarios, Kiosko de Pescadores (Delicias del Mar), La Fondita, Taco Rico, Mamie Colye, Las Olas Restaurant, Panadería La Familia, Pescadería T y M, and Restaurante Paseo Playero. Once the needs assessment was completed, INprende's team provided each business with specific recommendations and designed a handbook to help owners continuously assess their operations. The needs assessment results demonstrated that the key areas of attention were social media management and access to capital.



In support of the entrepreneurial ecosystem, two additional events took place during this phase. The first one was a gathering of business organizations that provided tools and information to business owners. The topics discussed in the first event were related to financial options for small and medium sized businesses in Puerto Rico, customer service, and tourism. A total of 40 businesses participated of the two-day event. The workshop was a success thanks to the FPR team and partners, which included Colmena66, Kiva, FideCOOP, the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Puerto Rico Trade and Export Company, Unidos por Puerto

Rico, Local Guest, Universidad del Este, and King-Bird Innovation Center.

The second workshop was organized by the FPR team with the support of ViewPR and Brands of Puerto Rico, who talked about Digital Presence and Marketing to the business owners in attendance. The Visitor Information and Experience Warehouse of Puerto Rico ("VIEWPR") is a non-profit effort driven by Foundation for Puerto Rico, that seeks to attract more visitors to the island and extend their stay by sharing new and reliable information with travel platforms across the world. Brands of Puerto Rico is a platform that lets entrepreneurs market their products to the world. Both efforts provided immense value to the participants through pamphlets, presentations, and informative material that helped the business owners increase their marketing know-how and their digital presence in diverse platforms.





In order to support the entrepreneurial ecosystem, FPR replicated in Punta Santiago the successful new business ideas program that took place before in Orocovis. The Centro para Emprendedores collaborated with FPR to bring the Startup Weekend forth. The Startup Weekend is a 54-hour event in which groups of developers, business managers, startup enthusiasts, marketing gurus, graphic artists, among others, pitch ideas for new startup companies, form teams around those ideas, and develop a prototype, demo, or presentation by the end of the event. The event took place at the P.E.C.E.S. School in Punta Santiago between the 18th and 20th of May 2018. Out of the 10 business ideas presented by the 15 participants, only four were chosen for further development.

The top four ideas were: Xtage, an indoor paintball park; Canvas Trip, a matchmaking platform for travelers, locals, and guides; Puntadas, an e-commerce business that sells personalized clothing for plus-sized women; and El Fogón de Fela, a traditional cooking restaurant. FPR awarded Canvas Trip \$500 for the best idea in the visitor's economy space. The winners received additional technical support services by Centro para Emprendedores, one legal session by Ferraiouli LLP, company brand development, and a marketing startup kit, among other prizes.

In addition, FPR brought INprende's incubator program to the community as a way of decentralizing coaching and support services to entrepreneurs and bringing them to communities like Punta Santiago.



The goal was to develop ideas into new businesses that will impact the community and the visitor economy. FPR and INprende opened an application process to an incubation program in which residents could apply to and participate in group sessions to learn about how to develop a business idea. FPR then met with INprende to select the top 10 ideas for the program. In this case, 11 business ideas were chosen: Natural Drinks and Frappes (Las Piedras), Coffee Shop & Cereal Bar on Wheels (Humacao), Liquor Shop (Las Piedras), a wine and "tapas" bar (Humacao), Arepas Factory (Punta Santiago), a boutique for women (Humacao), a health food shop (Humacao), a rabbit hatchery (Humacao), a Yoga and Health Center (Punta Santiago), a Laser Tag Facility (Juncos), and a Gift Shop and Artisans Workshop (Punta Santiago). After the end of the program, 8 completed all the boot camp hours and were evaluated for seed funding. After the evaluation, two ideas were eligible for up to \$60,000 in seed funding from FPR. The new business ideas selected were Súpernova Café, LLC. with a seed funding of \$28,045 and Productos Don Daniel, Inc. with a total of \$30,000 in seed funding.

"INprende has been a life-changing opportunity for me, my experience working with them has not only given me the tools and knowledge on how to develop new ideas and start my own business, but it has also given me the motivation and confidence to do so, because now I have a professional support group with which I can clarify doubts and follow up on the exciting experience of entrepreneurship."

Oneira Velázquez, Punta Santiago Entrepreneur

Social Capital



The operational field team moved to Punta Santiago from May 2018 to October 2018. Upon their arrival, they developed and implemented various engagement initiatives in the community. These initiatives strengthened the initial strategy of stakeholder engagement and reinforced existing social capital linkages in Punta Santiago. Each initiative helped identify needs and challenges in the community. As previously mentioned, the multisectoral meeting was a great way to start building those linkages and avoid duplicating efforts through the project. The social mapping exercise was crucial in developing the initial strategy. This exercise allowed the operational field team to understand the role each stakeholder played in the recovery and the available resources to implement the investment strategy.

Punta Santiago had a particularity that had not been encountered in the previous pilot in Orocovis: it had many external and local organizations assisting in the recovery. Since there were many helping the communities' most pressing needs, FPR needed to map out all recovery initiatives to avoid duplicating efforts. This was very challenging, since it was a moving target every day. It was difficult to validate all information to assess the scope of the assistance of some of the organizations as well. The operational team would often hear conflicting information from local leaders who would argue that help never came to them. Nevertheless, the operational team kept a weekly tally of recovery efforts to ensure FPR investments were not duplicative in any way.

As stated before, FPR implemented various community initiatives during this phase to help create social capital linkages within the community early in the intervention. Below we go through some of these initiatives.

Community Security Council

According to the Incident Statistic Tool from the Puerto Rico Police Department, Punta Santiago has a high incidence of criminal activity. From robberies, burglaries, illegal appropriations, and assault incidents one thing is certain: Punta Santiago was not the safest destination. The operational field team quickly confirmed the assumption made from police statistics with the results of the community survey; where “security” was one of the highest social problems perceived by the community. During the team’s stay, robberies were a common thing in business establishments. Restaurants like Paseo Playero were preyed upon by robbers. There were even many carjackings. To transform this reality in Punta Santiago, the community was going to be key.

Upon searching for plausible and executable solutions to deal with the problem at hand, the team identified a strategy used by the community in Orocovis to drive down crime: The Community Security Councils of the State Police Department. The Community Security Councils of the State Police are born out of Regulation 5720. They represent an organizational forum for the community, where prevailing situations of social order or public safety are exposed. They are composed of groups of twelve or more volunteer citizens that live in the community. The objective of the Council is to make citizens aware of their duty to participate actively in their community to help solve their problems and needs. Which in turn is achieved by detecting, identifying, and alerting their neighbors and the Police of irregular situations that may affect public safety.

The operational field team thought it would be a perfect fit for the communities of Punta Santiago and headed for the State Police Department to find out information about how to initiate a Council. There the team met agent Báez, from the Community Relations Bureau. Agent Báez is the supervising agent behind the councils in Humacao. It turned out that Humacao has 18 councils, but none in Punta

Santiago. That being said, Community Security Councils are not easily formed. To prove their commitment, community members must hold at least three meetings with the managing agent (in this case, Báez). They must choose a directive and go through a background checks before they swear in at their post as council members.

This first meeting with Agent Báez was held the 23rd of August of 2018. Over 15 community members attended. They got an orientation on the requirements, obligations, and responsibilities of the council. The operational field team moved forward to scheduling another meeting. However, for this meeting to happen, the aspiring council members would have to hand in all the paperwork needed to run the background check. This was the hardest part of all. The operational field team took a more active approach to make things happen. They constantly called people and visited houses to look for the documents. Once they had the documents from the aspiring candidates, they visited agent Báez’s office to hand them in. Once they had the minimum quorum (12), the operational field team organized the meeting on October 25, 2018. This meeting was held with the participation of 16 community members. The executive directive was formed, with Daisy García as elected president. FPR donated 15 flashlight taser units and 24 whistles for all members of the Community Security Council.

"The experience working with the Bottom Up team was outstanding since they helped us to form the group and donated materials and equipment to the Council. We are very grateful. The next steps for the Council are: to ensure the safety of the elderly, to visit schools to teach children and young about the police athletic league and the school police, and to continue collaborating with the state and local police, whom have been diligent in providing guidance, visiting, and being more active in Punta Santiago".

Daisy García, Security Council Chair

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)



The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. A few years ago, P.E.C.E.S. was a certified CERT in Punta Santiago, but they had not renovated their certification in the following years.

In most cases, NGOs were the first and only responders in an emergency. During the aftermath of hurricanes Irma and Maria, P.E.C.E.S. became an important player regarding relief efforts. For example, they lead the reconstruction of homes through granted submitted proposals. Knowing that P.E.C.E.S. was preparing to be an integral part of the future rescue and emergency response, the operational field team, thought adequate to work on re-establishing the CERT program. A result, FPR coordinated the P.E.C.E.S. CERT certification process. Today, a total of 61 P.E.C.E.S. employees are certified. In addition, the team also saw the valuable opportunity to include members of the community. Around ten community members signed up and attended the training, for a total of 71 participants certified.



"The experience participating in the CERT certification was gratifying and beneficial for all the staff in our organization. The material provided helped us learn about strategies for how to lead and organize during different emergencies. For example, (it was useful for) an event like hurricane Maria where the next day we mobilized immediately to assist our community, without necessarily having the experience and a defined work plan to deal with these emergencies. The CERT initiative certainly provided capacity to our organization toward disaster preparedness for the benefit of our entire community"

Rey Cintrón, Manager at P.E.C.E.S.

ASSET BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (ABCD) EXERCISES IN PUNTA SANTIAGO



Punta Santiago, like many other communities, has a great number of assets at their disposal, especially environmental and cultural assets. Also, it has institutional assets such as P.E.C.E.S. and associations like Asociación Recreativa de Playa Humacao, Inc. They can count on many great and committed individuals. Still, the biggest challenge for the operational field team was to change people's mindset. FPR wanted residents to rethink their community and visualize new possibilities.

To instill and spark a train of thought that would make the people of Punta Santiago re-visualize their community, the operational field team decided to execute a different type of intervention. They facilitated a series of conceptual and geographic mapping exercises where community members and key stakeholders would identify existing resources and assets through participatory and inclusive processes. As a result, FPR conducted a series of meetings, using the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) framework to explore different ways in which the community can manage assets through existing resources. These exercises and discussions served as a good preamble to phase two of the Bottom Up, where local leaders construct a destination plan. The benefits of the exercise for the Bottom Up were many. It introduced the Visitor Economy concepts to the members of the community and helped document resources, ideas showing potential, and projects for the second phase of the program.

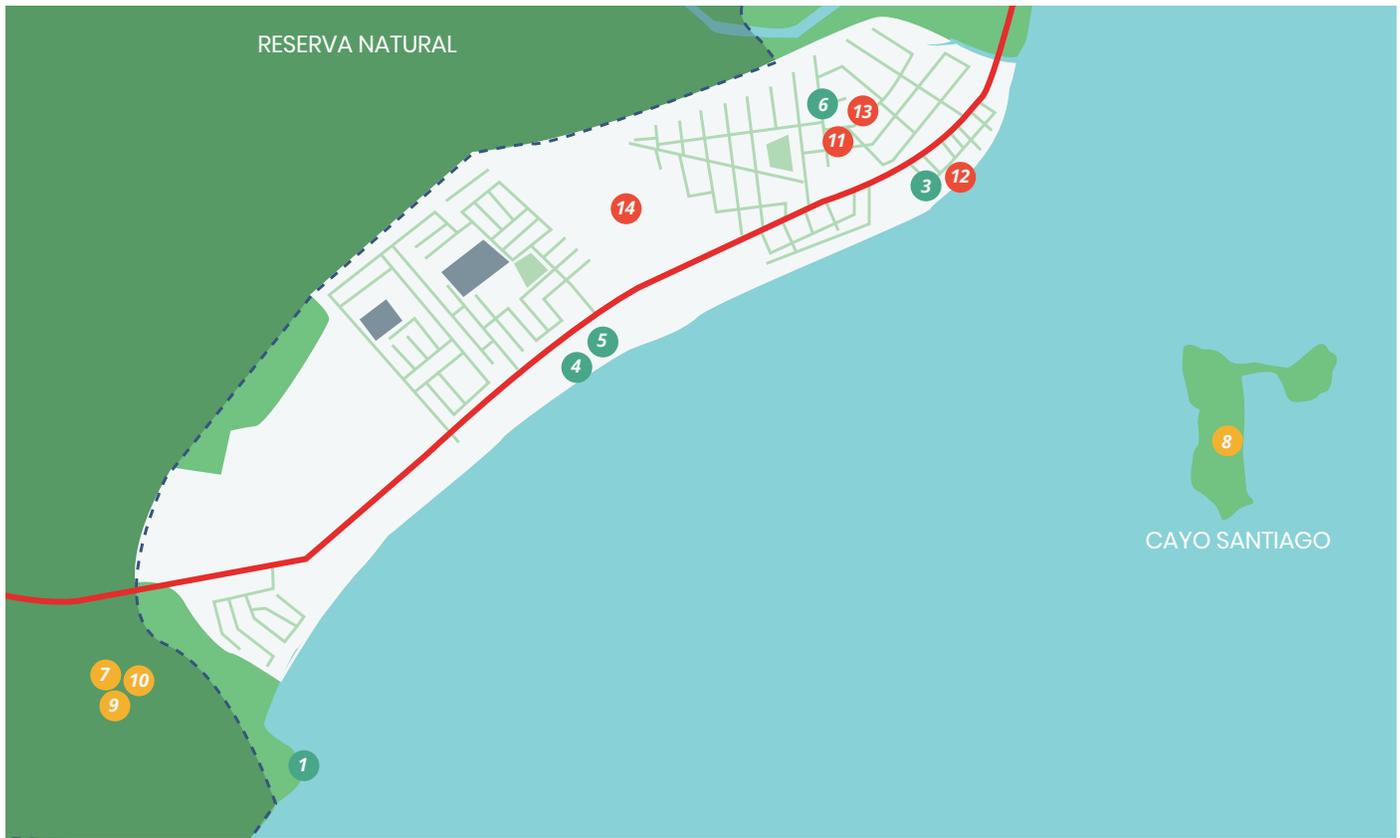
The team set out to conduct two main activities. The first would be a mapping exercise; the second, a walk around the neighborhood. The mapping exercise was called "Veó Veó" in Punta Santiago, alluding to the childhood game. It was an activity that people of all ages and social groups participate in. The promotional efforts consisted mostly of digital and traditional methods (Posters / Flyers). P.E.C.E.S. and the Association's social media accounts proved useful to reach our target audience. Even though a small group participated on this first event, it was a good sample from stakeholders in the community. The participation of institutions, associations, business owners, and individuals was evident. During the event, participants were introduced to the ABCD framework and completed a mapping exercise where they identified many local resources and assets.

The other activity was very simple and mainly consisted of a walk. This initiative was meant to get participants out of their comfort zone and give them a chance to revisit the community with a fresh set of eyes, visualizing potential.

These exercises had very promising results. During the first exercise, many assets were identified. Talented individuals such as Andres Louring, a historian; Antonio Rodríguez, a poet; Myriam Morales, a farmer; José Arce, a builder; Peter Paes, a cabinetmaker; and Israel, a boat maker, were identified among many others. Associations such as Asociación Recreativa de Playa Humacao, Asociación Recreativa de Verde Mar, Asociación de Residentes de Villa Palmira, Class A baseball team, Recreation Dance Group, were identified among others.



Tourism



| BUILT OR HISTORICAL ASSETS: | NATURAL ASSETS: | INSTITUTIONS: | GASTRONOMIC ASSETS: | LODGING: | ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL ASSETS: |
|---|---|--|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 El Morrillo 2 Building of the former customs house (with murals) 3 The dock (known as "el muey") 4 Beach 5 Water Park (closed) 6 Community Center of Playa Humacao | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7 Natural Reserve of Humacao 8 Santiago Cay 9 Water Sports and Eco Tours 10 Morrillo Cycle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11 Recreational Association of Playa Humacao 12 Fisherman's Association 13 Caribbean Primate Research Center 14 P.E.C.E.S. 15 Community Security Council | <p>Several restaurants, bakeries and supermarkets.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Vacation Center (closed) 2 Barefoot Travelers Rooms and Adventure Guesthouse 3 Other Airbnbs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Fishing tradition 2 Crafting of boats (lancha planúas) 3 Lancha Planúa's Festival 4 Parrandón Playero's Festival 5 Virgen del Carmen's Festival 6 Confection of dulce de alegría |

In collaboration with FPR consultants and local leaders, the operational field team assessed the current state of the three main tourism assets in Punta Santiago: the Fishing Village, the Cayo Santiago Biological Field Station (CSBFS), and Efraín Archilla Diez Natural Reserve.

This assessment allowed FPR to determine the right investment strategy to spearhead the recovery of these assets.

The Fishing Village



The Fishing Village represents an exponential economic engine for Punta Santiago, thanks to its strategic location and the gastronomic offer it derives. There are several gastronomic businesses, especially of seafood and fried foods. There is also the fish market, the economic engine of the area. Another protagonist element there is the dock, where locals and visitors meet daily to fish and observe the beautiful natural landscape (the coastal sunset, Cayo Santiago and Vieques in the distance).

The Punta Santiago Fishing Village is the place the fishing community of Punta Santiago calls home. It is comprised of three buildings: (1) the fishermen's lockers', (2) Delicias del Mar Kiosk, and (3) Pescadería T y M. It also serves as a boatyard for the fishermen's boats. Both, the kiosk and the lockers are run by Pescadores Unidos de Punta Santiago Humacao, Inc. On the other hand, the Pescadería is run by Vice President Héctor Ramírez, known as "Tolo." The fishery and the fishermen are separately run from each other but are codependent. "Tolo" usually buys the fishermen's daily catch and supplies the fishermen with ice for their trips. On the other hand, the fishermen supply the fish to the fishery and the Delicias del Mar Kiosk sells an assortment of seafood. The excess money is redistributed to the fishermen through fishing equipment, among other supplies.

Through the initial assessment and individual interviews, the operational field team identified various challenges. On a good day, this fishing village employed over 12 fishers. However, hurricane Maria changed that as it devastated the village, decimating most of the fishermen's vessels. Flooding destroyed all the fishing equipment stored in the fishermen's lockers as well as all the appliances stored in the Pescadería and Delicias del Mar Kiosk. They also lost their ice machine, six freezers, and countless other belongings. After the hurricane, most of the fishermen could not fish anymore and had to find other ways to make a living. Antonio "Tony" Torres, President of Pescadores Unidos de Punta Santiago Inc., stated how most of his fishermen had to work in the construction sector to make ends meet.



One of the biggest necessities of the Fishing Village was a new ice machine, since this equipment is necessary for daily operations. The fishermen use ice to preserve the catch at sea (approx. 18 pounds per trip). On the other side, the Delicias Kiosk consumes around 142 pounds of ice per week. The absence of this machine had a heavy impact on the village's pocket because they had to buy ice daily. According to Antonio "Tony" Torres, the village's operational costs rose, cutting profits short for everyone.

Acknowledging these situations, the operational field team moved forward with donations to help them reach pre-Maria-levels. On September 26, they were able to deliver the ice machine to the fishing village. Since then, the fishermen have been saving up to \$12 per trip; the Delicias Kiosk, on the other hand, have been saving up approximately \$19 per day.



Freezers were another main need the fishermen village had. Originally, the Pescadería had six freezers but lost them all to flooding. The absence of freezers left Héctor Ramírez "Tolo" with limited storage space. For this reason, he was unable to buy or store his fisherman's catch. When the field team arrived at the village, the Pescadería could only hold about a total of 1,368 pounds of storage space in three freezers. According to chest freezer manufacturers, you can store 35 pounds of product per cubic foot. However, seafood must be handled carefully. Filling freezers to the brim can destroy shellfish and other types of catch, leaving even less storage space. Acknowledging this need, FPR decided to donate three 19.8 cubic feet chest freezers which added approximately 2,079 pounds of additional storage space. This donation helped bring the Pescadería closer to pre-Maria levels.

"We thank Foundation for Puerto Rico for the donations of equipment that we needed so that the fishermen could obtain daily sustenance. Thanks to Foundation, the Village is steadily developing. We must improve it until we reach better conditions than those prior to the hurricane, but yes, we are heading towards that and its already bringing results. There is more customer movement in the Pescadería and the kiosk in the Village."

*Antonio "Tony" Torres,
President of Pescadores Unidos de Punta Santiago, Inc.*



THE CAYO SANTIAGO BIOLOGICAL FIELD STATION (CSBFS)



An unusual gem sits across the coast of Punta Santiago, the two small connected cays known as Cayo Santiago are home to more than 1,800 rhesus monkeys that form part of ongoing research run by The Cayo Santiago Biological Field Station (CSBFS). As an educational asset, it has been an unparalleled resource for research, education, and training both national and international students and scientists. Historically, they have employed generations of people from the Punta Santiago community and are considered an integral part of the community. As a natural asset, the Cayo Santiago also holds a place in Punta Santiago's culture and daily life.

Hurricane Maria hit the island of Cayo Santiago directly and caused unprecedented damage to both green and gray infrastructure. The cay suffered the loss of 90% of its vegetation, limiting the monkey's sources of shade and food. At least 98% of the research center (including vehicles, laboratories, and equipment) was destroyed. It also destroyed all cisterns that store rainwater except for the only two made of concrete. The apparent competition for the limited supply of drinking water motivated the monkeys to drink sea water, a behavior not previously observed. Angelina Ruiz, associate director of the CSBFS, expressed how difficult it had been to recover from the hit as damages ranged well into a seven-digit figure. The CSBFS receives around 50 visitors for training and research purposes, often housing them in Punta Santiago for periods ranging from 30 days to two years, making this institution an important contributor to the local economy. FPR directed its efforts towards aiding the recovery of Cayo Santiago's flora in hopes of preserving the institution's integrity as a research station as well as a natural and cultural asset.

Recovery efforts in Cayo Santiago were bound to be complex. Ruiz from CSBFS had already reached out to various organizations searching for help without much luck. FPR needed to find partners, experts who could assess and build a recovery plan. FPR reached out to the Department of Natural Resources (DRNA), Para la Naturaleza, Protectores de Cuencas (PC), National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the US Forest Service to help with recovery and revitalization. FPR was able to bring these partners together for a meeting in mid-July. The consensus was that a pilot reforestation exercise had to be performed before attempting a full-fledged operation. Para la Naturaleza provided seeds and trees; DRNA harvested and made mangrove seeds available, which would tend to the accelerating erosion on the cay; the NRCS provided technical assistance to perform soil salinity testing; and the US Forest Service committed to looking for possible funding opportunities. The NRCS's thorough assessment for Cayo Santiago, included comprehensive testing and evaluation of soil quality and erosion, as well as plant inventory of existing species. The US Forest Service was also able to allocate funding for actual improvements and equipment in the cay after receiving a formal proposal from the CSBFS. Over 50 trees were planted as well, in collaboration with Para la Naturaleza and the help of volunteers.

Cayo Santiago represents an important element for various local businesses with touristic services offering monkey sightseeing around the cay. Yet a new law billed by the Caribbean Primate Research Center (CPRC), that manages the CSBFS, created a 200-meter perimeter around the island in which transit would be prohibited. All trespassers now must pay a \$1,500 fine. The law seeks to protect the monkeys and the research activities held in the cay. This perimeter, being great in distance, affected tour operators that took visitors near the cay. Despite several conversations with both the CPRC and the tour operators, the field team concluded there is no way around the law for operators to get close enough to the cay to be able to continue providing these types of tours. Therefore, tour operators would have to redesign their tourist experiences bearing the wellbeing of the natural and scientific resource in mind.

Other potential experiences within the visitor economy that the CPRC shared with FPR were the ideas of developing a museum and accommodations for researchers. Both projects would be held in the facilities of a former public school that would serve as CPRC's headquarters through a lease agreement between the Autonomous Municipality of Humacao and the UPR Medical Science Campus. The field team supported CPRC by helping clean the rooms and prepare them for painting, as well as by seeking advice from some experts to better understand the potential of the projects. A curator recommended the creation of an interactive exhibition room instead of a museum with:

- *Visual arts - Paintings by local artists inspired by Cayo Santiago*
- *Educational videos of the rhesus monkeys and live broadcasts from Cayo Santiago*
- *Historic images*
- *Display of bones and auscultation area*
- *Participatory World Map*

Our partners Local Guest were also involved in conceptualizing the experience. They proposed immersive K-12 educational workshops for school groups in the exhibition room where they would enjoy: a short film about CSBFS, meet one of the scientists, and learn about the worldwide research in the CSBFS. Partial sustainable economic feasibility exercises were carried out by our partners INprende. The field team also supported the creation of a one-pager for the CPRC to improve the overall image and branding of the organization.



THE NATURAL RESERVE, RESERVA NATURAL EFRAÍN ARCHILLA DIEZ



Aside from the local seafood cuisine, one of Punta Santiago’s key assets for incoming visitors and residents is the Efraín Archilla Díez Natural Reserve. It has an extension of 3,186 acres of land and serves as shelter, nesting, and feeding grounds for the diverse wildlife that call this site their home. In addition to having an extensive trail for strolling and biking, recreational fishing was also a common practice among local and foreign visitors alike. Four locally managed micro businesses ranging from biking and kayaking tours to a cafe and souvenir stand operate from this facility. These businesses were a product of P.E.C.E.S.’s business incubator and accelerator program.



At first glance, the destruction of vegetation caused by hurricane Maria was one of the most shocking aspects of the natural reserve’s condition. Its recovery had been slow. Vegetative debris still obstructed trails and waterways. On the other hand, due to infrastructure damages suffered after hurricane Maria, only two of the businesses were operating at time of the team’s arrival. The natural reserve’s most pressing needs were mainly infrastructural. Among them were damaged gazebos, fungus-infested office trailers, and a heavily affected pavilion where most of the businesses operated from. Important maintenance equipment was also damaged, which in turn hindered this site’s ability to get back on its feet.





Furthermore, the natural reserve's administration policies were an added challenge. For the past seven years the Reserve has been under a co-management agreement made between P.E.C.E.S., the Puerto Rico Tourism Company (PRTC), and the DRNA. The Cooperative Agreement, signed in 2011, governs the Reserve and is valid until 2026. Essentially, the PRTC commits to promoting the Reserve among local and foreign travelers. On the other hand, DRNA administrates and manages the Reserve under a "land lease agreement" and has the capacity to allow its use and occupation. Finally, P.E.C.E.S. helps with the social, financial, and educational development of the Reserve.

To better understand this relationship, the operational field team revisited this agreement to understand which parties had certain jurisdictions and were responsible for different aspects of the natural reserve's reconstruction. Two-thirds of the parties in this agreement were government agencies. Advancements were slowed down by tedious bureaucratic procedures. Pushing for a reconstruction of this magnitude without the proper response from government agencies and a lack of resources was daring considering the significant funds needed to get the natural reserve back on track.

Learning from the initial multisectoral meeting, it seemed the best way to approach this challenge was to meet with all three parties to determine the course of action. After several meetings, an action plan was set in motion.

Fortaleza Para Ti, a program run by the First Lady's office, alongside the Regional Director for the DRNA, quickly moved in to help remove remaining debris. Also, with the support of FPR, they rehabilitated a neglected structure located inside a part of the Reserve called "Morrillo," among other improvements. The CSBFS was another collaborator in the Natural Reserve's recovery, putting equipment such sections of a floating dock to help clear branches and fallen trees stuck throughout water canals at their disposal. The CSBFS also donated a water cistern with filtering capabilities, which the team turned into a watering station for visitors to fill their canteens. In turn, the DRNA would also put forth staff available in the natural reserve to assist and collaborate in other recovery needs that the CSBFS had of their own.

Para la Naturaleza was another important partner in advancing the natural reserve's green infrastructure recovery. Para la Naturaleza had the reforestation program Hábitat that aimed to plant 750,000 native and endemic trees in different parts of Puerto Rico. The program comprises a reforestation plan in response to the destruction caused by hurricanes Irma and Maria. PLN's Hábitat program helped plant 32 native trees in the receiving areas of the reserve. FPR later coordinated volunteer efforts and hosted over 75 residents, students and visitors to clean out, prep, and plant an additional 100 native trees in the coastal region.

FPR also made donations to fix the roofs of all gazebos and provided outdoor chairs and tables for the receiving area. At the end of the first phase, the Reserve was better equipped to receive visitors, although not all areas were accessible.



Efraín Archilla Diez Natural Reserve



Results

The previous section went through each impact area describing not just the results, but the process and strategies implemented which are as important. A summary of the full intervention in Punta Santiago is on the next table and includes the objective for each impact area, the intervention strategy, the action taken, and the results. To reiterate, Bottom Up was designed so that short-term investments could speed up recovery and improve resiliency in a community. In this second pilot, the implementation strategy was to prioritize investments in key tourism assets in the community. These assets were the Fishing Village, the Cayo Santiago Biological Field Station, and the Natural Reserve. As a result, the operational field team focused its efforts on these impact areas. By the end of this first phase of investments, the destination needed to be in a better position to initiate longer-term recovery destination planning. This could only be possible if the main tourist assets were ready to receive visitors.

To speed up recovery, investments were made in small businesses near the main tourism assets selected. The Small Business Cash Grant Program accompanied by individual coaching sessions was effective at maintaining those businesses open and helping them back to pre-Maria levels. FPR provided additional technical capacity to existing businesses in Punta Santiago through workshops on various topics such as customer service, marketing and promotion, human resources, operation, and finance and accounting. FPR also invested in spurring the development of new business ideas and opportunities in Punta Santiago. The new businesses supported by FPR are Súpernova Café, LLC., receiving seed funding of \$28,045.00, and Productos Don Daniel, Inc., receiving \$30,000 in seed funding. This sort of entrepreneurship environment reinforced by FPR's intervention to existing and new business ideas had a huge impact and made the difference between a short and long recovery in Punta Santiago. As Denis Pereira from INprende stated, "The participants were optimistic entrepreneurs willing to use their resources to identify business opportunities".

The resiliency objectives were tackled through investments in nonprofit organizations, community-based initiatives, and associations, and by leveraging existing businesses to improve the physical infrastructure in the

destination. Punta Santiago now has more capacity to produce potable water, has access to resilient satellite Wi-Fi hotspots in case of an emergency, and solar public lighting in strategic areas.

The remaining resiliency component had to do with social capital, which means building local capacity and enhancing stakeholder bonds to make a recovery and development sustainable. In contrast to Orocovis, when the operational team arrived at Punta Santiago, several organizations were working in the relief stage of the region. The strategic multisectoral meeting with the organizations identified in the stakeholder mapping exercise was the right path to build common ground. The collaborations and alliances created were beneficial and some of them unprecedented, as some local organizations were prompted to work together for the first time.

A new component added in this pilot community was the asset recovery and revitalization. In Orocovis the main strategy was around investments in small businesses within commercial clusters. As stated before, in Punta Santiago the focus was around key visitor economy assets. By assisting these tourism assets with revitalization and recovery, the destination would be more likely to grow and prosper by welcoming back visitors. There is certainly still room for improvement. More investments and follow up is needed, but if these collaborations and initiatives can evolve and sustain, long-term destination planning will surely be more viable. FPR will continue to support the existing collaborations between local stakeholders regarding these assets and finalizing the physical revitalization process.

"The collaboration of Foundation for Puerto Rico came at a crucial moment in the recovery. The Bottom Up Team not only helped reactivate key economic assets in Punta Santiago, but also boosted the social component by integrating various groups in the community that were working independently in the past. By reorganizing the community and local stakeholders, they facilitated the process of engagements that strengthen people's capacities and skills to rethink possible scenarios of economic recovery in Punta Santiago. This experience allowed us to come together and created a common community mindset."

José Oquendo, CEO, P.E.C.E.S.

FOUNDATION FOR PUERTO RICO'S TOTAL COMMITMENT TO THE BOTTOM UP IN PUNTA SANTIAGO, HUMACAO: \$529,650

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>BASIC NEEDS AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p> | <p>Make investments in small businesses and local organizations physical infrastructure so they are more resilient but can also serve as additional Hubs for the community.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Installed 11 water cisterns and distributed 18 water filter systems to main assets and 12 satellite Wi-Fi antennas to small businesses. · Donated and installed satellite 12 Wi-Fi equipment to small businesses, local stakeholders and main assets. · Installed 100 solar lamps in 39 small businesses and main assets. · Three bodies of water tested; 23 business owners trained; 17 community members trained in water testing and responsible. · 14 business owners trained in compostable material and waste management. · Restricted donation of \$90,000 to P.E.C.E.S. for solar energy system at their community school. · 11 businesses and locations, visited, assessed and provided with a power energy assessment with short-term and long-term recommendations. · A 193-piece debris removal kit donated to P.E.C.E.S. and the CERT to ensure access to key areas of the destination. |
| <p>SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT</p> | <p>Existing Businesses Investments to make small businesses more resilient and provide intense technical support so they can sustain new market realities and improve the quality of their products.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · \$38,000 in cash grants to 15 businesses · 72 hours of individual technical assistance and entrepreneurial workshops to XX businesses. · Three capacity building workshops open to all existing business. |
| | <p>New Businesses Help create an environment of entrepreneurship through multiple events and execute an incubation program that leads to new businesses that could help increase visitor demand.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Two entrepreneurial Events · 72 hours of business education provided to XX local entrepreneurs to assist in the development of new business ideas. Eight entrepreneurs completed the boot camp and were evaluated for seed funding. · Two new business ideas completed the program and received seed funding: Súpernova Café, LLC. with a seed funding of \$28,045.00 and Productos Don Daniel, Inc. with a total of \$30,000 in seed funding. |
| <p>SOCIAL CAPITAL</p> | <p>Push for strategic alliances between P.E.C.E.S. and other local stakeholders around disaster preparedness, asset revitalization, public safety, and economic development goals.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Created a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) - 74 community members certified around disaster preparedness. · Created a Community Security Council- Established a council with 16 community members. · Fostered alliances between entities for the recovery, restoration, and revitalization of main assets identified. |
| <p>IMAGE AND TOURISM REVITALIZATION</p> | <p>Complete a versatile visitor economy asset mapping exercise and develop content using main assets identified.</p> <p>Revitalize physical infrastructure in main assets identified.</p> | <p>Financial investments made in main assets to revitalize its social and physical infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The Fishing Village – Minimized operating costs for fishermen and businesses. They saved an average of \$83 per week and increased storage capacity (over 800 pounds of product) by donating the necessary equipment (ei: ice machine and freezers). · La Reserva – FPR donated \$24,506.33 to fix the roof of all gazebos and donated outdoor common area furniture for the receiving area. FPR also coordinated the planing of over 130 native trees and the cleaning and removal of debris. · The Cayo Santiago Biological Field Station (CSBFS) – coordinated the provision of seeds and trees for the cay. Coordinated technical assistance to perform soil salinity testing, which included comprehensive testing and evaluation of soil quality and erosion, as well as plant inventory of existing species. Finally, in collaboration with Para la Naturaleza over 50 trees were planted. |

Local Destination Plan – Phase II

DESTINATION PLANNING

In March 2017, FPR published a research paper on Destination Management, where it analyzed the different elements that make up a destination and the different governing structures to manage it.⁴ Most importantly, the paper made some critical observations about the challenges within each element in Puerto Rico and recommended a management framework to develop the destination. During that time, FPR urged the nation to begin a destination planning exercise using the recommended framework. As a result of these efforts, several key stakeholders joined FPR a multi-stakeholder coalition to work on a national destination plan for Puerto Rico.

In 2018, FPR began applying several national destination planning elements at a community level, through the Bottom up Destination Recovery Initiative. FPR borrowed concepts from traditional destination planning models, community-based planning initiatives in Puerto Rico, and asset-based development programs around the world. The result was a customized proprietary framework that could work in communities in Puerto Rico. This part of the program has three main objectives:

- *Create a community-led destination plan that could help bring more visitors in the short term.*

- *Ensure commitments from local stakeholders towards the implementation of the plan.*

- *Develop sustainable locally based governance around plan goals and objectives.*

The following are some of the benefits of creating a local destination management plan with the participation of local leaders from the community:

- *Encourages residents to value their assets and commits them to managing them responsibly.*

- *Promotes that local residents themselves, and not external agents, develop and manage their community as a destination, capitalizing on existing assets.*

- *Helps establish strategies that guide for local governance among the different stakeholders of the community.*

- *Facilitates the incorporation and participation of the community in other tourism projects and efforts at the state and/or regional level (for example: Puerto Rico Tourism Company, Discover Puerto Rico, Para la Naturaleza, among others)*



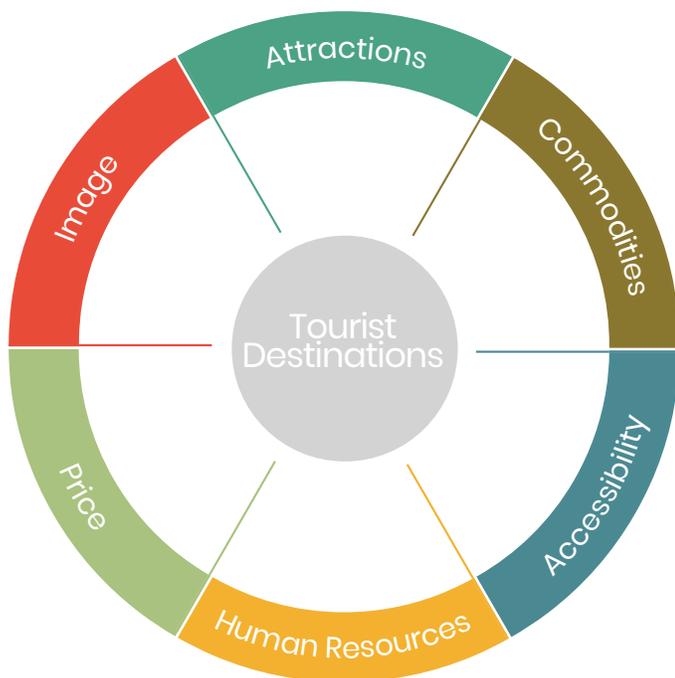
⁴ "La economía del visitante: gobernanza y manejo del destino". Foundation for Puerto Rico. March 2017."

SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

This Local Destination Management Plan (“Plan”) will convey a statement of purpose shared and agreed upon by a group of key stakeholders in the community. The Plan seeks to define the ways in which the destination is to be developed over a given period of time. It also sets out the roles and concrete actions to be carried out by local key stakeholders in the short term to increase tourism activity in a sustainable manner, in line with the vision adopted by the community residents themselves.

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines six main elements that include most of the aspects related to tourism activities in a destination: attractions, amenities, accessibility, image, price, and human resources⁵. The Plan uses this model or theoretical framework to ensure that tourism is addressed from a holistic, comprehensive, and inclusive perspective.

Elements of the Destination



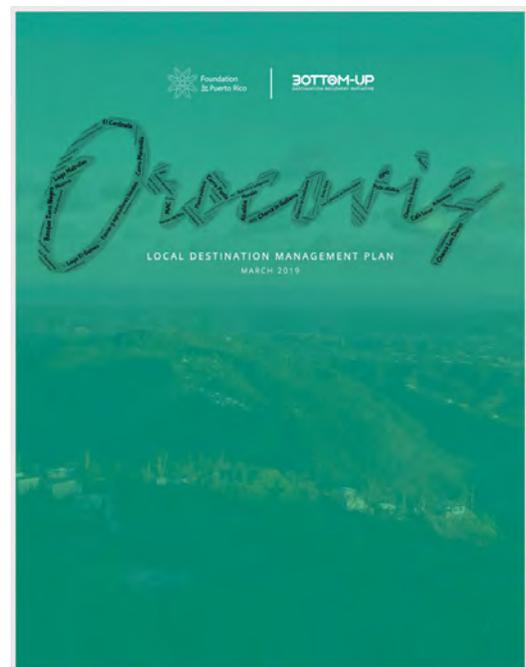
A traditional destination plan includes elements such as territorial planning, improvements to basic infrastructure (telecommunications, roads and energy), as well as land and coastal management,

zoning, and government incentives. However, the objective of this plan is to achieve a local approach to the planning and management of the destination's tourism offer.

For this reason, the Plan establishes short-term attainable goals that do not depend to a large extent on factors or actors external to the destination. A new bridge, the dredging of a body of water or tax incentives are examples of projects that would fall outside the scope of this Plan. The objectives and projects included in the Plan must be managed by local leaders themselves, even when it might require collaboration with a state agency. The aim of this process is to establish a local governance of tourism efforts, so it can lead to future initiatives managed by the local stakeholders themselves.

THE OROCOVIS LOCAL PLAN - THE FIRST PILOT

In March 2019 FPR hosted a presentation of the Orocovis Local Destination Plan, the first plan using this new methodology. The local plan resulted in a destination assessment, six (6) strategic projects and a new locally based governance model, led by the municipal government⁶.



⁵ World Tourism Organization (2007). *A practical guide to tourism destination management*, Madrid: WTO

⁶ "Orocovis: Local Destination Management Plan". Foundation for Puerto Rico. March 2017.

One of the lessons learned from the Orocovis planning process was the need for a shorter timeframe and quicker turn around for deliverables. To avoid fatigue among participants, FPR was conducting one meeting per month during the first few months. However, this proved to be counterproductive at times since it affected momentum and ultimately delayed the process. The gap between meetings meant FPR had to spent a considerable amount of time recapping what happened in the previous one. For those reasons FPR increased the number of monthly meetings in Punta Santiago and attempted to reduce the timeline in order to complete the plan in three to four months, instead of the six or seven in Orocovis.

FPR identified the need for capacity building in Orocovis. Destination Management is not by any means an easy process, it takes time, resources, and technical capacity. Although FPR invested time in educating local leaders in Orocovis about the visitor economy and the destination elements, it was not enough as more training and coaching was needed to fully equip local stakeholders in all destination management components. As a result of what was learned in Orocovis, FPR incorporated additional training hours in Punta Santiago, in topics such as community tourism, destination management, and image and branding. In addition to technical staff, FPR brought in resources from universities, the government, entrepreneurship organizations like Kiva, and international tourism organizations like Skift to Punta Santaigo. FPR took advantage of the extra meetings to incorporate these additional elements in the planning in Punta Santiago.

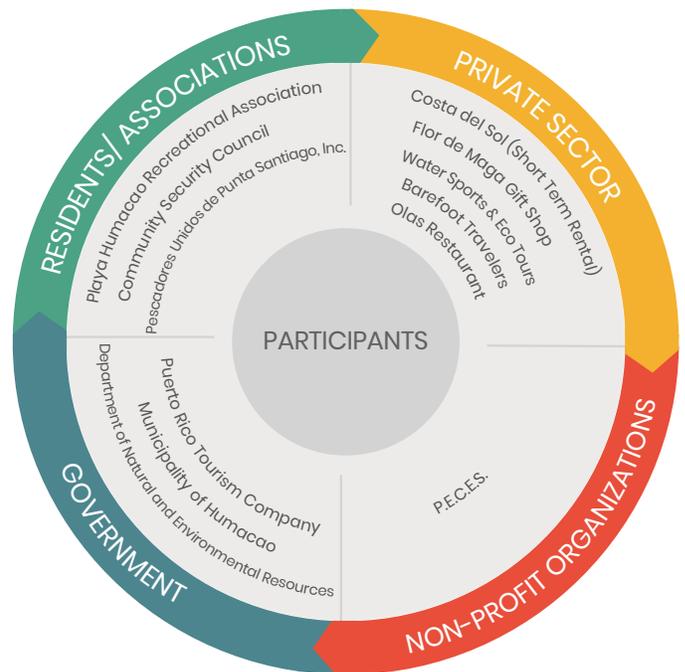
Development Process

During the development of the Local Destination Management Plan for Punta Santiago, there was participation from all the sectors, from residents and business owners, to state agencies and non-governmental organizations. FPR believes that a multisector approach leads to a more robust Plan, and thus a stronger the destination.

The Orocovis Municipal Government, through the Department of Tourism and Cultural Events had a prominent role in the planning process. So much so that it ended up being the lead in the plan's implementation. The mayor of Orocovis was a big supporter of the initiative and participated in several meetings as well. In Punta Santiago it was quite a different story. Although the municipal government participated in the planning process, through their Planning Office, they had a more passive role. There are several reasons for this. First, the destination plan was limited to a geographic area within the municipality of Humacao, versus Orocovis that was more about the municipality as a whole. Secondly, Punta Santiago has a very strong non-profit in P.E.C.E.S., which serves as a catalyst for many things in the community. Given P.E.C.E.S.'s prominent role in the community, to many, they are the considered the equivalent of the municipal government in Punta Santiago, both for local and non-local stakeholders. That being said, there was active participation of local and central government in the planning process.

Below is a list of the some of the key actors participating in the development of this Local Plan.

Participants



There were 15 formal planning meetings over a seven-month period. Participants worked on multiples tasks in preparation for every meeting. In total, FPR calculated over 600 work hours from all participants.

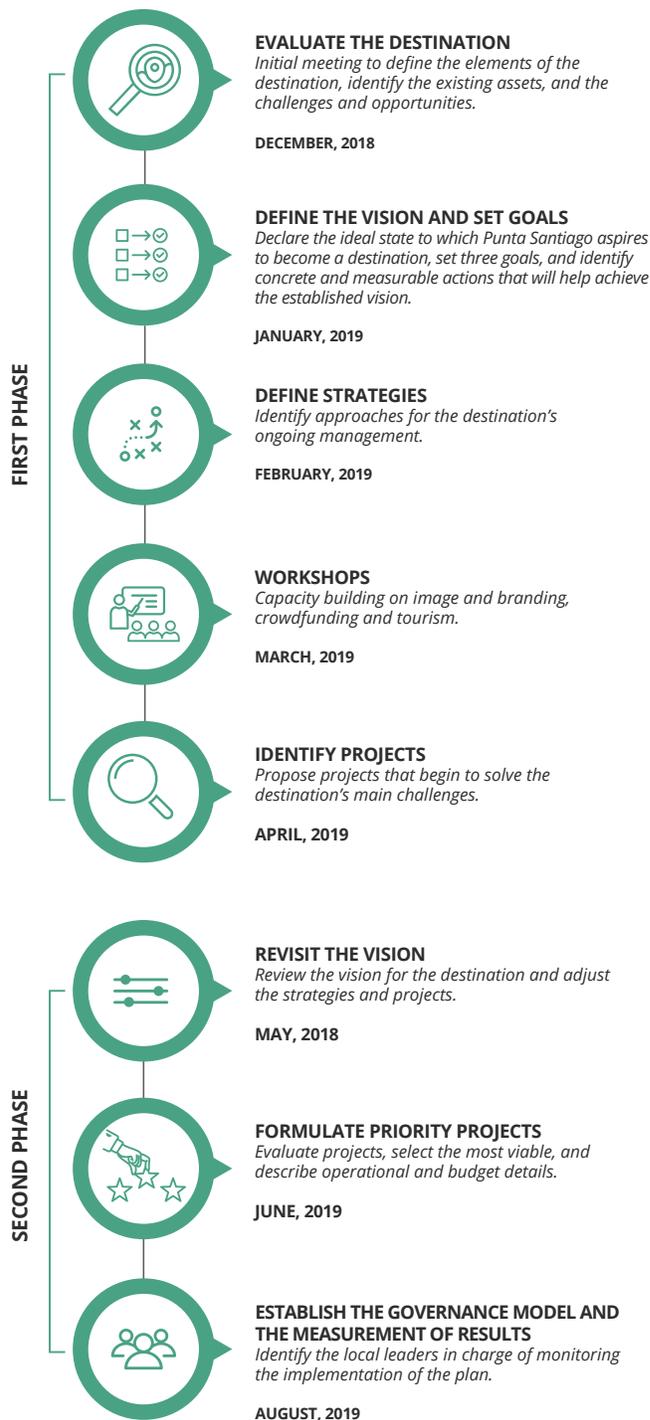
The official planning process began with a workshop on destination management and tourism development conducted by FPR. Participants then identified ideas, challenges, and opportunities in Punta Santiago through a series of collaborative exercises.

Over the following months, e-mail communications and text messages were sent to community leaders to gather ideas and articulate the overall vision for Punta Santiago, as well as challenges and opportunities within each element of the destination. Finally, participants evaluated and formulated potential projects for the Plan. Throughout the process, the community leaders maintained an active role while the FPR team supported them on more specialized topics such as cost validation and marketing and promotion.

Although the goal was to finish the plan in 4 months, there were elements that required FPR to add additional steps in the process. After identifying the projects early in the planning process, FPR had to revisit them months later. Some of projects were not directly linked to the challenges and opportunities identified in earlier exercises or the destination assessment prepared by FPR and Local Guest. For example, some projects were associated with integrating tourism attractions and experiences or the re-branding of Punta Santiago as a as diverse tourist destination. However, the data and the destination assessment did not support these assertions. It seemed that some of the projects were very similar to the ones in the Orocovis Destination Plan, which FPR shared with participants. For various reasons, some of the projects or ideas were not aligned to the realities of the destination. As a result, FPR had to work around participants' assumptions by conducting additional planning workshops in the community. Most notably, FPR led an asset mapping exercise and revisited the challenges and opportunities matrix prepared months before. These exercises helped the community better understand their assets and thus provided for a more grounded project selection. Additionally, given the interest of local stakeholders in community tourism, former Tourism Company Chief Terestella González

also came in to discuss the community-based tourism model, and lessons learned from previous government efforts in Punta Santiago. As a result of these additional efforts, the timeline was extended by two months, which meant revisiting the mission, all strategies, and projects one more time.

Work Plan



Local Management Destination Plan

ASSET IDENTIFICATION

One of the most important exercises of the destination planning process is creating an Asset Map with all tourist attractions, experience assets, and tourist services. It is considered best practice to use existing assets as a baseline for any destination planning effort.

This inventory is not fixed, assets could be added or cease to exist with time, which makes it a dynamic tool. Ideally, local leaders maintain an updated inventory of the assets and add additional information such as the current physical state of the asset, hours of operation, photos, description of service/product offering, among other things.

In Punta Santiago, the FPR team had already identified several assets during the first stage of the Bottom-Up Initiative. Local leaders who participated in the workshops, validated, corrected, and contributed additional information to the destination asset inventory.

Although an asset validation drill was done at the beginning of the planning process, due to the need to revisit the vision and all projects, a more intense and thorough asset mapping exercise was conducted in the month of May. This included two full sessions with participants, one focused on identifying all assets and another on how to link them to tourism activity.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | <p>HISTORICAL AND BUILT ASSETS El Morrillo Former Customs Office (with murals) The Dock (known as “el muey”) Water Park (closed) Community Center of Playa Humacao</p> |
|  | <p>NATURAL ASSETS Natural Reserve of Humacao Efraín Archilla Diez Beaches Santiago Cay Water Sports and Eco Tours Morrillo Cycle</p> |
|  | <p>ENTITIES Playa Humacao Recreational Association Verde Mar Recreational Association Pescadores Unidos de Punta Santiago, Inc. Caribbean Primate Research Center P.E.C.E.S. Community Security Council</p> |
|  | <p>GASTRONOMICAL ASSETS A variety of restaurants</p> |
|  | <p>LODGING Vacation Center (closed) Barefoot Travelers Rooms and Adventure Guesthouses and other Airbnbs</p> |
|  | <p>CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC ASSETS Fishing Tradition Craftsmanship and Construction of Lanchas Planúas The Lancha Planúa Festival Parrandón Playero Festival Virgen del Carmen Festival Preparation of the dulce de alegría</p> |



ASSESSMENT OF THE DESTINATION

As part of the initial assessment of Punta Santiago, FPR wanted to identify critical challenges and opportunities affecting the development of the destination. An initial destination assessment was conducted by Local Guest. FPR led a series of validation exercises with participating local leaders until a consensus was reached regarding the biggest challenges at Punta Santiago. The following diagram displays these challenges by destination element:

Timeline

| ELEMENT | MAIN CHALLENGE |
|---|--|
|  ATTRactions | Lack of enough tourist experiences. Lack of digital selling infrastructures (e-commerce) in existing operators. Lack of integration between the community and the main tourist asset, The Natural Reserve. |
|  COMMODITIES | Lack of accommodation options (traditional and non-traditional). |
|  ACCESSIBILITY | Lack of signage to identify and highlight the tourist value of existing assets. |
|  HUMAN RESOURCES | Lack of knowledge of the value and history of the existing assets by residents, business owners and tour operators. |
|  IMAGE | Lack of acknowledgment of Punta Santiago as a tourist destination by Puerto Ricans, and consequently by non-locals. |

Using the analysis provided by Local Guest and participant input, it was concluded that Punta Santiago has adequate tourism assets, particularly natural ones, but not enough tourism experiences to generate additional demand of visitors. Part of the problem with tourism experiences stems from the lack of technical capacity and capital of residents to start a tourism business. From managing reservations to bookkeeping, starting, and maintaining a

business could be quite a challenge for many in Punta Santiago, even though they are more than capable of providing a unique service to a tourist. During the planning process, FPR identified several individuals eager to start a new experience in Punta Santiago, from teaching visitors how to fish to a fish carving and preparation demonstration. There were many examples with great potential. As a result, the consensus was that the greatest opportunity lays in maximizing the abundant natural assets in order to create new adventure and ecotourism experiences to connect with existing ones.

Another challenge observed is the lack of recognition of Punta Santiago as a destination, not only to potential visitors but to the community residents themselves. Many residents in Punta Santiago did not see tourism as a real opportunity to create jobs and economic activity in the community. As a result, FPR had to work with the different sectors to create awareness regarding the opportunities more visitors can bring to Punta Santiago. Having residents sold on this opportunity is a pre-requisite to any development process.

Tourists from the metro area of Puerto Rico are low hanging fruit for Punta Santiago as they consistently engage in adventure and eco-tourism. Many metro area residents might be familiar with Punta Santiago, but more as a community devastated by the hurricane than a tourist destination. Punta Santiago could be a perfect day trip for metro residents on the weekends, with its compact geographic area and easy accessibility (only 45 minutes from San Juan).

Although natural assets have the greatest tourism potential, gastronomic chinchorro (restaurant hopping) experiences are currently generating the greatest demand for visits. A challenge with these visits is that the length of stay is short since these stops are usually part of a multi-town route, thus, tourism consumption is minimal. However, you could take advantage of these visitors stopping in a restaurant to raise awareness about the other tourism opportunities in Punta Santiago, thus encouraging future visits.



“Punta Santiago will be the most important community-based tourism destination in Puerto Rico with a diversity of natural, cultural and gastronomic experiences managed by members of the community.”

It is important to notice the inclusion of community-based tourism in the mission. This is due to a very strong community-based initiatives in Punta Santiago and some distrust of the government and large tourist providers. As mentioned before, Punta Santiago, unlike most low-income communities in Puerto Rico, has a strong and well-known NGO in P.E.C.E.S., which provided local residents inspiration on this model. Along with P.E.C.E.S., Punta Santiago has additional community-based organizations like the Recreational Organization and the Fisherman’s Club. This explains local residents’ desires to develop the destination with community-based organizations leading the way.

Goals of the Destination

Once the participants reached a shared vision, the next step was to establish concrete goals for the destination. Goals are results or achievements that you want to accomplish through concrete actions or projects. In Punta Santiago, participants were asked to define three goals they wanted achieve in the short term in order to fulfill their vision as a destination. To select them, the local leaders took the challenges and opportunities discussed in the previous session as well as the destination assessment provided by FPR into account. The participants agreed that these goals were achievable, measurable and had a great impact in Punta Santiago as a destination.

PUNTA SANTIAGO SHORT-TERM GOALS (2022):

- 10% of visitors at top chinchorro restaurants will return to the destination to visit the Humacao Nature Reserve or other new tourist experiences.
- 75% of the experiences and tourist elements in Punta Santiago will have some element of community management (partial management).
- 50% of the tourism experiences and tourist elements in Punta Santiago will be completely managed by one or more entities of the community (complete management).

The first goal selected reflects strategy to increase tourism activity by leveraging existing visits to the chinchorro restaurants. The other two goals are associated with the desire to become a community-based tourist destination.

Destination Strategies

After defining the vision, goals, and main challenges for each element of the destination, local leaders were tasked with defining strategies that could guide decisions around investments and identification of projects. A strategy session was held with local leaders, where they identified potential ideas and projects that could help Punta Santiago achieve its goals. This was done for each destination element.

Attractions

To improve the tourism offer, Punta Santiago needs to create new tourist experiences. There are residents, such as fishermen, who could offer such experiences yet lack the technical capacity or capital to start offering services to tourists. As a workaround, these residents can work with existing tourism providers (i.e. Water Sports and Eco Tours) so they can be included in their current catalog. Existing providers could then charge an administrative fee to residents for each experience they sell. This way new providers can engage more easily with the help of access to clients from existing ones. By the same token, existing ones diversify their portfolio offerings.

Commodities

Instead of thinking about new hotels or increasing short term rental accommodations, Punta Santiago should leverage existing lodging infrastructure. This is the case of the Vacation Center, a 36-village complex that belongs to the central government. Although this Center suffered damages from the hurricane, many of its structures are intact and remain in prime real estate location. It is currently closed with little chance of reopening. The rehabilitation of this space must become a priority for everyone in the community, as well as for the municipality and the central government. This Vacation Centers provides lodging infrastructure that is critical for the future development of the destination.

Accessibility

Due to lack of awareness and knowledge of tourism assets in Punta Santiago, signage (particularly interpretative signage) can be used to improve the experience of visitors. These signs not only identify assets, but they educate visitors and can transform the experience of the visit.

Human Resources

Due to lack of knowledge of existing tourism assets among local providers and community residents, Punta Santiago can establish an Ambassadors Program. Ambassadors programs have become excellent tools for promoting destinations throughout the world. However, these programs require training. Punta Santiago could take advantage of P.E.C.E.S.'s Alternative School and train students to become ambassadors of the destination. These ambassadors would help promote new (and existing) tourist experiences, both in Punta Santiago and in other parts of the Island.

Image and Marketing

Currently, the chinchorro restaurants attract the majority of visitors to Punta Santiago. Given the captive audience at these popular restaurants, like El Limon, product placement and promotional efforts through televisions, banners, and marketing materials can be displayed while visitors are there. Further-

more, once tourism ambassadors are trained (see human resources strategy) they can visit these restaurants to promote the experiences and Punta Santiago as a destination beyond the chinchorro.

Project Evaluation

In Orocovi's planning process, a project prioritization exercise was conducted among participants to select the projects that would receive priority in the Plan. An electronic questionnaire was used with a rubric that valued the project in four dimensions: complexity, impact, cost, and promptness. The projects with the highest score were identified as those with greater promptness, biggest impact, and lower cost and complexity.

This step was omitted in Punta Santiago this step was omitted for various reasons. In Orocovi, 13 projects with high impact potential were originally identified in the community. In Punta Santiago only about 6 or 7 were brought to the table by the participants. This made the project prioritization exercise unnecessary in Punta Santiago, although FPR had to put in more work to help define the projects. As stated before, a second project identification exercise was added towards the end of the planning process.

Once the local leaders reached consensus on the final six projects, a project formulation process began to determine costs and implementation details.

Each selected project was assigned to a participating local leader who then acted as project manager. Each local manager was given a template to design and decompose the project details. With the assistance of FPR technical staff, managers conducted independent research to establish a detailed description of the project, cost estimates, implementation schedule, impact level, and possible funding sources.

Each manager presented their findings to the rest of the participants at a subsequent meeting. By the end of the exercise, local leaders had a clearer idea of the steps required to implement each project.

Destination Projects

| PROJECT | DESCRIPTION | IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY | ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIME | ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION COST | PROJECTED ANNUAL REVENUES | PROJECT OWNER |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--------------------|
| DEVELOP NEW TOURIST EXPERIENCES THROUGH EXISTING SERVICE PROVIDERS | In Punta Santiago there is an abundance of natural assets, but not enough tourist experiences to increase demand for visits and length of stay. This project will identify at least 3 community resources that can offer a new tourist experience. Recognizing how difficult it is for a local resident to start a new business (systems, financing, insurance, etc.), these new providers would be part of existing companies that already offer services to visitors. This not only benefits new entrepreneurs by lowering startup costs and providing access to customers, but also benefits existing tourist operator by diversifying their inventory of tourism experiences. | New providers will work with the P.E.C.E.S. accelerator and other service providers to get training and coaching, in areas of customer service and product development. Support will also be given to existing companies that will be integrating new suppliers. These existing companies will also be supported in the development of their virtual catalog and electronic reservation and point of sale system. | 6-9 months | Initial Costs: (equipment and inventory): \$21,817 Capacity building: \$1,500 | \$94,915 (5 new experiences) | Will be identified |

| PROJECT | DESCRIPTION | IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY | ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIME | ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION COST | PROJECTED ANNUAL REVENUES | PROJECT OWNER |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| HISTORIC MURALS ROUTE DEVELOPMENT | Murals have become an important tourist attraction in many parts of the world. It is for that reason that the Humacao Beach Recreational Association will be working on making a series of murals in different areas throughout the community that show historical content and unique elements of the tradition and culture of Punta Santiago. The content of the murals will be designed by the members of the community to ensure that images relevant to the context of Punta Santiago are displayed. | Empty spaces will be identified near a tourist attraction that can be easily accessible to visitors. The Recreational Association will be responsible for obtaining input from residents and businesses to ensure a sense of belonging with the murals. The murals will be interdependent, so that the visitor sees them as a single experience. The project will seek to connect with social media "influencers" so they can visit them and post about it on their networks. | 6 months | \$8,400 | \$16,848 | Recreative Association of Playa Humacao |

| PROJECT | DESCRIPTION | IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY | ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIME | ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION COST | PROJECTED ANNUAL REVENUES | PROJECT OWNER |
|--|---|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| SPEARHEAD PROGRESS WITH REHABILITATION OF THE VACATION CENTER AND SEEK ADMINISTRATIVE TRANSFER TO LOCAL ORGANIZATION | This Vacation Center has 36 vacation units, which make it the main lodging facility in Punta Santiago. The center was affected by the hurricane, but it maintains a large part of its infrastructure and could be rehabilitated with money from the insurance claim and private investment. Although the rehabilitation of the Center could take years, it is important that efforts begin from this moment so that corresponding steps could begin as soon as possible (insurance, permits, agreements with the central government). Therefore, this project does not entail the rehabilitation of the Center itself, but to ensure it jumpstarts. As well, the project includes seeking an agreement with the central government in order to transfer part of the administration to local entity in Punta Santiago. | P.E.C.E.S. will lead the campaign to jumpstart this process by setting up meetings with government and creating awareness in the community about the importance of the Center for Punta Santiago. | 9-12 months | In-Kind time P.E.C.E.S. staff | -- | P.E.C.E.S. |

| PROJECT | DESCRIPTION | IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY | ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIME | ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION COST | PROJECTED ANNUAL REVENUES | PROJECT OWNER |
|------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE PROJECT | Signage is an essential element in a tourist destination, not only identifies all tourist attractions to the visitor, but also provides context to them during their visit. Currently, Punta Santiago has poor tourist signage, both informative and interpretive. Therefore, it is proposed to design and implement a new signage program with signs located both on the main road, starting at the intersection of Carr. # 3 and # 60, as well as some tourist attractions. The signs near the tourist attractions would be interpretive in nature, providing context and history to the visitor. | A meeting with leaders of Punta Santiago will be coordinated to decide places where the signs will be installed, seek collaboration from artists, create design and content. The idea is that the signs are creative and original so that they are distinguished from those of other destinations. The input of the community will be used to incorporate interesting facts, history, and culture of Punta Santiago. The signs will have consistency in content, colors, and design. | 4 months | \$7,541 | -- | Will be identified |

| PROJECT | DESCRIPTION | IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY | ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIME | ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION COST | PROJECTED ANNUAL REVENUES | PROJECT OWNER |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------|
| AMBASSADOR PROGRAM THROUGH THE P.E.C.E.S. SCHOOL | Traditionally, a destination hires promoters to promote attractions or has tourist information centers. Because there are no resources to promote the experiences (both existing as well as new ones) a new program of tourist ambassadors in Punta Santiago will be created. Ambassadors would need to be recruited and trained. For these purposes, the tourism ambassadors' program will be created at the P.E.C.E.S. Alternative School. The school will integrate an educational component into its core curriculum where students will be taught about the importance of visitor economy, tourist attractions, and promotional techniques. Students would receive credits for destination promotion activities as well. | Foundation for Puerto Rico will work with P.E.C.E.S. in the preparation of the curriculum. In addition, employees of the Tourism Company and DMO, and other private sector companies that use promoters in their marketing strategies will come to class to provide workshops for students. A private sector sponsor will be sought to create a Special Fund that will reward students with greater accumulation of promotional hours. | 4-6 months | \$31,524 | \$38,970* (If it includes tours offered by the students) | P.E.C.E.S. |

| PROJECT | DESCRIPTION | IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY | ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION TIME | ESTIMATED IMPLEMENTATION COST | PROJECTED ANNUAL REVENUES | PROJECT OWNER |
|---|---|--|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------|
| PROMOTION OF TOURISM EXPERIENCE IN KEY RESTAURANTS WITH SUPPORT FROM AMBASSADORS. | Currently the restaurants in Punta Santiago are the main attractions of visitors on the weekends through the chinchorro route in the area. To take advantage of this traffic, promotional material for the different tourist experiences (new and existing) will be placed in these restaurants in order to encourage a future visit. In addition to the promotional material, there will be a flat screen TV displaying videos of the different experiences in Punta Santiago. The promoters of the school of P.E.C.E.S. will amplify these efforts and will be able to make bookings on demand. | Participating restaurants will be identified based on volume of weekend traffic (maximum 4). An agreement will be made with the restaurants to determine the area in which to display the promotional materials, the frequency and the role of the ambassadors. Also, an economic incentive for the restaurant can be developed for each reservation made. In order to succeed, tourist providers must automate their reservation system so that ambassadors can book them electronically. | 3-4 months | Initial cost \$11,000 Yearly Cost \$2,800 | -- | P.E.C.E.S. |

GOVERNANCE MODEL

Collaborative work is essential to develop the destination in an integrated way, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the visitor economy. To improve destination management, one must enhance transparency in decision-making, avoid segmentation in the communication among the destination’s diverse local leaders, and encourage active collaboration across all sectors.

Therefore, it is necessary to establish a governance structure composed of local leaders committed to the development of the destination.

After talking with the local leaders, consensus was reached to create a Standing Committee for the Management of the Punta Santiago Destination. This committee would be responsible for:

- *Establishing and reviewing the destination’s priorities;*
- *Monitoring the various activities that will be carried out to implement the Plan;*
- *Measuring progress and results; and*
- *Identifying and distributing funds and resources.*

This Committee will be composed of the participating local leaders or any other person that the committee considers needs to be included.

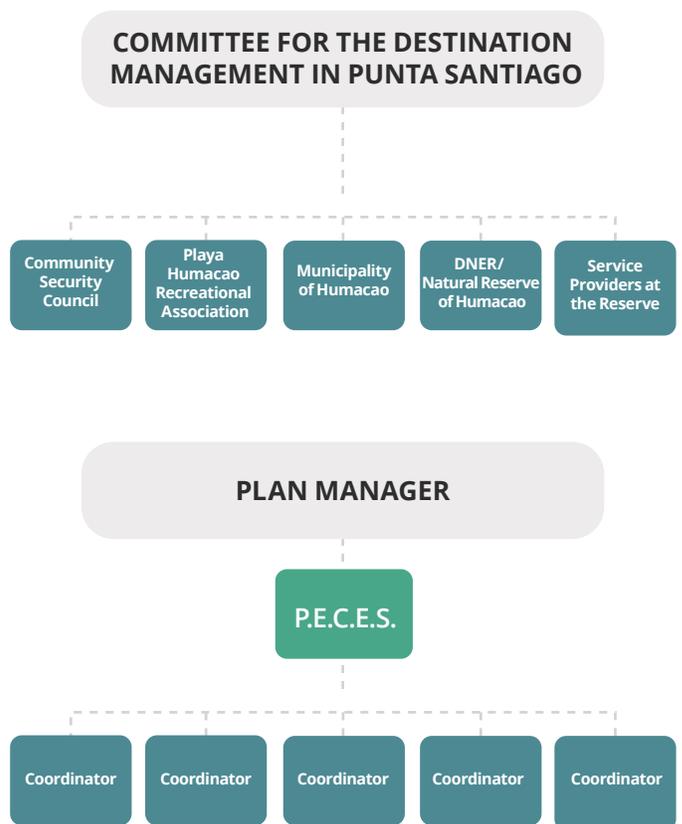
Under the local governance structure, there will be a Plan Coordinator in charge of the following:

- *Safeguarding the objectives of the Plan;*
- *Reviewing that all Projects are being satisfactorily implemented;*
- *Gather all necessary information to measure progress;*
- *Work with local leaders and external actors in the coordination of Projects.*

Under this proposed local governance model, Managers will continue to be responsible for following up on specific tasks for each assigned project.

The nonprofit P.E.C.E.S. will serve as Plan Coordinator, given the important role that the Department plays in the destination. The Coordinator will be in charge of periodically convening the committee and the Project Managers for follow-up meetings.

Because this is a new function for P.E.C.E.S., the Foundation will be providing technical assistance to the municipality’s staff over the next year in the areas of destination management, project management, and economic development.



The committee should meet with the Project Managers once every two months to discuss the status of the projects as well as the progress with the Plan’s objectives. During these meetings, the Managers will also be able to communicate the challenges or needs they are facing.

FPR will be sponsoring a Fellow over a six-month period to assist the municipality’s staff with the coordination of meetings and follow-up efforts. As part of the arrangement, the Fellow will submit progress reports to FPR on a monthly basis.

Performance measurement

Measuring the results of the Plan’s implementation is an important component of destination management, as it ensures that the efforts and resources invested are being maximized.

Destination performance will be measured through the outcome of key performance indicators (KPIs). These KPIs were established based on the goals defined by local leaders. The Committee should periodically measure the progress of the KPIs.

For the plan indicators associated with community tourism, a tool will be developed by FPR to conduct an inventory of assets and tourist attractions. FPR will also provide P.E.C.E.S. with guide to classify the assets into three (3) categories.

- *Asset managed by an individual or company that is not part of the Punta Santiago community (i.e. Vacation Center)*
- *Asset partially managed by an individual or company that is part of the Punta Santiago community (i.e. La Reserva)*
- *Assets managed entirely by an individual or company that is part of the Punta Santiago community (i.e. Water Sports and Eco Tours)*

Once the inventory is completed, a baseline for the indicators will be established to measure progress and compliance with the goals. In the future, the local participants should attempt to measure not only the amount of assets, but by number of visits in order to capture the proportion of tourism activity associated with local residents.

For the goal associated with new visits to the Reserve and new tourist experiences, P.E.C.E.S. will work with

the main tour operators to track the number of reservations and the percentage that could be attributed to promotional efforts at the restaurants. The two tour operators will be:

- *Barefoot Travelers*
- *Water Sports and Eco Tours*

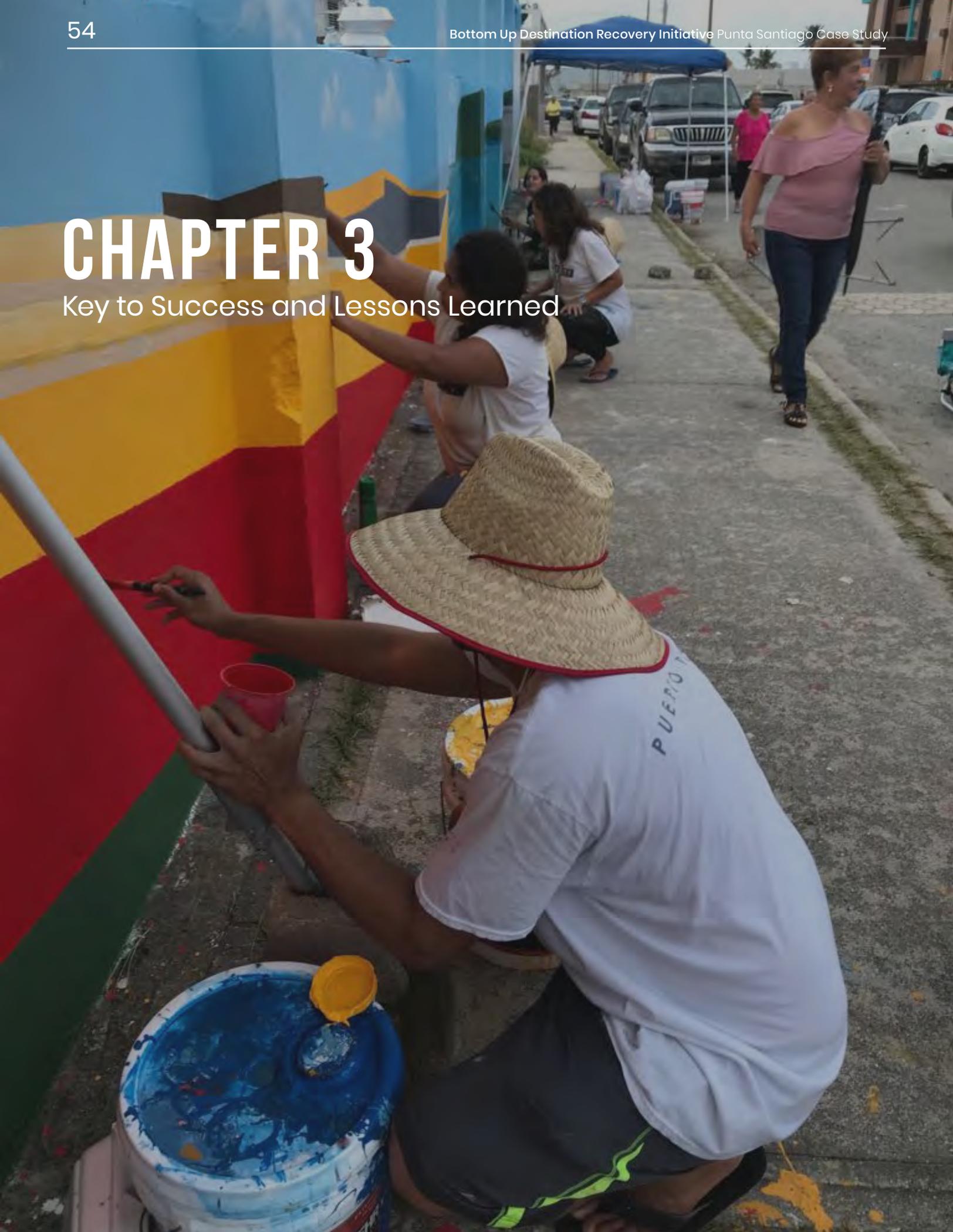
| INDICATOR | TARGET |
|--|------------|
| % of the visits to the gastronomic assets of the area will return to the destination to visit the Natural Reserve of Humacao or other new tourist experiences. | 10% |
| % of the experiences and tourist aspects in Punta Santiago will have some element of community management (partial management). | 75% |
| % of the experiences and tourist aspects in Punta Santiago will be completely managed by one or more entities of the community (complete management). | 50% |

The following are the key performance indicators related to each project:

| NAME OF PROJECT | INDICATOR (BETA) |
|---|---|
| Development of new tourism experiences through existing service providers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new experiences operating • Number of reservations for new experiences • Change in existing experience reserves (increasing) |
| Development of a route of historical murals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of completed murals • Number of post / hashtags in social networks |
| Manage the development of the Vacation Center and the administrative transfer to local organization | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurance claim is processed • Rehabilitation work begins • Private investor is found to modernize the Center • Agreement is reached between the government, private investor and local organization to operate the Center |
| Interpretative signage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of completed informative signs • Number of completed interpretive signs • Number of post/ hashtags in social networks |
| Ambassadors program through the school of P.E.C.E.S. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of students enrolled in the program • Number of students completing minimum promotional hours • Number of hours incurred by ambassadors in promotional activities |
| Promotion of tourist experiences in key restaurants with the support of ambassadors | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participating restaurants • Number of promotional hours of the ambassadors in the restaurants • Number of reservations as a result of the program and income generated by reserves through the program |

CHAPTER 3

Key to Success and Lessons Learned



CREATING AWARENESS AROUND THE VISITOR ECONOMY IN THE COMMUNITY



A necessary step in any tourist-related initiative in Puerto Rico is to intermediate knowledge and create awareness of the importance of the visitor economy. Many communities in Puerto Rico see tourism as exclusive to hotel chains and big attractions in the San Juan area, which was the case in Punta Santiago. Unlike many of those places, in Orocovis, there was clear recognition of the value of visitors, thanks in part to the success of Toro Verde Adventure Park. As result, in Orocovis most of the planning focused on the visitor economy framework, fostering linkages among the various stakeholders and on strategizing to increase tourism expenditure. FPR had a very different experience in Punta Santiago. The awareness of the importance of the visitor economy was nominal. Some stakeholders even questioned a tourism driven initiative when there were so many issues lingering from the devastation caused by hurricane Maria. According to P.E.C.E.S. CEO, José Oquendo, “the devastation caused by the hurricane was unprecedented, both physically, regarding infrastructure, as well as the emotional and psychological damage to the population”. There were even more pressing issues in the community prior to the hurricane. According to the Incident Statistic Tool from the Puerto Rico Police Department, Punta Santiago has a high incidence of criminal activity. From robberies, burglaries, illegal

appropriations, and assault incidents one thing is certain: Punta Santiago is not the safest destination. Upon arriving to Punta Santiago the FPR operational field team quickly confirmed the assumption with the results of the community survey; where “security” was one of the highest social problems perceived by the community.

The post-traumatic stress shown by many local residents, compounded with the many issues in the community made the planning process a challenge. Recognizing this, FPR adjusted the timeline and decelerated process, which was originally set to be completed in 4 months. The actual planning ended up taking about 8 months, more than it took in Orocovis.

It was proven that flexibility in the framework helped to achieve better engagement with the community. For example, the social capital component supported the development of a community security council and coordinated CERT trainings, even when these initiatives were not part of the original plan for the field team. Listening to the community, understanding the most pressing needs, and looking for ways to support them generates more engagement with the Bottom Up program.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BOTTOM UP'S DESTINATION RECOVERY PHASE I

One of the keys for success in a community planning exercise is to build trust with local leadership. This process takes time, sometimes years, particularly to an outside organization with no previous experience in the community. As well, local leadership is not easily defined, a list of organizations or stakeholders working in a community is not an existing resource. Many times, information on who is a local leader will depend on who you ask. As with trust, identifying local leadership can take time. In Orocovis, the recovery phase of the Bottom up program was instrumental on identifying the key stakeholders to participate in the destination plan. The initial program investments in Orocovis were also critical at accelerating the recovery objectives of the program and were also effective at getting early buy-in from community stakeholders. The ability of FPR to make quick investments in small business and in the main assets selected, contribute greatly to create early traction with local residents and collaborators in community-based development, resulting in a more fertile environment for additional community engagement efforts. In Punta Santiago this was the case as well, although there were some important differences. In Orocovis, FPR was often the only outside organization working in the community, while in Punta Santiago there were

many assisting in the recovery. Since some were helping the community's most pressing needs, FPR was constantly mapping out all recovery initiatives to avoid duplicating efforts. This was very challenging, since it was a moving target every day. It was also difficult to validate information to assess the scope of the assistance of some of the organizations. Nevertheless, the FPR team kept a weekly tally of all recovery efforts to ensure FPR investments were not duplicative in any way. As expected, this was a challenge throughout the Bottom Up initiative, which led to the delay of recovery investments, pushing some towards the end of the first bottom up phase, and others occurring while the destination planning was taking place. As well, FPR struggled during the initial phase due to many of the tourism assets having central government jurisdiction, such as the Natural Reserve, the Cay, and the Dock. Each tourism asset had its complexities which at times delayed FPR interventions. In each case, FPR organized multisectoral meetings to get all parties involved and determine the best course of action. It was important to conduct a series of meetings with different stakeholders to ensure we established communication with the all the important key players and got the all information needed before making investments.



As a result of all this work in the first six months, FPR was able to identify those key leaders that were essential for the destination planning process. The right mixture of local participants is one of the most important elements of a successful destination planning process. The time spent in the community prior to the destination planning effort allowed FPR to have participants that were representative of all the destination components in Punta Santiago. This certainly led to a more comprehensive planning process.

The Role of P.E.C.E.S.

Part of what this pilot project aimed at testing the benefits of having an established local NGO working alongside the operational field team. A strong NGO like P.E.C.E.S. with ties to the local community and competent staff and leadership is very uncommon in Puerto Rico. As expected, P.E.C.E.S. took the leading role in the relief and recovery of Punta Santiago facilitating and distributing immediate assistance throughout the community after the storms. P.E.C.E.S., was extremely occupied during this time, coordinating relief efforts and adding new capacity and programming in the organization, while dealing with the chaos of the disruption of transportation, electricity, supply chains, and telecommunications.

As a result, it was difficult for FPR to coordinate efforts with P.E.C.E.S. during those first 6 months, which led to delaying some of the investments. On top of that, given the novelty of the Bottom Up program, it seemed expectations were not clear to P.E.C.E.S. from the beginning. It would have been ideal to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between P.E.C.E.S. and FPR to better define the collaboration. Other organizations that had MOUs with P.E.C.E.S. indicated that it was very useful. Yet, FPR was aware of the key role P.E.C.E.S. was playing in the recovery of Punta Santiago, the many new roles they had to take and how overwhelming was

the process for everyone in the community. P.E.C.E.S. barely had the bandwidth to manage all the incoming resources and support for recovery.

That being said, by the end of the first phase of Bottom up, things were not as chaotic in Punta Santiago and P.E.C.E.S. was settling in and winding down relief efforts. This paved the way to the new destination planning phase, where members of the P.E.C.E.S. team played an active role in meetings and project development. Their active involvement was critical to the success of planning process, not just because of their input, but due to the endorsement they gave to the plan with their engagement. This made other participants feel assured with the planning process.

When it came down to selecting a Plan Manager, P.E.C.E.S. was hesitant to take the role due to their desire to have other organizations function as leads in community projects. The P.E.C.E.S. leadership team did not want other stakeholders to think they were trying to take over everything. Nevertheless, when FPR discussed the Plan manager role with other participants, they all wanted P.E.C.E.S. to be the lead. When discussed with P.E.C.E.S. again, they agreed to take on the role, but were cautious about the expectations of other participants. Both P.E.C.E.S. and FPR wanted everyone to be clear that it was not P.E.C.E.S.'s plan, this was the community's plan, and everyone was responsible for the implementation. This will be the tricky part of the plan's implementation, the role other organization's play. As it happened in Orocovis, where the larger organization plays the manager role in the plan, the municipal government in that case. In Punta Santiago the risk of others not doing their part because they rely on P.E.C.E.S. for the implementation exists. Ensuring proper and balanced delegation of responsibilities is a big challenge in community-based plans. So far in Orocovis, other players outside the municipal government have maintained their involvement with the plan's implementation. FPR hopes that is also the case in Punta Santiago.

Reducing the Scope of the Destination Plan

From the beginning, a strategic decision was made to reduce the scope of the destination plan components. The Plan sets short-term attainable goals that do not depend to a large extent on factors or actors external to the destination. A new bridge, the dredging of a body of water or tax incentives were examples of projects that fell outside the scope of this Plan. This is because the objective of this process was to achieve a local approach to the planning and management of the destination's tourism offer. This decision made the planning process more approachable and engaging to local leaders. FPR followed that path in Punta Santiago with one exception: the Vacation Center. Although the Punta Santiago plan does not entail opening the Center, it does call on to jumpstart the necessary processes to do so. This is something attainable in the short term and it will help move the needle with critical infrastructure projects. By giving the community a short-term deliverable on a long-term project you get traction and engagement with participants by showing them that you are getting closer to the ultimate goal.

Lessons Learned

For the Phase I of the Bottom Up, there are two important lessons learned in Punta Santiago:

- Given the complexity of the program, for any future partnership it will be crucial to establish Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) to better define the collaboration from the beginning of the intervention in the community.
- The program framework should be flexible enough to include initiatives that respond to the immediate needs of the community, even when they are out of the Bottom Up's scope of work. This helps to get buy-in and engagement from community members.

There are a couple lessons learned that will be applied to future community destination planning efforts:

- Shorter timeframe and quicker turn around for deliverables. In efforts to avoid fatigue among participants, FPR conducted more meetings per month and planned for a quicker turn around. However, this proved to be counterproductive at times, since it affected the quality of the deliverables and meant FPR had to go back to the group to rework some of the ideas produced. FPR learned that the timeframe will depend on the community you are working in. In Orocovis, where tourism was already a well-known enabler for growth, the shorter timeframe with more frequent meetings could have worked. As stated in a previous chapter, in Punta Santiago that did not work. In the future FPR will conduct a series of exercises at the beginning to better gauge readiness for destination planning, and then make the decisions involving timeline.

- Additional capacity building. Destination Management is not by any means an easy process, it takes time, resources, and technical capacity. Although FPR invested time in educating local leaders about the visitor economy and the destination elements, it takes more hours of training and coaching to fully equip local stakeholders in all destination management components. Additionally, the destination assessment conducted was based on a particular point in time, thus, there is a need to conduct periodic updates at all levels of the destination. FPR was able to facilitate the initial assessment, but moving forward, local leaders would need to continue to reevaluate needs and identify new tourism opportunities. Unfortunately, local leaders, including the municipal government, do not have the capacity and experience in this kind of process. Aside from visitor economy specific skills, there is a need for project management, economic development, grant writing, leadership, marketing, and community development. Without building capacity in these areas, there is a fair chance that these efforts might diminish over time. FPR is currently working on a potential program that could provide ongoing support and technical capacity to local leaders from Bottom Up communities. It even might include some sort of certificate in visitor economy management or a partnership with a university to create continuing education programs around destination management. In the end, the visitor economy will grow if the local leaders are continuously engaged with the shared vision, the main strategies and the management of their destination. The process started in Orocovis and Punta Santiago, FPR must provide support to ensure these efforts are sustainable.

ENDNOTES

1. "Visitor Economy: A First Step Towards Transformation". Foundation for Puerto Rico. October 2016.
2. "Orocovis: Local Destination Management Plan". Foundation for Puerto Rico. March 2019.
3. The unemployment rate at a national average is 16.4%.
4. "La economía del visitante: gobernanza y manejo del destino". Foundation for Puerto Rico. March 2017."
5. World Tourism Organization (2007). A practical guide to tourism destination management, Madrid: WTO
6. "Orocovis: Local Destination Management Plan". Foundation for Puerto Rico. March 2017.



Foundation
for Puerto Rico

BOTTOM-UP
DESTINATION RECOVERY INITIATIVE

Punta
Santiago
HUMACAO, PR