

The Rural Community Development (RCD) Program

Helping Puerto Rico's rural and tribal communities build and maintain safe water and wastewater systems



Puerto Rico Facts

405 community water systems

308 water systems serve communities with fewer than 3,300 people

\$796 million estimated water infrastructure need for small systems

8.1% of the population lives in a rural area

Sources: EPA, Census



About the RCD Program

The [Rural Community Development \(RCD\)](#) grant program builds capacity to create, expand, and maintain safe, affordable water and wastewater systems in rural areas. RCD serves very small communities in sparsely populated areas made up predominately of residents with low income who lack safe water and wastewater treatment services and sometimes even indoor plumbing. RCD tailors its support based on community need. It helps communities assess water and wastewater infrastructure and accessibility needs, helps identify and secure funding for water facility upgrades, builds capacity through local experts to establish and maintain water facilities, and trains water operators to ensure water systems are functional and compliant. There are currently [eight RCD grant recipients](#) — six regional organizations and two organizations that support tribal communities. RCD grant recipient [RCAP Solutions, Inc. \(RSOL\)](#) serves communities in Puerto Rico.

Example of RCD's Support in Puerto Rico

Veredas de Camuy, Puerto Rico

Veredas de Camuy, a small community in Camuy, Puerto Rico with a population of 365 people, faced a challenge when a developer left the community with an incomplete wastewater pump station. With RCD funding, RSOL's initial task involved conducting a thorough assessment of the system and its specific needs. RSOL's role primarily focused on providing guidance and strategic direction. Detailed discussions were held concerning the prerequisites for transferring infrastructure responsibilities to the Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA). To bolster community knowledge, RSOL organized an online training session, featuring a presentation by PRASA specialists on this subject. Furthermore, the recorded session was shared with other community board members for wider dissemination. Recognizing the complex nature of the project, RSOL advised the community to use this information to engage an experienced engineer familiar with similar endeavors. The collection of this information and guidance has contributed to the community's ongoing efforts toward reaching a viable solution, and RSOL continues to be a resource for the community.

National Outcomes*

With the help of RCD:



\$742 million
in additional funding
secured for communities



83,000 residents
have gained access to
safe drinking water



49,000 residents
have gained access to
sanitary sewer systems



2,100 communities
served by RCD projects

*Outcomes for RCD grant recipients' work across the country since FY21



RCD
Rural Community Development

For more information about the Rural Community Development (RCD) Program, [visit the RCD website](#) and the [RCD Information and Data Dashboard](#).

For more information about OCS's other anti-poverty programs, [visit the OCS website](#).