



# “Puerto Rico Rural Water Association” The Implementation of a Non-Profit, Non Government Organization focused on Non-PRASA Communities in Puerto Rico



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## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to determine the effects of implementing a non-profit Non Government Organization focused on Non-PRASA Rural communities in Puerto Rico. Through this research the following question was asked: Would you be in favor of the creation of a Non-Profit Association that facilitates the management and acquisition of funds for the potable water system in your community?

This research proposes the benefits for the communities to organize Puerto Rico Rural Water Association. To begin with, potable water systems guarantee the fundamental human entitlement to safe drinking water. They play a pivotal role in enhancing sanitation and promoting better hygiene practices.

According to the question presented to members of various Non-PRASA rural communities, the results indicated that they would establish a structure similar to the one proposed in this paper.

## Introduction

Access to potable water is a fundamental necessity for human survival and well-being. In the context of rural areas in Puerto Rico, the importance of having reliable potable water systems cannot be overstated. These communities, often located in remote regions of the island, face unique challenges when it comes to accessing clean and safe drinking water. Therefore, establishing and maintaining potable water systems in rural Puerto Rico is crucial for several reasons.

Without access to safe drinking water, rural communities are at risk of waterborne diseases and other health hazards. Contaminated water sources can lead to the spread of illnesses such as cholera, dysentery, and typhoid fever, posing significant threats to public health.

Inadequate access to clean water often hampers the implementation of proper sanitation measures in rural areas. With potable water systems in place, individuals can maintain better personal hygiene, including regular handwashing and proper sanitation practices.

## Background

Puerto Rico counts a total of 245 communities with Potable Water Systems also known as NON-PRASA. They are independent from any of the State Departments and are viewed as individual organizations. The local state agency in charge of water utilities in Puerto Rico is the Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA). These communities can not be connected to the PRASA due to their geographical position. The majority of these NON-PRASA are located in high elevation points.

## Implementation

Puerto Rico Rural Water Association (PRRWA) will serve as mediator between Agencies and NON-PRASA Water Systems. As a non-profit Non Government Organization (NGO), it will assist and provide financing and technical assistance to develop water systems. Its main vision is to provide the support NON-PRASA Water Systems need in better communication with State and Federal Agencies. It will facilitate the arrangements between agencies and the Water Systems. The Federal Agencies that this organization will have more contact with will be the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Rural Development section.

As of today, NON-PRASA Water Systems in Puerto Rico are independent, low-income, and they are susceptible to large scale natural disasters as well as federal and state fines imposed by agencies if their documents and parameters are not following the law.

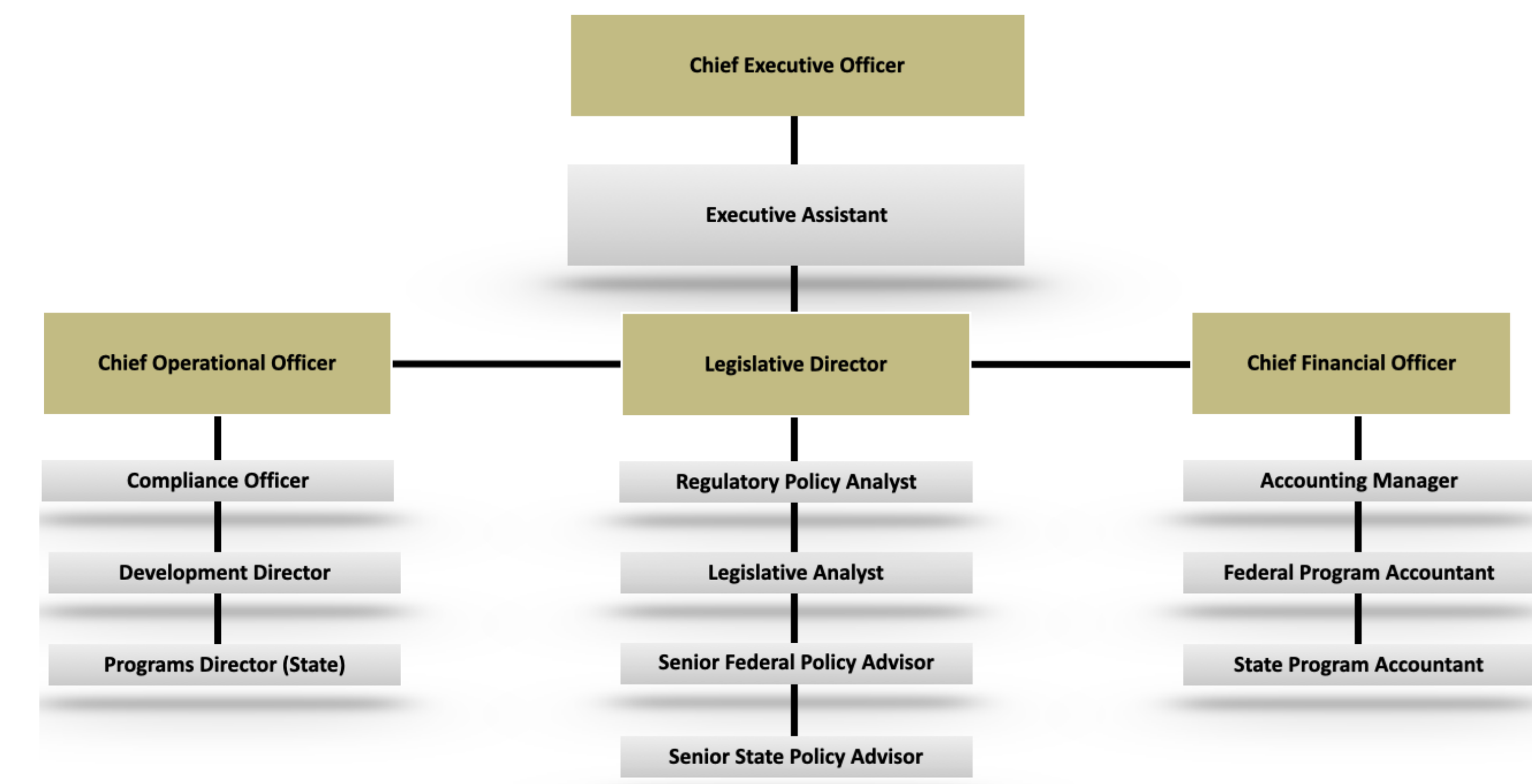
PRRWA will have a Headquarters office in the town of Caguas. This town is geographically located in the Central East side of Puerto Rico. It is located 20 miles from San Juan and has a population of 127,244, compared to the population of San Juan that has 1,000,000 of habitants.

As already mentioned PRRWA will conduct official business with Local agencies. It will also participate in future projects inside the Puerto Rico State Capitol. This organization will work hand to hand with committees in the Senate and in the House of Representatives. In the House of Representatives the committee that will work with PRRWA will be Natural Resources, Environmental Affairs, and Recycle Committee. The committee is led by Hon. Edgardo Feliciano Sánchez at the moment of this paper. On the other hand, in the Senate, PRRWA will be working with the Natural Resources and Agriculture Committee. This last committee is led by Hon. José L. Dalmau Santiago at the moment of this paper.

## PRRWA HQ, Municipality of Caguas



## Board of Directors and Departments



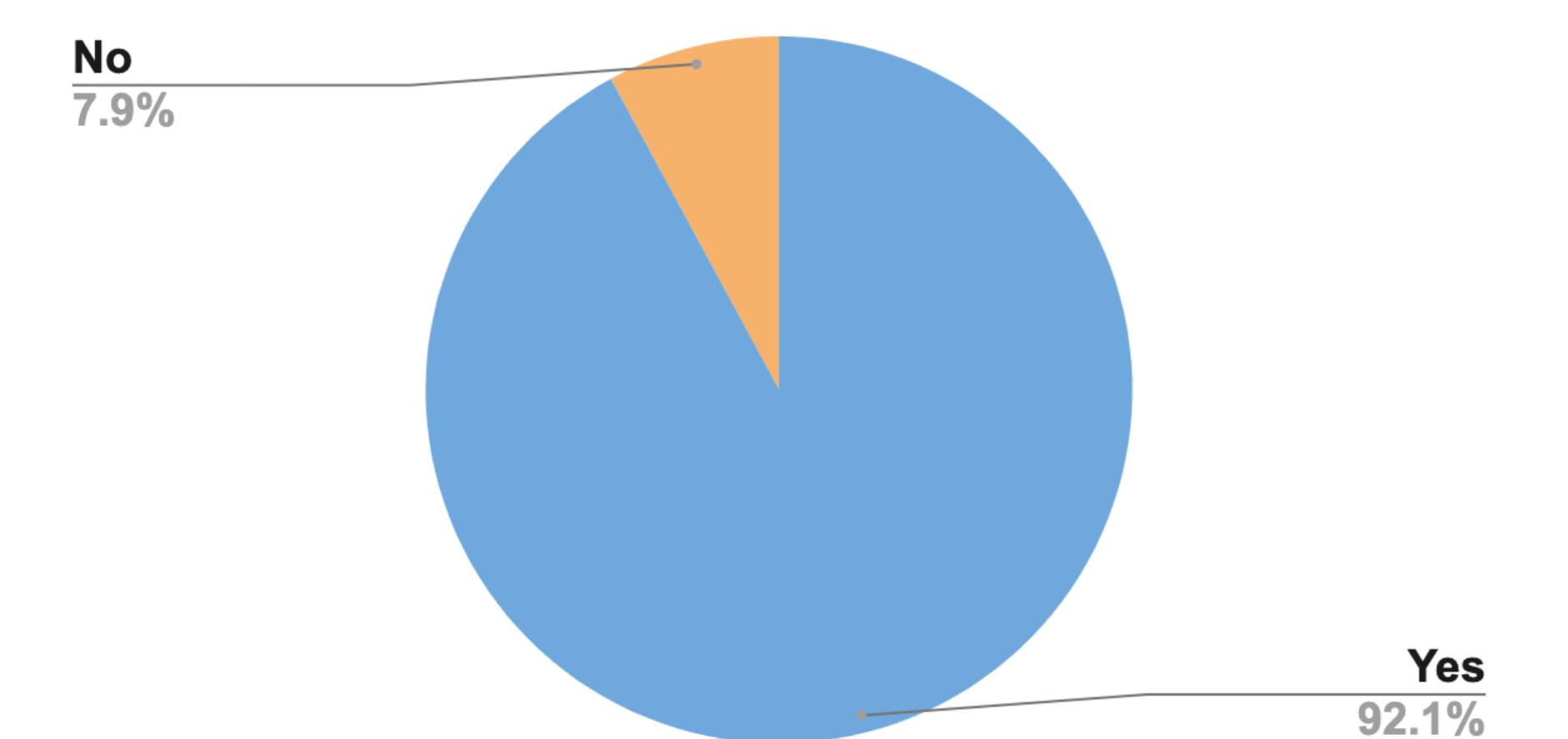
## Conclusion

A census was made while conducting a Survey using two communities as experimental groups. A total of 150 members from across various communities including Divisoria Community in Corozal, Humata in Aguada, Rancho Grande in Naguabo, and Palmarito Cintrón in Barranquitas were given the form to answer questions of basic knowledge of their community Potable Water System. The form also included a question regarding the formation and affiliation to Puerto Rico Rural Water Association in case it is formed. Out of the 150 people, only 114 answered the survey. Out of the 114, 9 only answered that they would not like to be part of the association. The final results of this survey clearly indicates that it will benefit the most of these communities and their Potable Water Systems. A link for this survey will be attached to this document at the reference portion.

At the moment there has not been any mention between these Water Systems and/or Agencies for uniting themselves in a non-profit entity with the purpose of being the common mediator between State Agencies, Federal Agencies, and community Potable Water Systems.

Puerto Rico's rural communities with Potable Drinking Water System should become part of an Association like the one mentioned in this paper in order to have better access at Federal and State Agencies. Have a personnel fully dedicated to the service of the communities in Water Systems. Have the personnel to focus on supporting and representing the interests of rural water and finally give technical assistance, training programs, and educational resources.

Amount of responses to belong in Puerto Rico Rural Water Assoc.



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