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The Role of Community Land Trusts After Hurricane Maria.

Lucy Cruz has lived all of her 58 years in Caño Martín Peña, an informal community centrally located in the Puerto Rico capital of San Juan. Eight distinct neighborhoods make up the community, clustered around a stream, a caño, that gives the area its name and identity.

Some 1,200 homes in Caño Martín Peña lost their roofs during Hurricane Maria, according to Cruz, who says that the community has worked collectively to gather supplies and rebuild those roofs. They have managed to rebuild 75 completely, but in many places, blue tarps keep out the elements, according to Cruz. Access to federal funds can make a substantial difference.

For working class areas of Puerto Rico, like Caño Martín Peña, it’s been a tough go of accessing those funds. FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, has strict requirements for emergency funding recipients to prove homeownership. Proving that in the aftermath of a Hurricane can be difficult.

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NEXT CITY

BY ZOE SULLIVAN | JUNE 1, 2018

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