

Working in Cuba on several fronts, but the people of Pinar del Río are not forgotten



Jorge Luis Tapia Fonseca, Cuban deputy prime minister visits affected areas. ACN

By Roberto Morejón

In 2023, residents in the province of Pinar del Río with the support of forces from all over Cuba, resumed the arduous tasks of recovery after the passage of the devastating hurricane Ian on September 27.

With still painful traces in the houses and problems with the water supply, the westernmost of the Cuban provinces is already showing a modest recovery in crops and poultry farming.

It should be taken into account that the territory was still suffering from the damages caused by other hurricanes before the arrival of Ian.

Pinar del Río occupies a geographical position that makes it vulnerable to tropical storms and hurricanes, to the point that in the last 10 years it has been hit by 13 of these phenomena.

In this context, the advance of hurricane Ian, with a strength of three on the Saffir-Simpson scale of five, is part of this context.

Farmers and agricultural workers are preparing land, planting and recovering field facilities, in a struggle against time.

A unique evolution is underway in poultry farming, with the transformation of old disused schools into farms to protect the birds from the winds.

More than 90 of the 133 of these rooms damaged by Hurricane Ian have been restored as part of a construction rhythm also appreciated in the construction of houses, although unfortunately the speed is below the pressing needs.

This is due to the magnitude of the damages, since in Pinar del Río there were six thousand houses damaged by hurricanes before the catastrophic Ian, whose effect added another one hundred thousand.

However, construction workers and groups from other provinces are working hard to provide Pinar del Río residents who lost their homes with a place to take shelter for good, since they remain in the homes of relatives and state-owned buildings.

In the westernmost geographic point of the archipelago, they have managed to recover a little less than 19 thousand dwellings, most of them with modest typologies, in the midst of limited resources, especially wood.

The material circumstances of the country, exposed to the intensified U.S. blockade, lacking international credits and hit by the expenses during the pandemic, prevent the construction of optimal housing in Pinar del Río.

But together with the improvements in the water supply to respond to a long-standing problem, in Pinar del Río there is NO rest for the victims to gradually return to definitive homes.

The authorities of the province urged to be more agile, creative, organized and sensitive in order to return Pinar del Río to the appearance it had before the passage of the devastating Hurricane Ian.

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