Hurricane Maria: Where Are We 2 Years Later?

An overview of Puerto Rico’s recovery efforts and events marking the 2nd anniversary of Hurricane Maria

Coordinated by the Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition’s Puerto Rico Working Group

September 12, 2019
Diane Yentel,
President & CEO,
National Low Income Housing Coalition

dyentel@nlihc.org
The Disaster Housing Recovery Coalition (DHRC)

- Coordinated by the National Low Income Housing Coalition
- Composed of over 800 local, state and national organizations, many directly working on the ground in post-disaster areas
- Working to ensure federal disaster recovery efforts reach all impacted households, including those that have the fewest resources to recover
- The Puerto Rico Working Group was created after Hurricane Maria struck the island in late 2017
Hurricane Maria: The Damage & Response

Destruction – By the Numbers:

- Over 3,000 killed
- Over 300,000 homes damaged by wind or flooding
- Over $90 billion in damage to Puerto Rico and the USVI

Inequality and Poverty Made Worse by the Storm

Before Hurricane Maria:

- 45% of the Territory’s population lived in poverty – more than triple the national average.
- 3 out of 4 of the lowest income families paid more than 30% of their income on housing
- More than 110,000 homes lacked basic kitchens and plumbing

FEMA Denied Assistance to Puerto Ricans at Twice the Rate of Other Survivors

- FEMA denied nearly two thirds of the nearly 1.2 million applications for FEMA assistance filed in Puerto Rico – twice the denial rate after Hurricane Harvey
- At least 77,000 of these households were denied assistance because FEMA failed to recognize local land ownership practices and the island’s informal housing system.
September 2017
Major disaster declared by President in advance of Hurricane Irma

September, 2017
Congress approves $15 billion in disaster aid, including $1.5 billion in CDBG-DR aid for Puerto Rico’s Recovery from Hurricane Irma

September 20, 2017
Major disaster declared by President in advance of Hurricane Maria

February 9, 2018
Congress approves $89 billion in disaster aid, including over $16.5 billion in CDBG-DR aid for recovery and disaster mitigation in Puerto Rico

July 30, 2018
HUD approves Puerto Rico’s action plan and $1.5 billion in CDBG-DR recovery funding

September 20, 2018
HUD signs grant agreement allowing Puerto Rico to access $1.5 billion in CDBG-DR recovery funding

March 3, 2019
HUD approves Puerto Rico’s action plan for $8.2 billion in CDBG-DR recovery funding

June 6, 2019
Congress approves $19.1 billion in disaster aid, including $2.4 billion in CDBG-DR for 2017, 2018 and 2019 disasters

A Lengthy Recovery Process
Ivis Garcia,
Planners for Puerto Rico

Ivis.Garcia@gmail.com
Glenisse Pagan,
Executive Director,
Red de Fundación de Puerto Rico
Glenisse.Pagan@redfundacionespr.org
David Carrasquillo,
PR Planning & Community Development Manager,
Hispanic Federation

dcarrasquillo@hispanicfederation.org
Adi Martinez,
Founder,
FURIA, Inc.
Senior Policy Analyst – Puerto Rico
OXFAM
adi.martinezroman@Oxfam.org
Laura Esquivel
National Advocacy Director
Hispanic Federation
lesquivel@hispanicfederation.org
Contact

Sarah Saadian Mickelson
Senior Policy Director
National Low Income Housing Coalition
smickelson@nlihc.org

Ivis Garcia, PhD, AICP
Planners for Puerto Rico
Ivis.Garcia@gmail.com

David Carrasquillo
PR Planning & Comm. Dev. Manager
Hispanic Federation
dcarrasquillo@hispanicfederation.org

Glenisse Pagan
Red de Fundacion de Puerto Rico
Glenisse.pagan@redfundacionespr.org

Adi Martinez
Founder
FURIA, Inc.
adi.martinezroman@Oxfam.org

Laura Esquivel
National Advocacy Director
Hispanic Federation
lesquivel@hispanicfederation.org