

## Chapter 1 : The future of energy in Puerto Rico is renewable | World Economic Forum

*Puerto Rico should seize the opportunity to break, once and for all, the needless and obstinate dependence on fossil fuels which was responsible for thousands of deaths in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.*

A community volunteer planting new crops at Huerto Semilla, an urban garden at the University of Puerto Rico. CNN A year ago, Hurricane Maria tore into Puerto Rico, obliterating power grids, decimating farms, flattening homes and wrecking the local economy. Maria came on the heels of Hurricane Irma -- sister-storms that would forever change the fate of the island. But even as Maria churned, another sister-storm raged on. This one involved a sisterhood of Puerto Ricans, some living on the island, others part of the diaspora in the US mainland. Right now they are rebuilding Puerto Rican homes, restoring farms, installing solar power grids and seeking to transform the local economy -- all motivated by a heartfelt wish for the island they call home to become whole again. Read More These are their stories. Carla Gautier is an architect with a monumental function -- in the form of a shipping container. Makeshift homes and bureaucracy collide For generations, more than half of Puerto Ricans relied on informal construction to build affordable homes and bypass a costly, bureaucratic process. Without formal property deeds, home owners struggled to get federal aid. A container built for hurricanes "They are fabricated to withstand the worst atmospheric conditions, in the middle of the ocean, getting hit by waves and typhoons," said Gautier, who had seen firsthand this type of construction used successfully in Europe. So she turned to lifelong friend Maria Gabriela Velasco, a psychologist and entrepreneur. Together they formed HiveCube to revolutionize the way Puerto Ricans build affordable homes. It includes two bedrooms, one bathroom and a kitchen-living area. The entire structure, including the windows, can withstand a Category 5 hurricane with winds up to miles per hour, assuming it is properly anchored to a foundation. For an additional cost, the homes can be fitted with a solar power microgrid, rainwater collection and a sewage treatment system that doubles as a garden. HiveCube is now taking orders from homeowners who can afford the units without financing and is in the process of securing an owner-financing plan with local banks. Next in line is an assembly plant. But even as they rack up awards and accolades, some only see two girls playing construction. For weeks she received no word about her family, friends or her restaurant, El Departamento de la Comida The Food Department , a spot where local produce was the main dish. Using a network of nonprofits and Puerto Ricans in the diaspora, the women bought a used school bus, which they named the Guagua Solidaria the "solidarity bus" in English. Rodriguez Besosa drove volunteer brigades from farm to farm around the island. We had to work with the seeds that had sprouted, and prevent the farmers from closing their doors and leaving for Florida. They hope to help more in the year ahead. A growing mission Vilar and Rodriguez Besosa are on the front lines of a fast-growing movement to use locally-grown food as a way to decolonize the island. Their mission has evolved from emergency response to creating a lasting food legacy for future generations. As part of their food revolution, Rodriguez Besosa, an architect by training, envisions a fundamental shift in the way farms are run -- from large, one-crop, corporate strongholds to small-scale, sustainable, locally owned farms. Lessons from the past This way of life, she says, is nothing new. And half of the activists in this movement are women," Rodriguez Besosa said. This year, Rodriguez Besosa purchased her own farm, which will be the new home of the rebranded El Departamento de la Comida. Additionally, they will launch a product line of sustainable foods and nonperishable products such as jams and sauces. Puerto Rico is a major source of military apparel in the United States, according to a Congressional Report. The industry has grown steadily over the last ten years, after legislation required all military clothing be manufactured in the United States. In Puerto Rico, this has proven both a blessing and a curse: It brought much needed cash flow, but also created a dependency on military contracts. In meetings with over two dozen factories in Puerto Rico, Herrero Lugo pitched an idea that could overhaul the local industry and awaken a dormant potential: Instead of a lot of things fast. The groups, called modules, work together to meet production demands, and can handle smaller, more specialized orders. To reach this level of efficiency, Retazo has created the Moda Lab, a bridge between apparel factories, garment workers, designers and small sewing co-ops comprised mostly of women working from home. In this centralized hub, designers

learn how to work directly with factories and vice versa, and outside fashion companies find help navigate the resources on the island. Puerto Rican seamstresses are known for their detailed craftsmanship, such as the "mundillo," a handmade bobbin lace honored on the island. A new style of business "We already know there is demand, more than we can keep up with," said Herrero Lugo. They have an additional 30 clients on a waiting list. After a month, it became clear that there were already these amazing service organizations on the island that had the systems, infrastructure and personnel to help people. Within a week, they formed their nonprofit. Energizing partnerships "We got materials, solar panels, then flew them down there, got crews on the ground," said Roig-Morris. Resilient Power installed solar power microgrids in four community centers. We want to work with communities to empower them, adapt these systems, own these systems and become aware of the long-term resilience. Castrodad-Rodriguez joined Resilient as part of a collaboration with the Rocky Mountain Institute , a renewable energy-focused non-profit. This energy revolution is driving collaboration between women, and between Puerto Ricans living on the island and the diaspora on the mainland. Resilient Power PR has identified about community center across the island that could benefit from solar power microgrids. Empowering people with electricity "Everyone should have the option to be independent from the grid," Roig-Morris said. In the meantime, Castrodad-Rodriguez sees in her role an opportunity to give underrepresented communities a voice, especially women trying to break into a male-dominated industry. We are uniquely positioned to transform the way we work together toward a more equitable, sustainable future for the country.

## Chapter 2 : Investing In Puerto Rico's Future | Seeking Alpha

*The Hill is a top US political website, read by the White House and more lawmakers than any other site -- vital for policy, politics and election campaigns.*

While the scale of devastation in Puerto Rico is incredible, it is far from the only place in the U. In fact, according to power systems engineer Massoud Amin, on "any given day in the U. The deterioration of our electric grid through neglect, underfunding and the economic dynamics of investor owned utilities has left the entire U. So what can be done to create reliable power for people? While generating clean energy from the abundant renewable resources around us is clearly part of the solution, it is not enough. So as the storms cleared and the Puerto Rican grid was left devastated, those homes with solar were also without power. Islanding occurs when the flow of electricity to and from the grid is cut off, allowing the house to function completely independently as an electricity island. This is usually achieved with a specific switch, called an automatic transfer switch, that is triggered when problems with the grid supply are detected. Once islanded, the house can use its solar panels internally. Since solar generates variable amounts of electricity and only when the sun is shining, solar alone is not enough during a blackout. Energy storage needs to be paired with the solar to create a reliable solution. Instead of sending the extra energy generated by solar to the grid, some of it will go to charging batteries. When the solar panels are no longer generating, the house can use electricity from the batteries. Through proper sizing and system design, a house can function independent of the grid day in and day out. The concept of microgrid can be scaled up with larger solar arrays and battery arrays, to be able to serve the population of entire neighborhoods and villages. This is one of the best options for Puerto Rico to recover from the catastrophic failure of its grid – carve it up into smaller, island-able grids that can interconnect. In most jurisdictions, this process is painfully slow and hindered by various entrenched interests, such as private utility companies that want to prevent any reduction of customer consumption to protect sunk costs, causing actual adoption of this powerful, simple, proven system to never come on line. But in Puerto Rico, the utility, regulators and collaborators in the energy space are pushing forward new regulations to encourage distributed generation, energy storage, and microgrid technologies. A report produced by industry heavyweights in collaboration with local agencies recommended that while many areas could be served by microgrids, for some regions, the best course of action may be "permanent disconnection from the main PREPA grid. Once privatized and -- like so many Investor-Owned Utilities -- guaranteed a certain rate of return, there seems to be a high likelihood that electricity rates will go up even higher. While challenging for those people who use the grid electricity, increasing rates will drive further grid defection as people choose to control their own power and stop paying the utility all together. Rebuilding, With or Without the Grid Blue Planet Energy has been engaged with partners from solar installers, engineers, nonprofits and community organizers since October While the situation is still unfolding, we are already supporting the creation of safe, long-lasting and reliable energy systems. Our energy storage systems are being installed in homes and community centers that were once connected to the grid but are now without power, locations with only generators that are expensive to run, and remote regions without clean water or grid electricity as part of water purification systems. We will continue to collaborate in rebuilding Puerto Rico by deploying our leading Blue Ion energy storage system to provide reliable off-grid power to the world. Get the most from your energy Preorder your system now, or get in contact with a Blue Planet Energy representative to start building your system today.

**Chapter 3 : Can Farming Save Puerto Rico's Future? | The Nation**

*Yet in Puerto Rico, at least, there is a harder-to-quantify piece of the agroecology movement that has been crucial to its success: the aforementioned farmer brigades.*

There will be new dispatches every few weeks follow along here. Five years earlier, Garcia had been living in the city of Corozal when mass layoffs hit. She lost her job as a social researcher, and wondered what to do next. She had been raised on a farm, in a family of farmers. Government help was slow to materialize on the islands—the Federal Emergency Management Agency has been accused of being absent in the days after the storm—and ultimately proved to be inadequate. This holistic approach treats farming as a component of its surrounding ecology, unlike the industrial monoculture model that seeks to maximize profit and efficiency, often at the expense of the environment. The negative effects of industrial farming are well-documented: The changing climate is already forcing farmers to adapt, and has even pushed some off water-sapped, desertified lands. The growing frequency and intensity of extreme-weather events, like Hurricane Maria, have been linked to climate change. Yet in Puerto Rico, at least, there is a harder-to-quantify piece of the agroecology movement that has been crucial to its success: These brigades not only act as crisis-support and mutual-aid recovery teams; they are also facilitators of adaptation and climate-smart policies. This sharing model has its roots in El Movimiento Campesino a Campesino, which began in Guatemala in the s and has since swept through Mexico and Central America. Its values of solidarity and a communal approach to production, consumption, and ownership are a stark contrast with the individualized, private-property-oriented mind-set that predominates throughout much of the United States. At the end of the workday, the farmer hosting the brigade usually gives a workshop. As the climate and ecological systems are transformed, this knowledge-sharing among small farmers will be indispensable. What crops are most resilient? What methods work best? Similar interactions between farmers and the people they feed are part of the ecosystem, too. And they are at the heart of agroecology. But she learned quickly. She realized that, were it not for her job, she might never have known about these ingredients, much less have access to them. To understand what had happened to agriculture on her island, she began to read. A community garden in San Juan, shortly after Hurricane Maria. The result is that Puerto Rico now imports about 95 percent of the food it consumes before Maria, it was 85 percent. And because of the Jones Act, which requires all goods shipped to Puerto Rico to be transported on US vessels, the imported foods are costly. The farmers she worked with had nothing to sell, and, more important, their safety and livelihoods were at risk. Instead, she began raising money for small farmers and the long-term development of agroecology, utilizing the newly launched Puerto Rico Resilience Fund. And as volunteers streamed into Puerto Rico after the hurricane, the fund also started its own brigade, coordinating visits to one or two farms a week. The teachers were struggling; one classroom held three separate classes at once. Courtesy of El Departamento de la Comida Ramos is working on a pilot project to introduce bottom-up decision-making into the school—no small feat for a school system used to top-down decision-making. And that project involves agroecology: Inside the greenhouse, pumpkins, beans, tomatoes, sunflowers, oregano, guanabanas, coconut trees, and melons are growing; students will care for the plants at home over the summer. This is important for Ramos, because agroecology is about more than just food. A debt crisis, exacerbated by austerity measures that President Obama signed into law, had been slamming the territory even before Maria. What food should we grow? What, if any, chemicals should be used, and where? She just bought her own farm this spring, after Maria jeopardized her plans for a time. To submit a correction for our consideration, [click here](#). For Reprints and Permissions, [click here](#).

### Chapter 4 : Sorry, this content is not available in your region.

*A new video from Hurray for the Riff Raff captures, in brilliant colors, the pain and strength of the Puerto Rican people. 'Pa'lante' Is an Ode to Puerto Rico's Future | Sojourners Skip to main.*

Warring visions have now erupted over the energy and economic futures of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Will the islands become a cutting-edge green-powered solartopia for the benefit of their long-time residents? Or a fossil-fueled robber baron playground like Hong Kong or Singapore, set to operate for the profit of outside corporate investors? Representative Plaskett has also joined Congressman Ted Lieu, Democrat of California, in co-signing a letter asking that all Federal Emergency Management Agency funds for rebuilding the electric grids of the islands go for solar energy, wind power, and decentralized microgrids. Solar panels are already pouring in. Even before Maria, Puerto Rico had plans to add 1. At least one big solar array largely survived the storm, allowing a local greenhouse to resume business the day after the disaster. A large wind farm on the south side of Puerto Rico also got through, though its impact has been limited by the crippled grid. The German company Sonnen, which was working pre-Maria with local customers to make the Puerto Rican grid more resilient, has been shipping in panels, batteries, and micro-grids aimed at making hospitals and emergency facilities self-sufficient. So has the Houston-based Sunnova, which is retaining ownership of the hundreds of panels it has installed, then charging its customers a rate well below what they were paying before the storm hit. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Whitefish is the hometown of Trump Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, whose son had worked for the company. When it began shipping in line workers at huge rates, they were showered by locals with rocks and bottles. The fossil-fueled vision has strong support among lawmakers like Doug Lamborn, Republican of Colorado, who is backed by the oil and gas industry. Committee Chair Rob Bishop, Republican of Utah, also the recipient of fossil industry support, has joined Lamborn in opposing an EPA presence that might restrict drilling and imports for a restored fossil-fired grid. But corporate visions for the islands hardly stop with gas and oil. Residents who have been restoring school buildings and re-starting classes at their own expense are being told by local authorities they must have inspections that never happen and permits that never come. Education activists are afraid that private charter schools will crush the public system, as in New Orleans after Katrina, where only a few public schools remain. He is author or co-author of about 20 books, including Solartopia! Our Green-Powered Earth at [www](http://www).

**Chapter 5 : Puerto Rico crisis ongoing months after Hurricane Maria | News | Al Jazeera**

*In September , Hurricane Maria dumped more than 30 inches of rain on parts of the island, destroyed about 80 percent of Puerto Rico's crop value, and left some towns without power for more than six months.*

Resource poverty can mean that vital supplies need to be brought in, either by air or sea, purchased at a premium. The environment often offers its own bundle of problems, including the fact that the prevalence of salt water often corrodes mechanical equipment. Fast-growing vegetation and rocky terrain can compound the issue, making power networks hard to build and maintain. It also ensured that, when Hurricane Maria struck, Puerto Rico was incapable of properly dealing with the resulting fallout. CNN reports that 3 million people are still without electricity and a million have no access to clean running water a month after the natural disaster. There are very reasonable fears that a far larger public-health crisis is looming. Time describes the crisis as a "big opportunity" for renewables, as the island could build a brand new grid to 21st-century standards and embrace green energy. That would harden its infrastructure against future crises, improve quality of life and, hopefully, cut costs to the consumer. The territory is not connected to the mainland, making it entirely reliant on others for its power needs. It generates power with a series of diesel generators, the fuel for which is shipped in on a regular basis. The costs of fuel are high and the equipment that burns it is, on average, 44 years old. As FiveThirtyEight explains, these lines often run through high mountain regions where access by road is either poor or nonexistent. A way of decentralizing energy generation and localizing it to avoid the issues surrounding transmission over long distances. Rather than an island-wide power grid, each area would have its own generation and storage capacity. Such a system would be ideal for Puerto Rico, because it would negate having to reconstruct transmission lines across dangerous terrain. In addition, there would be an improved resilience, because there would be fewer obvious points of failure when the next climate-induced disaster strikes. Much like Puerto Rico, the island was previously powered by diesel engines that consumed gallons of fuel per day, costing a small fortune for residents. Tesla replaced the existing infrastructure in favor of a 1. The batteries hold 6MWh of power, enough to run the island for three totally sunless days at a time. In addition, the system can recharge from dry to full in a little under seven hours of sunlight. The Kauai facility has a 13MW solar farm connected to a 53MWh Powerpack power storage setup and the early indications are that these systems work. Tesla has already shipped hundreds of its Powerwall battery systems to the island nation in an attempt to aid the recovery effort. Looking at the island, it seems feasible that the company could equip coastal cities like Ponce and San Juan in a similar fashion to its earlier projects. Specifically, he takes issue with the notion that lithium-ion batteries could be used to store and distribute baseload power. Baseload is, essentially, the constant stream of energy required by an electric grid that needs to operate continuously. Lithium-ion batteries have a limit to the number of times their cells can be charged and discharged before they start to degrade. In a domestic setting, a battery would likely last around 13 years before becoming unusable. But would such a system work to provide the backbone of a system supplying an island of 3. Then there are the up-front costs, which would be prohibitive for Puerto Rico even if it is likely to recoup the cash over time. Unfortunately, we wanted to put these figures directly to Tesla, which declined to speak to Engadget for this article. Renewable-based microgrids are not the only way that Puerto Rico could rebuild and refashion its power infrastructure. The Senate Energy and Natural Resources committee was told that the DoE has plans for both upgraded generation and transmission systems. Assistant Secretary of Energy Bruce Walker told the committee about plans for a "collapsible" electric grid that could be taken down when high winds were threatened. Secretary Rick Perry, meanwhile, told a Clean Energy panel that the government can build very small nuclear reactors that can be deployed in emergencies. Their relative size is also used by proponents to show how much safer they are than large-scale nuclear plants. Thankfully, we already have a template outlining what a 21st-century electric grid should be, thanks to the Obama-era White House. In June , a paper explaining the future of the electricity grid was published outlining how government and companies could work together. The paper believes that smarter grids with better demand management are a key to both improving resilience and reducing wastage. For instance, it is commonplace to overbuild energy-generation

capacity and overgenerate power to satisfy peak demand. On a hot day in Texas, for instance, additional power plants are activated to cope with the extra demand from everyone turning on their air conditioners to full. But smarter grids that reroute generated energy to where it is needed, with battery storage to fill in when demand peaks, help reduce the need for more power stations. The report posits that, if implemented, a more-efficient transmission network could negate the construction of up to 90 large power plants in the US. The paper also outlines methods for providers to manage demand better by encouraging folks to reschedule their activities to off-peak times. That may be an issue in Puerto Rico, however, where the locals are used to depressed charges for power -- simply because very few have the ability to pay more. That really becomes the killer issue, which is that, for all of the techno-utopian hope that Puerto Rico can emerge from this crisis better equipped, reality often gets in the way. The indebted island simply does not have the ability to invest this amount of cash in new infrastructure. In a statement , the company said that it has sent employees and subcontractors to Puerto Rico to help restore power to the island. In addition, a further people will be sent to the island in the near future to provide additional support. The business is described as a "2-year-old consultancy" that was "hired outside the usual channels for the job. But it remains to be seen if the island can, somehow, emerge from this crisis as a shining beacon for renewable energy in the 21st century. He lives in Norwich, U.

**Chapter 6 : Building the future of Puerto Rico's coffee industry | AL DÍA News**

*cortes to discuss puerto rico's future Jun 7 State Representative Bob Cortes will participate in a panel discussion entitled "Puerto Rico Rising" during the Sunshine Summit sponsored by the Republican Party of Florida.*

She rushed home to find her son dead on the back patio. Medical professionals labeled his death a suicide. He was one of six teenagers who took their lives after Maria, according to mortality records. CNN does not typically identify suicide victims who are not public figures. For this story, the teen will be called Alejandro, and his mother Isabel. It covers deaths that occurred for about nine months after the storm and may not include all deaths. More research is needed in order to say whether the suicide rate increased because of Maria, said Nayda I. In four, families believed the hurricane played a role in the deaths of their loved ones. The youth suicide deaths CNN researched have not been publicly ascribed to the hurricane by Puerto Rican authorities, who have come under criticism for their handling of the Maria death toll. A survey of more than 60, Puerto Rican public school students examined their mental and physical well-being in the months after Hurricane Maria. In August, officials said that nearly 3, people died directly or indirectly from the storm, based on a George Washington University statistical analysis of deaths that occurred from September to February. But that is just an estimate -- a number. Local officials have released details on only 64 people who died in the aftermath of Maria. Typically, multiple factors play a role. Asking for help The suicide rate in the United States has seen sharp increases in recent years. Studies have shown that the risk of suicide declines sharply when people call the national suicide hotline: There is also a crisis text line. For crisis support in Spanish, call The lines are staffed by a mix of paid professionals and unpaid volunteers trained in crisis and suicide intervention. The International Association for Suicide Prevention and Befrienders Worldwide also provide contact information for crisis centers around the world. Still, the longer chaos persists, psychologists and disaster experts said, the more damaging a disaster like Hurricane Maria becomes for vulnerable kids. Children in Puerto Rico have watched as their homes were torn apart, their friends moved to the mainland, their government struggled to restore water and power service and their parents lost jobs. Before the storm, their island was bankrupt and hemorrhaging its 3. Now, there are serious questions about how many young people will be left when the "exodus" slows. Norcross, a professor of child and adolescent psychiatry at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, said of the overall situation. The slow federal recovery efforts in Puerto Rico, he said, helped create these dire circumstances for kids. One researcher called them "The Maria Generation. Some children made it through Maria virtually unscathed. Their homes were repaired, power was restored, eventually, and life has started to return to normal. Others, however, have been pushed toward despair. Among the circumstances CNN found: In July, the neighbor pleaded guilty in that case to sexual coercion and enticement of a minor, which carries a sentence of at least 10 years in prison, records show. The suffering is not confined to a few. CNN exclusively obtained the results of a survey of more than 60, public school students in Puerto Rico, which was conducted earlier this year by the Puerto Rico Department of Education in consultation with the Medical University of South Carolina. Nearly half of surveyed students -- who were in fourth grade through high school -- reported their homes were "destroyed or greatly damaged" by the storm, researchers said. About a third reported their families "struggled to find food or water. These are hardships that can lead to hopelessness and suicide, said Rosaura Orengo-Aguayo, an assistant professor at the Medical University of South Carolina who was involved in the report. Researchers did not specifically ask about child suicide because of the sensitivities involved, she said. In all of , the hotline received 7, calls in which a person reported a suicide attempt. We know in these situations where kids are traumatized that it can actually affect their brains. Young children develop "models of the world" -- core assumptions about how they can expect things to operate, said Ryan Kilmer, a professor of psychology at The University of North Carolina at Charlotte who studied mental health in children after Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast in . Some of these assumptions, he said, are things like "mom and dad keep me safe" and "the world is fair. They have the life experience to start over and rebuild. But "children are much more highly sensitive to interruption of services and support," said Dr. Kids can start to wonder: Will this ever be normal? Why are we

here? Why is there war? Why do children suffer? His mother started fielding them when he was in elementary school, if not before. She liked that her son asked her these questions, though. Alejandro was the type of kid who observed the world in detail, who cared about the people and ideas in his orbit. In , though, his questions became more personal -- harder to answer. Still, his father died in September . If there were a God, why did this happen? Alejandro sank into depression, withdrawing from the family. At one point he expressed suicidal thoughts to his mother: "I want to die," he told her. But in the spring of , before Maria, things changed, Isabel said. He decided to turn tragedy into opportunity; the time he spent with his dad in the hospital motivated him to become a nurse. He enrolled at a university in a nearby town. His mom recalls him telling a school counselor that he felt needed and loved. The comments floored her. Power was out indefinitely. His college had closed temporarily, forcing the teen to move out of the dorm and back home amid the turmoil. He found purpose, relatives said, volunteering at a nearby hospital, caring for older patients who needed assistance after the hurricane. Alexsandra, 13, and her family were without power for more than 9 months after the hurricane. He became aggressive," said his mother. Alejandro started answering them. It was a statement. Experts in child suicide say it is often impossible to know what led a person to take his or her life. Sometimes there is no single identifiable reason. Almost always, there are many. But this is mostly worrisome for the vulnerable children -- that is, children who have had some preexisting challenges like depression. Kids who tend to be loners and not very communicative. Kids with other types of mental health conditions. This is the last straw. The teenagers heard mom and dad fretting. When communication systems returned to their part of the island after outages, they overheard their parents calling creditors, asking for time. The elder sister recalled thinking that "my sister would get two-times the food" if she were no longer around. She considered killing herself, she told CNN. For her younger sibling, it was worse. The younger girl attempted to kill herself in late October. She was hospitalized but survived. She was always trying not to stress out others. In another journal, she wrote: The teenager was coming to terms with her sexual orientation in an unaccepting world, she said. But the prolonged aftermath of Maria was her "detonation point. My daughter "was light," she said. In the s, about a third of all people living on the island were children. In , children accounted for only about one in five. Eleven people crowded inside. The teen slept in the living room. He took the situation the hardest, according to his mother. As months passed, the buzz of people, the lack of privacy, lack of cell phone service, lack of power, lack of anything to do, made him anxious and violent, she said. On December 3, the mother found her son dead outside the house; he had apparently taken his own life. Court proceedings and therapy related to the sexual abuse case stalled after the storm, too, she said, causing new anxieties. The year-old killed herself on February . Puerto Rico officials did not respond a request for comment on whether the deaths had been investigated or were determined privately to be hurricane related.

**Chapter 7 : Warring Visions of Puerto Rico's Future - racedaydvl.com**

*While tourism is a vital sector across the Caribbean, Puerto Rico's economy, one of the most diverse in the region, ought to create and absorb a highly-skilled, bi-lingual and future-proof.*

Naomi Klein author, journalist and senior correspondent for The Intercept. She is also author of *This Changes Everything: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*. Links Transcript This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form. It has been six months since Hurricane Maria battered the island of Puerto Rico. It was the most catastrophic storm to hit the island in over a century. The official death toll remains at just 64, but independent counts put the total number of fatalities at over a thousand. The governor is also pushing for privately run charter schools and private school vouchers. On Monday, teachers across Puerto Rico held a one-day strike to protest the privatization plan. Well, today we spend the hour looking at the future of Puerto Rico, which was already facing a massive economic crisis before the storm hit six months ago. She is founder of the Puerto Rico Syllabus. We welcome you both to Democracy Now! Good morning, Amy and Juan and Yarimar. So, a radical downsizing, deregulation and privatization of the state. There is also a powerful resistance movement, that was really gaining ground before Maria hit, that was resisting this illegitimate debt, this previous shock doctrine strategy of exploiting the economic crisis to push these very same policies. Well, Naomi, you begin your piece talking about the town of Adjuntas up in the mountains of Puerto Rico and also about one of these grassroots organizations that even before the storm had already been pioneering at least electricity generation for their own center. Could you talk about that some? The food system collapsed. The energy system completely collapsed and is still in a state of collapse. But there were a few things that did work. And there was—there is this community center in Adjuntas which is called Casa Pueblo. And so you had this beacon. Arturo Massol, who is the director of the board of directors of Casa Pueblo, described it as an energy oasis. So, in the midst of this sea of darkness, you have this community center that has light, the day after Maria, because their solar panels survived. And so, people came there. It becomes this hub of people-to-people recovery. They start handing out solar lanterns. And it becomes this kind of field hospital, where people plug in their medical devices. So this is, you know, very intensely practical. And we saw some similar things happening on farms, as well. And, Naomi, this was a town that was—not only had no electricity and no water, but was completely cut off from the rest of the island for quite a while because of the roads washed out, right? As so many communities were, you know, outside of San Juan, particularly in the mountains, where roads were either obstructed by fallen trees and branches or by mudslides. So, yeah, completely cut off. Its founder got the Goldman Prize, is that right? The environmental prize in San Francisco. Him, his son and the community building this place that became this sunny satellite, just shocking, given what was around, the darkness around them. I also saw an amazing example of this in the community of Mariana, in Humacao, where, you know, as—where an amazing mutual aid center was constructed, in the failure of FEMA, in the failure of the state to respond to this disaster. So people linked in with the Puerto Rican diaspora, got their own solar panels installed, and then this become—you know, while I was there, I witnessed an elderly man come in, plug in his oxygen machine, because this was still—and at this point, it was five months after Hurricane Maria—the only source of electricity in the region. So, tell us about who the—what you call the Puertopians are. Well, Yarimar, I think, can talk about this, as well. So, in , a couple of laws were passed to attract very wealthy people to Puerto Rico by giving them essentially the most favorable tax system in the world. So, just last week there was a major conference in San Juan in one of the luxury hotels, the Vanderbilt Hotel, which is actually owned by one of these high-net-worth individuals who moved to Puerto Rico because of these favorable tax rates. And they are attracted to Puerto Rico because it holds out the promise that they can convert their cryptocurrencies into harder currencies while paying no taxes whatsoever. And part of the irony of this is that cryptocurrencies are one of the fastest-growing sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the world. It is an incredibly wasteful way to create money. So, right now, Bitcoin uses as much energy in the creation of this currency as the state of Israel uses to—consumes energy. So this is a huge source of greenhouse gas emissions. And here you have Puerto Rico, battered by climate change and also unable to

provide power to its own people, beingâ€™pitching itself as a hub for the cryptocurrency market. Please attribute legal copies of this work to democracynow. Some of the work s that this program incorporates, however, may be separately licensed. For further information or additional permissions, contact us. Next story from this daily show.

### Chapter 8 : Meet the Puerto Rican sisterhood reinventing the island's future after Maria - CNN

*A year ago, Hurricane Maria tore into Puerto Rico, obliterating power grids, decimating farms, flattening homes and wrecking the local economy. Maria came on the heels of Hurricane Irma -- sister.*

The Puerto Rican status referendum, was to offer only two options: The specifics of the association agreement [76] would be detailed in the Compact of Free Association that would be negotiated between the U. That document might cover topics such as the role of the US military in Puerto Rico, the use of the US currency, free trade between the two entities, and whether Puerto Ricans would be U. Colonialism is not an option According to the Government Development Bank, this might be the only solution to the debt crisis. Congress has the power to vote to allow Chapter 9 protection without the need for statehood, but in late there was very little support in the House for this concept. Other benefits to statehood include increased disability benefits and Medicaid funding, the right to vote in Presidential elections and the higher federal minimum wage. Regardless of the outcome of the votes, Congress will be the body to make the final decision on the status of Puerto Rico. Presidential executive orders on the political status of Puerto Rico Various U. Congress[ edit ] See also: Since Congress must approve of any political status change for Puerto Rico, some argue that "congressional agreement to the options [on a ballot], prior to a plebiscite would save the people of Puerto Rico the grief of an emotionally draining and politically divisive vote that might result in a status not acceptable to Congress". The opinion of the court stated: Some authorities, such as Trias Monge, argue that Puerto Rico "clearly does not meet the decolonization standards set by the United Nations in ". Today, however, the UN "still debates whether Puerto Rico is a colony" or not. The debate over Resolution prompted the United Nations to agree on governing arrangements that would provide full self-government to non-self-governing territories: Yet, under international law, a freely associated state is a sovereign nation in a joint governing arrangement with another nation that either nation can unilaterally end. Most recently, the Decolonization Committee called for the General Assembly to review the political status of Puerto Rico, a power reserved by the resolution. Constitution applies partially to Puerto Rico by the Insular Cases. United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization[ edit ] Since , the UN has been considering the political status of Puerto Rico and how to assist it in achieving "independence" or "decolonization". The group called on the United States to expedite a process that would allow the people of Puerto Rico to exercise fully their right to self-determination and independence. Sparrow also determined that "Most Puerto Ricans consider themselves a distinct national group.

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*Puerto Rico is the eleventh of 12 EPFs that Austal has under contract with the U.S. Navy with a combined value of over \$ billion. "Austal is excited to christen another amazing ship," said.*