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Alimentación Segura Infantil

***The WHO Code in the
Context of Puerto Rico
and Disasters***



The background is a blurred image of a document. It features a line graph with a jagged line. A pen is visible in the upper right corner, pointing towards the graph. There are some numbers visible on the graph, such as '2.5' and '2.47'.

Disclosures

I have nothing to disclose



Historical Context

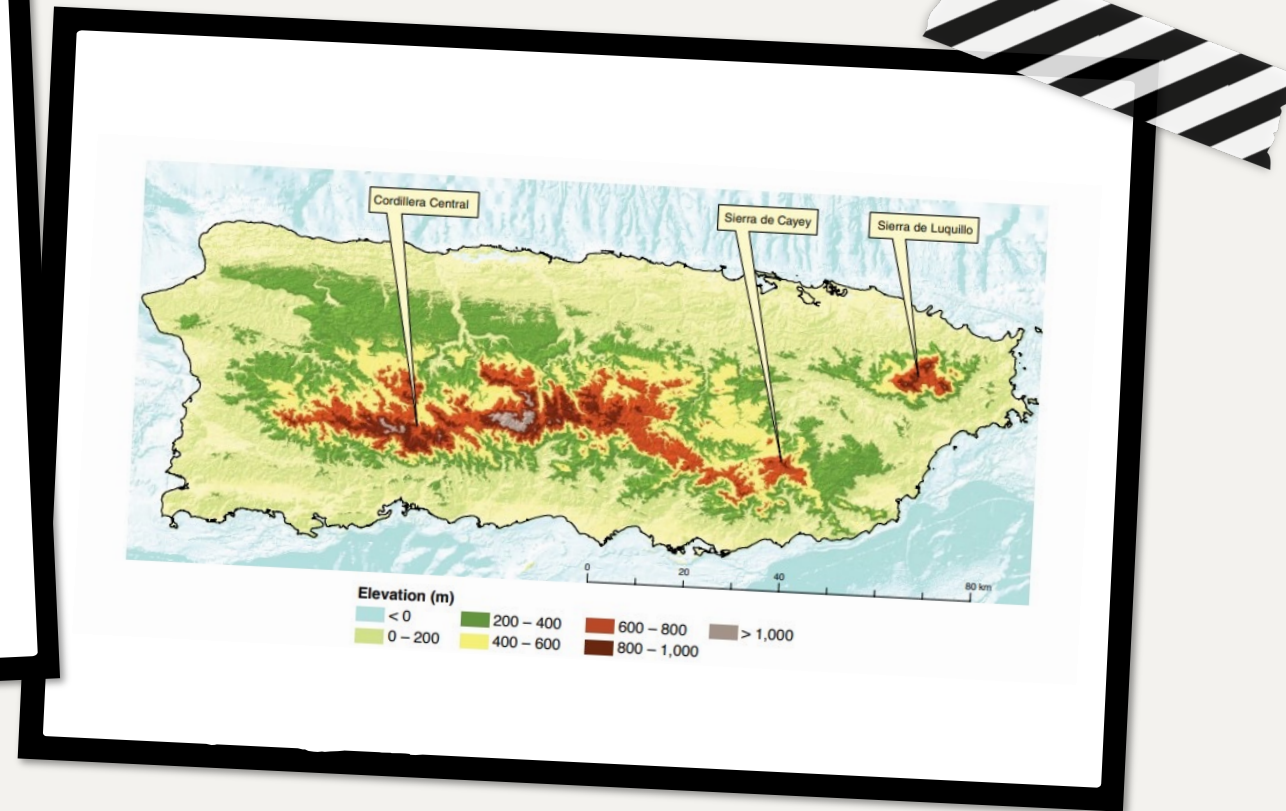
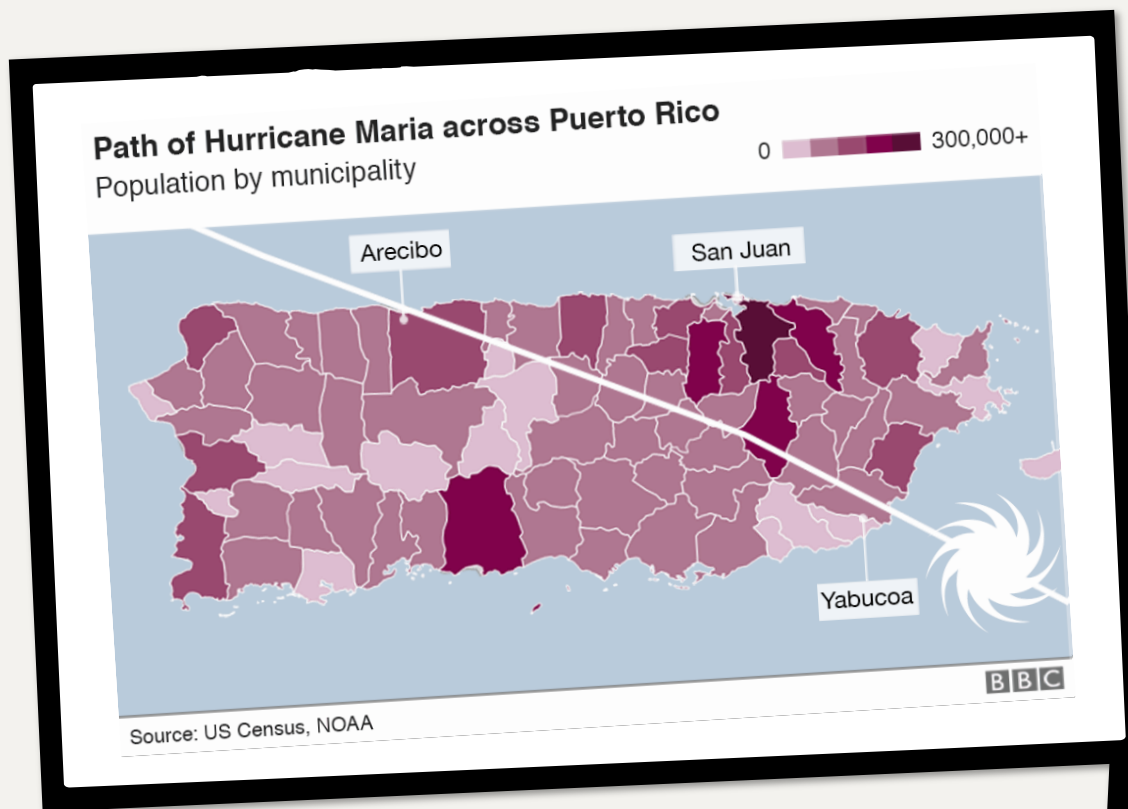
- Former Spanish colony passed to US hands as war booty in 1898
- Strategic location from a military perspective
- Site of medical and agricultural experimentation during its ongoing relationship with the US
- Former tax codes permitted US national corporations to operate without paying federal taxes until the year 2000 including pharmaceuticals
- Society deliberately restructured from one that was rural and agricultural to one that is urban and industrial
- US Citizenship for residents also has caused constant migration back and forth between the island and mainland
- Exists in “hurricane alley” because of location in the Caribbean and also located on a seismic fault line



Birth and Lactation before Hurricane Maria

- Economic debt causing large exodus of families of reproductive age
- 85% of children under 5 eligible for WIC
- 75% of young adults under 30 earning minimum wage or less
- Public policy related to Zika discouraged having children. Durable contraception heavily distributed
- 49% of births are by c-section
- 2018 Breastfeeding report card:
 - Any breastfeeding at 6 months was 47% vs. 57.6% national average
 - Any breastfeeding at 12 months was 29.8% vs. 35.9% national average
 - 26.5% exclusive breastfeeding at 6 months vs. 24.9% national average
 - 19.6% of babies consume formula before day 2
 - 1.1% of babies born in the only baby friendly hospital on the island
- Code violators have public-private alliances with the government





Hurricane Maria September 2017



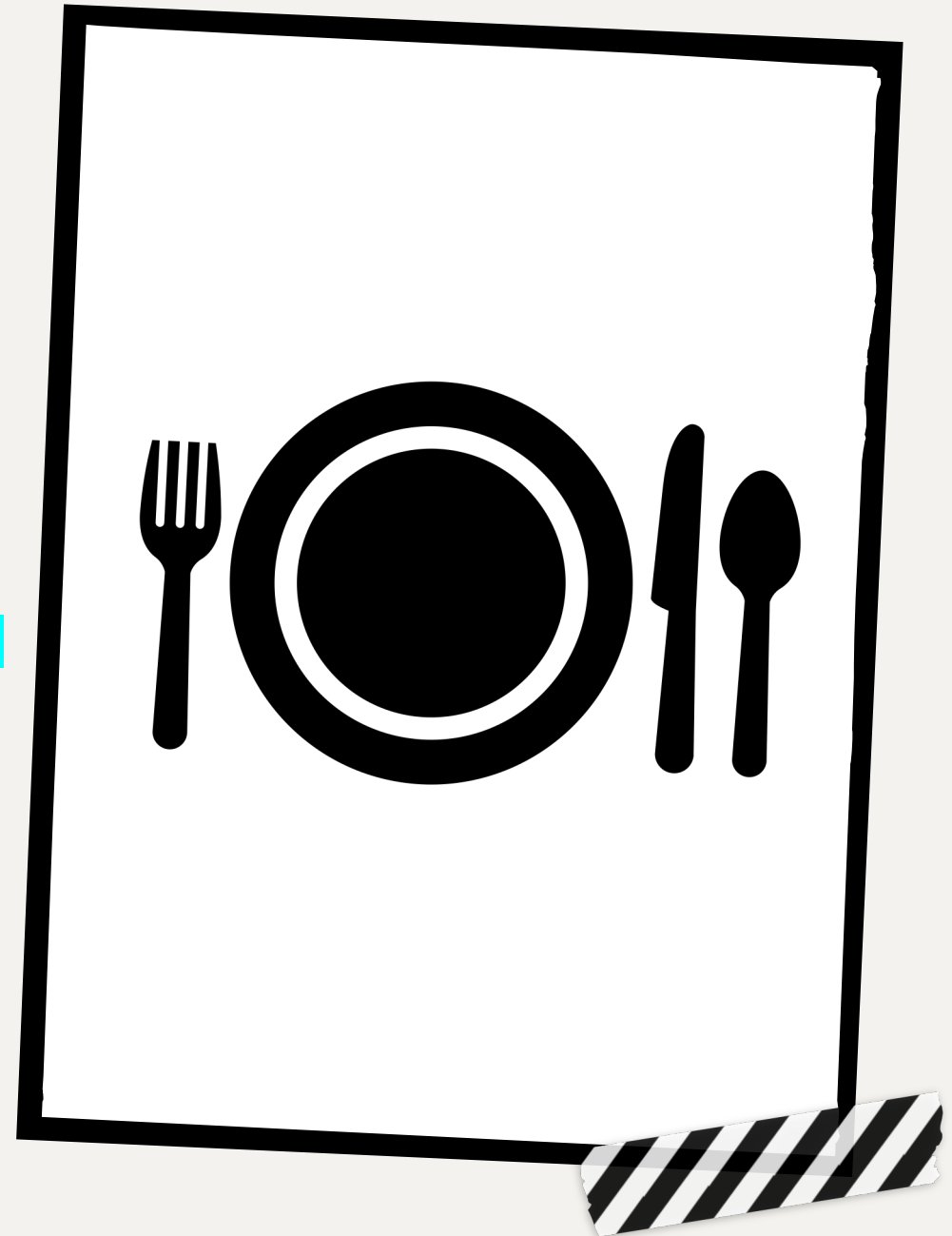
Aftermath of Disaster

- For at least 24 hours, 100% of the island was off the power grid.
 - + Some municipalities did not have power for as long as 10 months
- About 75% of highways were impassible for at least 3 weeks. Some communities were 100% cut off from vehicular traffic as bridges and roads disappeared.
- The Jones Act was only lifted for 10 day
- Cell phone towers were also swept away so that for about 3 weeks only about 20% of the island had signal and this slowly was resolved
- It took months for stores to be stocked and reopened
- Most impacted: rural, mountain communities and inner city
- WIC was off the grid and closed. In most impacted communities, they didn't open for months and then operated out of FEMA offices, making checks manually



How did we eat?

- Breastfeeding and chestfeeding will normally be the safest way to feed your baby, but 74% of babies relied on some formula feeding
- Families could not leave their houses or pay for goods, even if stores opened. Long lines.
- Many families had to seek shelter.
- Food, including infant formula, was being airdropped by the military to the most isolated.
- The local government did not step up, instead the private sector did and then later the military.
- Formula was everywhere, water and electricity was not.
- Investing in high skilled lactation service providers after disasters is not normally a priority



Predatory Marketing

- Product loyalty adds to food insecurity. Food is food.
- Inability to disinfect bottles and teats in a water and power crisis means sick adults and children.
- Formula literally falling from the sky and being pushed in most food pantries put the product within easy reach but not safe handling instructions.
- Gas lines could take as long as 10 hours. No express lines for pregnant people or families with infants and young children.
- Female and single heads of household tend to “go for help” and leave the children if it will be for a long time.
- Formula manufacturers position themselves as “heroes” when they donate large amounts of infant milks. Nobody is willing to unbrand the products.
- Powdered milk is cheapest to purchase and ship, and the most life threatening





IS THE CODE JUST FOR COUNTRIES “IN DEVELOPMENT”?

- We live in the same country that you do
- Economic, racial and ethnic disparities exacerbate disasters
- Hurricane season started on June 1, the pandemic is still a crisis, and the ground continues to tremble





Lactation Service

Providers, the Code, and

Cultural Humility

- Educating one on one is not a Code violation
- Giving formula to a family isn't a Code violation if you aren't pushing a brand.
- Teaching a family how to pace bottle feed isn't a Code violation.
- Cup feeding may be safest, but some families may choose not to practice it.
- Hand expression is a vital tool.
- Train communities to educate and help themselves







Combo Feeding / Exclusive Formula Feeding



formula during an emergency, safer measures save lives:

1. Please read the other side only if you'd like to re-lactate or increase your supply.
2. If there's not a wet-nurse or human milk available, liquid ready to feed formula, in disposable 3 or 4 ounce bottles, is the cleanest and safest for your baby. Read and make sure if it's liquid concentrate that you add more water but don't dilute regular formula.
3. When liquid formula isn't available, the World Health Organization recommends preparing it with freshly boiled and still hot water, whether it's bottled or from the faucet. This is to kill germs in the formula which are more abundant after a disaster. After preparation, you can cool it, as it lasts 2 hours at room temperature and 24 hours in a cold refrigerator.
4. If the brand of formula you use isn't available, read the ingredients on the back of another brand. The "type" of formula (regular, soy, hypoallergenic, amino acid) is safe even if it's another brand and you don't have to ask your doctor.
5. You must always sanitize ("sterilize") bottles after washing them with soap and water. Boil them for 5 minutes, steam the with a top for 7 minutes, or cold sanitatize by immersing for 2 minutes in a solution of 1 gallon potable water to 1 tablespoon regular unscented household bleach. When you can't disinfect bottles, you can feed your baby with a disposable or clean household cup easily.
6. Remember that when babies get sick from poorly handled milk, they blame it on something else like SIDS, gastroenteritis, infection, diarrhea, etc. These are basic measures you can take to help your baby who we know you love and care for so carefully.

Warm Line ASI: 787-501-0274





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Questions?

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