

# ENERGY INEQUALITY AND CLIENTELISM IN THE WAKE OF DISASTERS: FROM COLORBLIND TO AFFIRMATIVE POWER RESTORATION

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Do social vulnerabilities and ruling party support shape government responsiveness in times of disasters? The 2017 [hurricane](#) María territory-wide [power outage](#), the second longest in world history, is a tragic natural experiment that provides a unique opportunity to examine the determinants of government responsiveness during disaster recovery processes. We use data on [power restoration](#) crew deployments (N = 18,614 deployments), a novel measure of government responsiveness, and a new social vulnerability index to assess the determinants of government responsiveness in the wake of disasters. We find that communities with ties to the ruling party elicit greater government responsiveness while socially vulnerable communities are less likely to be prioritized during the disaster relief efforts, controlling for disaster damage as well as logistical, economic, and essential service recovery priorities. Existing power restoration policies place larger burdens on marginalized communities, motivating the need for including power restoration to vulnerable communities among restoration priorities.