



## SESSION DESCRIPTION

# **B4** Assessing climate vulnerability of cities and urban infrastructure: What works?

## **Panel discussion**

**Date:** Thursday, May 29, 2014

**Time:** 16:45-18:15

**Rooms:** S30-32

**Language:** English

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**Organized by:** ICF International and the Inter-American Development Bank

## **OBJECTIVE**

This session will share lessons learned from past and ongoing vulnerability assessments under two programs: the Climate Change Resilient Development (CCRD) Climate Resilient Infrastructure Services (CRIS) Program of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Emerging and Sustainable Cities Initiative (ESCI) of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The panel includes program representatives and managers from participating Latin American cities. These programs have their own methods of prioritizing and analyzing climate vulnerability and risk, and have mobilized technical and financial resources in support of climate-resilient urban development and infrastructure.

Many developing cities are growing rapidly, and need to quickly expand their infrastructure to keep pace with their growing populations. Integrating climate risk is important to ensure that these investments result in infrastructure that will be resilient over time. In recent years, many methods have been developed to assess climate vulnerability, and these methods vary considerably in the time and money required. Several of these methods have been tested in cities across the world through programs such as CRIS and ESCI.

A representative from the CRIS program will describe how screening tools are being used to assess the vulnerability of assets in three Latin American pilot cities (Piura, Peru; Trujillo, Peru; and the National District of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic) to understand the most significant risks that need to be addressed and move quickly to adaptation implementation. This fast-track approach is one way to implement the development-first USAID Climate Resilient Development (CRD) Framework. A representative from IDB will discuss how vulnerability assessments are being conducted through ESCI to support Latin American and Caribbean cities as they develop City Action Plans. City representatives from the National District of Santo Domingo and Cuenca, Ecuador will describe their experience conducting vulnerability assessments. The Panel will discuss (1) the technical challenges involved in conducting vulnerability assessments, and (2) the use of such assessments in urban policy planning and city infrastructure development.

## **OUTCOMES**

Participants will gain:

- Increased awareness of how climate change impacts may specifically affect infrastructure investments and long-term sustainability in rapidly growing developing cities



- Specific knowledge about different approaches and tools that are being used to assess climate vulnerability of infrastructure, and the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches
- Understanding of the challenges faced and lessons learned by developing cities who have implemented these approaches

## METHODOLOGY

- The facilitator will open the session with a short introduction of herself and each panel member. **(5 minutes)**
- The moderator will start the session with an interactive series of questions with the audience to gauge the range and type of experience in conducting vulnerability assessments among attendees. **(5 minutes)**
- Each speaker will be given time to describe their work, using PowerPoint slides, maps, and other illustrations as needed. **(5x 7 minutes)**
- The moderator will then facilitate a discussion among panel members and audience using the guiding questions below to identify the lessons learned from panel program cities and other cities in the audience **(20 minutes)**
- The facilitator will manage questions and answers from the audience. **(20 minutes)**
- The facilitator will conclude with closing remarks. **(5 minutes)**
- Key findings from the discussion will be captured by recorders, and a synopsis of the session discussion will be prepared.

### Guiding questions:

1. What is your program or city trying to achieve through this program, and what is the role of the vulnerability assessment in supporting urban policy planning and city infrastructure development?
2. What approach to vulnerability assessment did you use? Why and how did you choose that approach? How were city staff and decision makers involved in the process?
3. What are the technical challenges involved in conducting vulnerability assessments, including availability of information regarding climate variables; the use of techniques to assess exposure, vulnerability, and risk; the methods to synthesize results of such analysis; and the financial requirements to conduct properly such assessments?
4. How did the vulnerability assessment findings inform or change city decisions?
5. What are recommendations for cities undertaking vulnerability assessments related to infrastructure?

## CONTRIBUTORS

Facilitator/  
Panelist *Joanne R. Potter, CRIS Program Manager, ICF International, Washington D.C., USA*

As facilitator, Ms. Potter will guide the panel presentations and discussion with the session participants. She will also give an overview of USAID's CRIS Program, including the cities that are participating as pilots, the program objectives, and the tools and approaches that have been developed.

Panelist *Jose Miguel Martinez Guridy, Minister of Environment, National District of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic*



Mr. Martinez Guridy will describe the experience of the National District of Santo Domingo (ADN) as a pilot city in the CRIS Program. He will highlight ADN's experience in developing a working group of municipal staff, other government agencies, and community partners and stakeholders to address climate resilience. He will also discuss the progress they have made in assessing the vulnerability of existing and planned water treatment facilities in a highly vulnerable, low-income neighborhood.

Panelist *David Wilk, Lead Climate Change Specialist, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington D.C., USA*

Mr. Wilk will present IDB's Emerging and Sustainable Cities Initiative (ESCI), including the program objectives, participating cities, and lessons learned through the disaster risk and climate change studies conducted in Latin American and Caribbean cities.

Panelist *Sebastian Izquierdo Abad, Former Director, Environment Commission, Municipality of Cuenca, Ecuador*

Mr. Izquierdo Abad will describe the experience of Cuenca as a participant in the ESCI program. He will discuss the municipality's sustainability objectives, the activities the municipality implemented, and lessons learned from this work.

Panelist *Emilio Ventura, Director of Adaptation to Climate Change and Strategic Risk Management, Ministry of Public Works, Transport, Housing, and Urban Development, El Salvador*

Mr. Ventura will discuss the experience of the Ministry's Directorate of Climate Change Adaptation and Strategic Risk Management on vulnerability analyses in an urban context and share his knowledge on the opportunities of aligning Risk Management and Adaptation.

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**Further recommended reading**

IDB Emerging and Sustainable Cities Initiative  
<http://www.iadb.org/cities>

USAID Climate Adaptation Resources  
<http://www.usaid.gov/climate/adaptation/resources>

USAID Climate-Resilient Development: A Framework for Understanding and Addressing Climate Change  
<http://www.usaid.gov/climate/climate-resilient-development-framework>

USAID Climate Change Resilient Development Library  
<http://www.ccrdproject.com/ccrd-library>

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