

Towards Climate Resilient and Inclusive Urban Development in Latin America: Showcasing a participatory planning project in three cities

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This presentation is based on the "Participatory Decision-Making for Climate Resilient and Inclusive Urban Development in Latin America" project. The primary objective of the project, funded by CDKN, IDRC, and FFLA, is to identify and apply a practical, innovative and participatory methodology to support climate resilient and inclusive urban development in the rapidly growing small and medium sized cities of Latin America.

Not only is Latin America one of the most urbanized regions in the world, it is also one of the most hazard-prone. Moreover, the region is heavily affected by urban poverty, socio-economic inequality, substandard housing and infrastructure and inadequate institutional capacity. The research takes place in the cities of Santa Ana, El Salvador; Santo Tomé, Argentina; and Dos Quebradas, Colombia, which are small to medium sized cities that have experienced rapid development in the last few decades. All three cities encounter different urban problems and are at risk from different impacts of climate change requiring various disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and resilience building strategies.

This research comes at a time when all post-2015 development frameworks (Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Accord for Climate Change, the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda) recognize the importance of urban areas for the future of safe, equitable, resilient and sustainable development. Local governments and governance play the most important role in achieving this. This requires a specific focus on urban governance, particularly as a decision-making process involving all local stakeholders, which also enhances the feasibility of implementing such decisions. This project seeks to answer that need and to develop a practical way in which stakeholders are integrated into the decision-making process, that not only empowers citizens, but also facilitates the implementation of strategies that are identified towards a resilient urban development. The project uses a decision support tool and methodology in a multi-stakeholder setting and test and assess in different contexts issues such as risk, vulnerability, urban development and decision-making. The goal is to explore different options to integrate disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and resilience building strategies that will also ensure less inequality and increase empowerment through a participatory process. This participatory process is being implemented in the project cities and the presentation will showcase the results of this participatory process, outlining expected positive outcome, such as strategies on risk-informed urban planning and development, infrastructure upgrade, ecosystems management as well as social capacity development, as well as any challenges acquired during this process, which can be applied in different settings.