

## LA CEIBA, HONDURAS + SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS



**LOCATED ON THE CARIBBEAN COAST** of Honduras, La Ceiba is the third largest city in Honduras. It was founded in 1835. La Ceiba's location makes it geographically unique; it lies in an alluvial floodplain area between a mountain range and the Caribbean Sea.

The city of La Ceiba faces a complex scenario; challenges associated with a growing urban population and the city's geographic location make it city highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. A combination of climate-related and anthropogenic threats put the city at risk for damaged infrastructure and lower quality of life for the population that could even lead to the loss of human lives.

The municipality has an environmental management unit (Gerencia Ambiental Municipal- GAM) whose role is to enforce the National Environmental Law and its regulatory framework within the municipality. The GAM coordinates with the central government and the Ministry of Environment (MiAmbiente+) for the authorization and licensing of new projects and construction as well as investigating environmental complaints from the citizens, among other duties. Due to efforts by the central government to decentralize major governance roles, the GAM is not entirely responsible for regulating common resources within the boundaries of the municipality (i.e. forest exploitation, mining activities) which often creates conflicts and hinders its effectiveness at preventing environmental damages.

The local government is particularly interested in addressing these issues, which creates a window of opportunity to develop planning exercises and enforce regulations. In order to capitalize on this, the Municipal Corporation and its technical staff need to increase their understanding of climate change. Currently, there is a vague understanding of the expected impacts of climate change in the mid- and long-term which further increases uncertainty and hinders concrete action.

### RESULTS

1

**Creation of a sectoral climate change adaptation planning tool** that provides different types of adaptation strategies for land use services in accordance to the required sectoral need or critical systems, including physical infrastructure, social and human systems, natural systems, and economic systems.

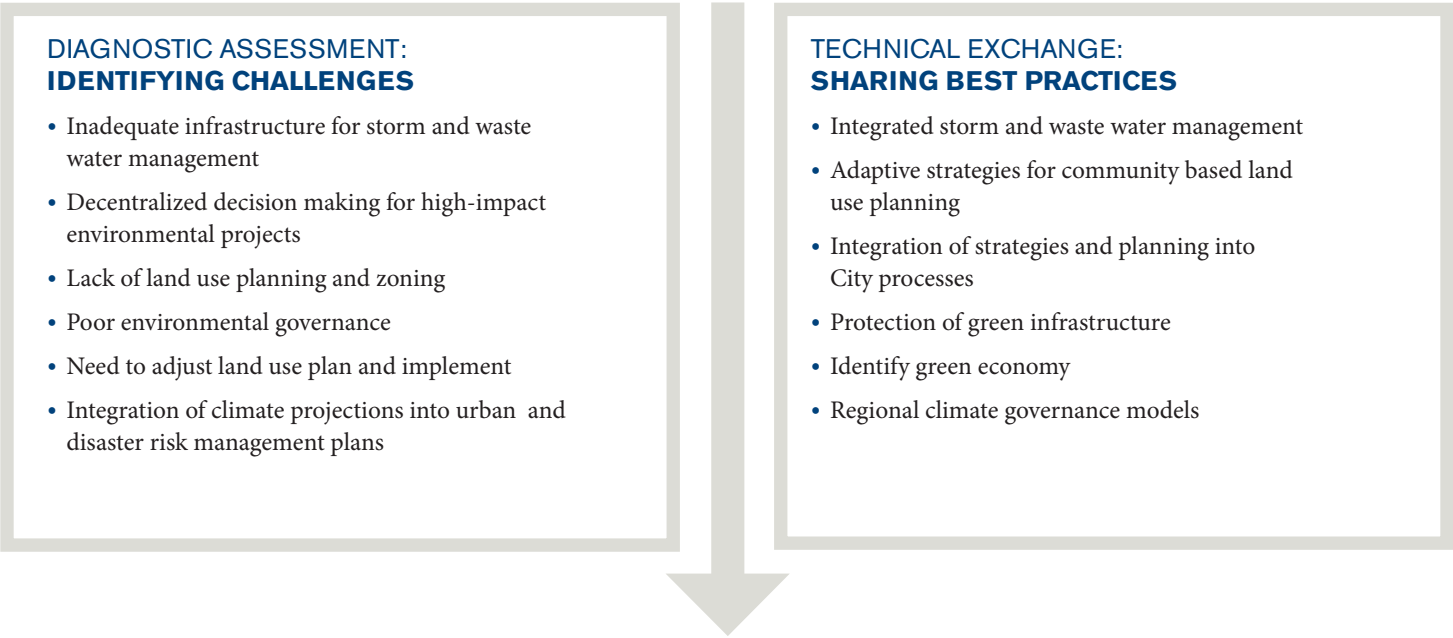
2

**Municipal decision makers, technical staff and civil society have increased their capacity to adapt to climate change** and have a broader understanding of long term impacts of climate change.

3

**Municipal key technical staff supported to leverage national response and financing** for upcoming steps to adjust current land use plan while considering climate change projections/adaptation.

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**WORK PLANNING:  
CREATING ACTIONABLE PROGRESS TOWARD LOCALIZED ADAPTATION MEASURES**

OBJECTIVE		
Strengthen the decentralization of environmental governance based on climate change adaptation awareness and strategical guidance to support decision making in land use planning.		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACTIVITY 1</b></p> <p>Disseminate the understanding of climate projections and the need for Climate Change Adaptation measures</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACTIVITY 2</b></p> <p>Prioritize local threats in accordance to most vulnerable geographical areas and identify vulnerabilities and adaptation alternatives</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ACTIVITY 3</b></p> <p>Create an adaptation guide and planning tool for physical and policy recommendations for the improvement of the city's land use plan</p>

### CROSS-CUTTING RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

- 1** Cities that are not fully developed must first address their current problems and plan strategically for future development.
- 2** Access and dissemination of data is critical to local governments' ability to make informed decisions across sectors to ensure climate resilient development.
- 3** Building capacity at the local level about green and grey infrastructural solutions for climate change adaptation can resolve current issues and support resilient growth.
- 4** Building relationships through city-to-city partnerships is key for long term knowledge sharing creating catalysts for change between partnered cities.