

MERI DAVLASHERIDZE

309 Armsby Building
Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA 16802

E-mail: mzd169@psu.edu
Tel: 814-380-4591

RESEARCH INTEREST

Environmental and Resource Economics; Climate Change Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation; Applied Econometrics; Public Policy and Public Finance

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Candidate (ABD) in Agricultural, Environmental and Regional Economics
Pennsylvania State University, PA, USA, 2009 – Present (exp. grad. summer, 2013)
Dissertation: Three Essays on Disaster Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation
(GPA 3.80/4)

M.S. in Agricultural Economics, Texas A&M University, TX, USA, 2005-2007
Thesis: U.S. Farmland Price Dynamics, Cause-Effect Relationships
(GPA 3.875/4)

Economist, Production Economics, Organization and Management
Ivane Javakhishvili State University of Tbilisi, Georgia, 1994-1998
(Diploma with honor, GPA 5/5, state exam 5/5)

JOB MARKET PAPER

“The Effects of Adaptation Measures on Hurricane Induced Property Losses”

Abstract: In the paper, I investigate the roles of adaptation and mitigation in reducing economic impacts of hurricanes in terms of property loss. I conduct an empirical study of property damage in 864 counties along the Atlantic basin during 1989-2009. Controlling for important drivers of property losses given by hazard incidents, economic and population growth as well as socio-economic vulnerability, I contribute to the existing literature by explicitly accounting for a wide range of public and local adaptation measures. Results suggest that physical and socio-economic vulnerability are primary factors explaining high damages from hurricanes. I find clear evidence of the importance of regulatory-based loss mitigation strategies as exhibited by improved building codes and effectiveness of enforcement. Results suggest that *where to build* (zoning, land-use planning, etc.) is a significant policy complimented by *how to build* (building codes, retrofitting, etc.). Major structural and infrastructural projects were found to exacerbate property losses suggesting evidence of moral hazard, induced development or protective capacity limits of structural measures. Overall, the most efficient disaster loss mitigation strategy entails coordinated actions of federal and local government coupled with private self-insurance initiatives and is highly skewed towards non-structural projects.

WORKING PAPERS

“Indirect impacts of hurricanes: evidence from county level quarterly employment analysis using synthetic control methodology of comparative case studies”

“Optimal Local Level Adaptation: Evidence from CRS Program Class Choice”

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Research Assistant: August, 2009 – Present

Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology and Education, Pennsylvania State University

- Investigating disaster impacts, vulnerability and adaptation among U.S. coastal counties
Research supported by the U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Science, Biological and Environmental Research Program, Integrated Assessment Research Program, Grant No. DE SC0005171, Amount \$6M (3 years).
- Investigating climate risk management strategies implemented at the local level
Sustainable Research Network (title, “Sustainable Climate Risk Management Strategies”) funded by NSF, Grant Amount \$12M (5 years).

Scientific Researcher: 1998-2002

Department of Agricultural Economics, Agrarian State University of Tbilisi, Georgia

- Conducted literature review on financial & credit relations in emerging economies
- Identified economic and political challenges faced by micro-credit enterprises in Georgia

Intern: May – August, 2006

Resource Rural Economics Division of the Economic Research Service (ERS), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Washington DC, USA

- Conducted literature review related to farmland values
- Performed empirical study using ARMS survey data to investigate impacts of various macroeconomic determinants and government economic programs on farmland prices

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant: Spring, 2010; 2011

AEREC 597B – Computational Economics (graduate level course),

Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology and Education, Pennsylvania State University

Instructor: Professor Karen Fisher-Vanden

Lecturer: September 2008 – May, 2009

Risk Management and Mitigation Strategies for Businesses (MBA level course)

Business Modeling (MBA level course)

Ilia State University of Tbilisi, Georgia

WORK EXPERIENCE

Value Chain Initiative Director: March – August, 2009

CNFA Georgia, Agribusiness Development Activity (ADA), Tbilisi, Georgia

- Supervised and managed ADA investment portfolio of value added and value chain initiative projects for food production and processing companies (individual project investment ranged \$50,000 – \$150,000)
- Performed projects scoring and evaluation to identify potential grant recipients
- Prepared semi-annual and annual progress reports about projects activities

Consultant: February – August, 2009

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), Rural Development Projects, Tbilisi, Georgia

- Developed Concept papers for potential investors about meat packing and dairy processing operations in Southern Georgia
- Designed detailed plan about the viability of investment projects in the region

Strategic Programs Manager: October, 2007 – January, 2009

JSC Bank of Georgia, Strategic Development Department, Tbilisi, Georgia

- Provided economic sector quantitative and qualitative research including pharmaceuticals, durable goods, housing, retail sector, public transportation, etc.
- Provided recommendations on strategic expansion and development of the bank

Intern: June – August, 2007

Agricultural Cooperative Development International and Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (ACDI/VOCA's), Washington DC, USA

- Supported the design, writing, editing and formatting of proposals and program reports
- Updated and organized the Center of Excellence website

USAID funded Farmer to Farmer Project Coordinator: July, 2002 – August, 2005

ACDI/VOCA, Tbilisi, Georgia

- Developed projects and designed scopes of work (SOWs) for volunteer technical assistance projects with Georgian organizations/individuals (implemented over 150 projects)
- Prepared semi-annual and quarterly program reports
- Conducted follow-up evaluations (VPE) for each of the volunteer assignments
- Maintained a database record of all ACDI/VOCA assignments

Projects Administrative Assistant/Financial Officer: March, 1999 – June, 2002

IOCC, Credit and Infrastructure Projects, Samtskhe-Javakheti Region, Georgia

- Managed operation funds and financial reports
- Managed borrower bank accounts statements and update borrower database
- Analyzed Micro-Credit Journals
- Audited major infrastructural projects

- Prepared Loan Agreements

Deputy Manager: April, 1997 – March, 1999

Eurasia Foundation's Akhaltsikhe Business Center, Akhaltsikhe, Georgia

- Implemented Micro-enterprise development/training program
- Developed business plans for new and existing enterprises
- Published a monthly newsletter "ABC-Info" (circulation approximately 200)
- Provided written and oral translation services (English, Georgian and Russian)

Administrative Assistant: March – December, 1997

IOCC, Credit and Infrastructure Projects, Samtskhe-Javakheti Region, Georgia

- Assisted with and facilitated micro-enterprise development training program
- Maintained and updated enterprise database
- Translated for workshops/seminar providers (English, Georgian and Russian)

CONFERENCE PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

Davlasheridze, M., K. Fisher-Vanden and A.H. Klaiber, "The effects of adaptation measures on hurricane induced property losses." **Paper Presentation, *PIAMDDI DOE Project Meeting***, Stanford University, December, 2012.

Davlasheridze, M., K. Fisher-Vanden and A.H. Klaiber, "The effects of adaptation measures on hurricane induced property losses". **Paper Presentation, *Energy and Environmental Economics and Policy Initiative (EEEEPI) Seminar Series***, Pennsylvania State University, State College, PA, October, 2012.

Davlasheridze, M., K. Fisher-Vanden and A.H. Klaiber, "The effects of adaptation measures on hurricane induced property losses." **Poster Presentation, *Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA)***, Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA, August, 2012.

Davlasheridze, M., K. Fisher-Vanden and A.H. Klaiber, "The Effects of Adaptation Measures on Hurricane Induced Property Losses." **Session Paper Presentation, *Association of Environmental and Resource Economists (AERE)***, Annual Meeting, Asheville, NC, June, 2012.

Davlasheridze, M., K. Fisher-Vanden and A.H. Klaiber, "The Effects of Adaptation Measures on Hurricane Induced Property Losses." **Session Paper Presentation, *Northeast Agricultural and Resource Economics Association (NAREEA)*** Annual Meeting, Lowell, MA, June, 2012.

Davlasheridze, M., K. Fisher-Vanden and A.H. Klaiber, "The effects of adaptation measures on hurricane induced property losses." **Paper Presentation, *PIAMDDI DOE Project Meeting***, Pennsylvania State University, May, 2012.

Davlasheridze, M., K. Fisher-Vanden and A.H. Klaiber, “The effects of adaptation measures on hurricane induced property losses.” **Poster Presentation**, *Graduate Student Poster Exhibition*, Pennsylvania State University, March, 2012.

AWARDS

Research Support Grant (\$500), Energy and Environmental Economics and Policy Initiative (EEEEPI), The Pennsylvania State University; Fall, 2012

2012-2013 Thomas C. and Jackie M. Floore Memorial Scholarship Award (\$600), College of Agricultural Sciences, The Pennsylvania State University

Research Support Grant (\$750), Energy and Environmental Economics and Policy Initiative (EEEEPI), The Pennsylvania State University; Spring, 2012

Graduate Student Travel Awards, (\$300), College of Agricultural Sciences, The Pennsylvania State University; Spring, 2012

Conference Scholarship Award, Northeast Agricultural and Resource Economics Association (NAREA); 2012

2005-2007 Edmund Muskie Graduate Fellowship, Bureau of Educational & Cultural Affairs US Department of State

GRANTS & INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Democracy Commission Small Grant Program, United States Embassy in Georgia – “Fostering Sustainable Tourism Development in Abastumani”, Coalition project of Muskie Alumni Association of Georgia (MAAG) and Abastumani Tourism Association (ATA) (Amount: 16,035.00 USD); May – August, 2009

Alumni Grants Program, United States Embassy in Georgia, set up applied workshop on business simulation and forecasting methods introducing SIMETAR software, I. Chavchavadze State University of Georgia (Amount: 3,000.00 USD), 2009

Freelance Research for Business & Finance Consulting on SME Financing Industry in India, May-June, 2007

Financial & Credit Relations (case of the Samtskhe-Javakheti region); Scientific & Research Paper Publication of Agrarian University of Tbilisi, Georgia, June 2001

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Association of Environmental and Resource Economists (AERE)
Agricultural & Applied Economics Association (AAEA)
Northeast Agricultural and Resource Economics Association (NAREEA)
Muskie Alumni Association of Georgia (MAAG)

COMPUTER SKILLS

MS Office, STATA, MATLAB, GAMS, ArcGIS, RATS, SIMETAR

LANGUAGE SKILLS

English (fluent), Georgian (native), Russian (fluent)

REFERENCES

Karen Fisher-Vanden
The Pennsylvania State University
Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology and Education
Phone: 814-867-2752
E-mail: kaf26@psu.edu

James Shortle
The Pennsylvania State University
Department of Agricultural Economics, Sociology and Education
Phone: 814-865-7657
E-mail: jshortle@psu.edu

H. Allen Klaiber
The Ohio State University
Department of Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics
Phone: 614-247-4914
E-mail: klaiber.16@osu.edu