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# Building Capacity for Sustainable Urban Planning in Vietnam

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19-22 September 2004

REFORM AND CHANGE IN HOUSING AND PLANNING - TOWARDS  
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE ASIA PACIFIC



# Purpose

- ◆ Provide overview of urban planning in Vietnam
- ◆ Identify capacity building needs
- ◆ Focus on urban planning education and training
- ◆ Discuss prospective development proposals





# Involvement in urban development

- ◆ Project sponsor for a new university (inception, licence, business plan, finance, startup)
- ◆ Land and building developer (resettlement, public exhibition, zoning approval)
- ◆ Company director in Vietnam
- ◆ Project designer for learning resource centre program
- ◆ Director of Asia Injury (US NGO road safety established in Vietnam)
- ◆ World Bank Institute consultant on urban planning capacity strengthening in Vietnam
- ◆ Not otherwise practiced as urban planner in VN: much to learn, including from APSA discussion



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# Urban Planning and Management in Vietnam

- ◆ Urbanisation
- ◆ Urban growth and change
- ◆ Urban land development
- ◆ Private sector
- ◆ Development control and compliance
- ◆ Special precincts
- ◆ Environmental management
- ◆ Urban management





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# Urbanisation in Vietnam

Rising urbanisation

- ◆ 1950 11.6% → 2000 19.7%
- ◆ HCMC 8m, Hanoi 3m
- ◆ High population ↑
- ◆ Strong rural → urban
- ◆ Economic development
- ◆ Underbounded
- ◆ Floating population





## Urban Land Development Issues

- ◆ Currently a key policy issue – new land law
- ◆ But fragmented plans
- ◆ Poor infrastructure
- ◆ Weak coordination
- ◆ Unclear land title
- ◆ Confused land use rights
- ◆ Complex resettlement procedures
- ◆ Excessively complex statutes and legislation
- ◆ Low levels of compliance esp. building
- ◆ Need for stronger planning administration
- ◆ Insufficient know-how
- ◆ Informality, corruption



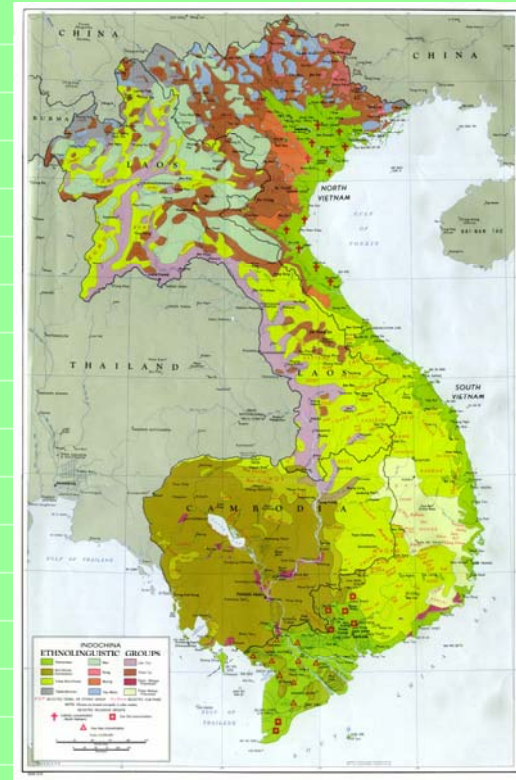
## Private Urban Development Issues

- ◆ Very small private sector, disadvantaged
- ◆ State owned enterprises, commercial arms advantaged
- ◆ Extension of urban land markets (with remaining doubts eg registrability of mortgages)
- ◆ Viet Kieu can buy
- ◆ Constraints in land supply
- ◆ Extreme land bubble esp. Ho Chi Minh City
- ◆ Informal sector inhibits private sector development
- ◆ Dollarised economy
- ◆ Strong continued growth in economy



# Urban Poverty Alleviation

- ◆ Persistent level of poverty even with rising incomes on average
- ◆ Ethnic minorities poor and regionally concentrated
- ◆ despite being world's #2 ODA recipient
- ◆ Rising disparities in structure and by region
- ◆ Urban settlement upgrade slow
- ◆ Land price spiral causes housing shortage
- ◆ Rural-urban drift and undocumented population
- ◆ Social and political movements including protests on urban issues





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# Riverside Settlement, Ho Chi Minh City





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# Riverside Settlement, Ho Chi Minh City





## Urban Management Challenges

Development control weak

- ◆ Too complex
- ◆ Low compliance
- ◆ Corruption
- ◆ Squatters, itinerants little catered for

Proliferation of special precincts, mega-projects

Environmental management and urban planning weakly linked eg salination of rivers

Urban management

- ◆ Weak across functions, between levels, across state-SOE-private-social domains
- ◆ Metropolitan fragmentation; difficulty of whole-of-government views
- ◆ Rapid growth management needed

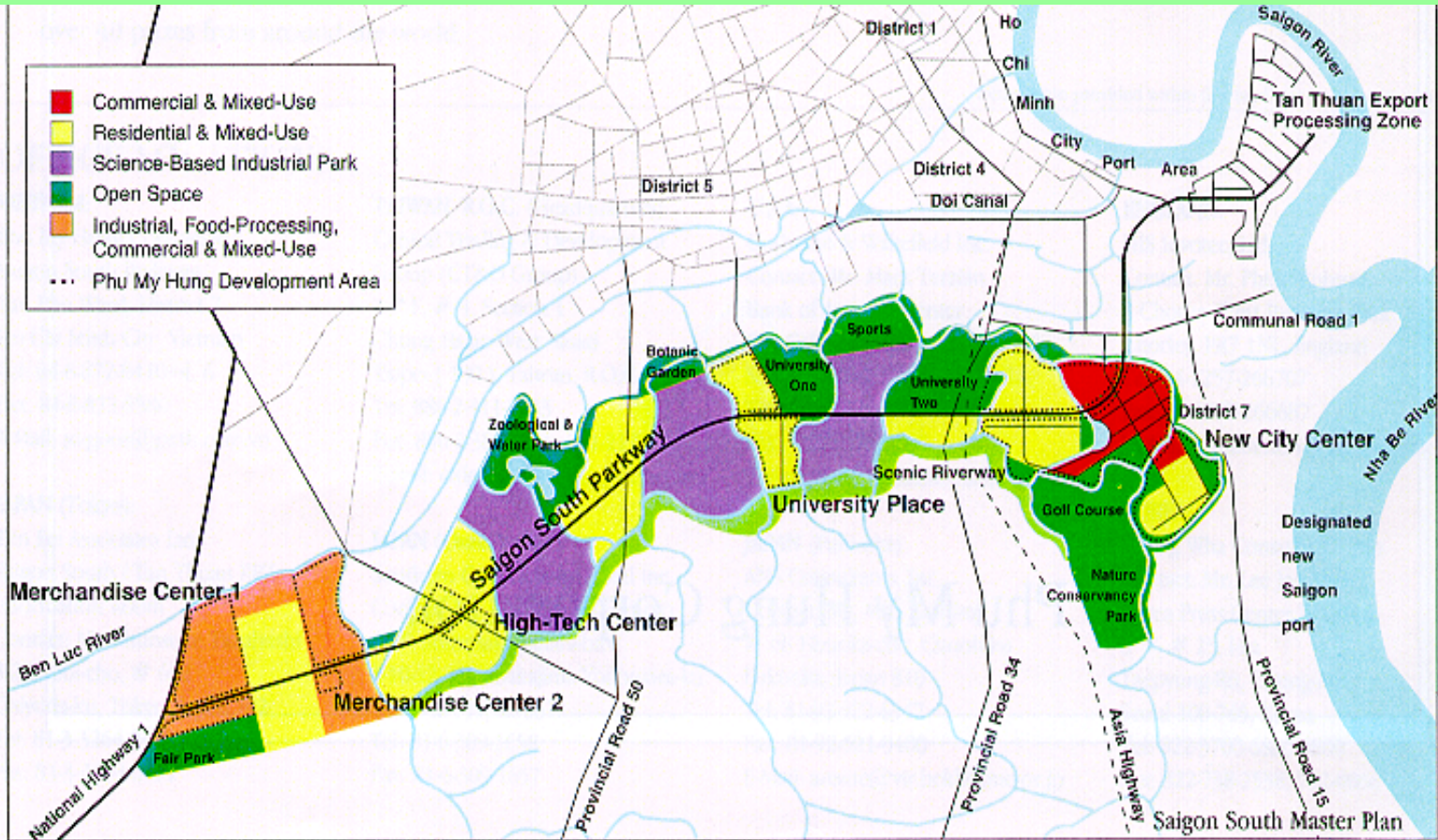


# Urban Planning System in Vietnam

- ◆ National Master Plan 1999 under Ministry of Construction
- ◆ Regional zoning plans and urban development master plans for regions and major cities
- ◆ Detailed master plans for 10 urban development zones (addressing urban growth, land use, environment, national defence)
- ◆ Master plans for districts, wards, etc
- ◆ New internationally produced urban plans eg Saigon South, Hanoi New Town
- ◆ New precinct plans for HCMC Quang Trung Software Park and Hanoi Hoa Lac Hi Tech Park
- ◆ Strong and urgent need for urban planning and management capacity building



# Saigon South Structure Plan





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# Hanoi New Town Plan





# The urban planning profession

- ◆ Long history of urban planning
- ◆ Master planning approach
- ◆ Inchoate planning profession eg Planning Association of Vietnam
- ◆ Rapid formation of urban policy
- ◆ Growth of professional development activity
- ◆ Some related industry associations forming eg Vietnam Real Estate Association





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## Institutions with educational programs related to urban planning

- ◆ Hanoi Arch University
- ◆ Hanoi Univ Civil Eng
- ◆ HCMC Arch University
- ◆ VNU Hanoi
- ◆ VNU HCMC
- ◆ Asian Institute of Technology
- ◆ National Institute for Urban and Regional Planning



- ◆ RMIT International University Vietnam
- ◆ Other institutions



# Training and Professional Development

- ◆ Tend to be ancillary project elements
- ◆ Come and go
- ◆ Some focus on capacity-building
- ◆ Usually not urban planning *per se*
- ◆ Some good programs in related areas e.g. EC-funded environmental management, AusAID Hanoi Planning and Development Project, Vietnam-Australia Training Centre, Asia URBS, URBNET Vietnam, World Bank City Development Strategy, UNDP, WHO Healthy Cities, etc





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# The Challenge of Capacity Building

Technical Cooperation can

- ◆ Undermine local capacity
- ◆ Distort priorities
- ◆ Focus on high-profile vs routine but necessary activities
- ◆ Fragment management
- ◆ Use expensive methods
- ◆ Ignore local wishes
- ◆ Fixate too much on targets (Fukuda-Parr et al)





## Towards an Action Plan

- ◆ Strengthening institutions, esp urban planners in them
- ◆ Clearly, resources
- ◆ Knowledge acquisition, innovation capacity, learning regions
- ◆ Training and information resources: esp. number and quality of urban planning professionals
- ◆ Urban planning policy reform
- ◆ Education via new programs incl RMIT
- ◆ Research training
- ◆ Urban planning and management documentation centre cf NACESTID

