

2.3.1

SERIES 2

Understanding
Vulnerability & Risk



Activity 2.3.1

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Development Trends: Past and Present Exploration

How has your city evolved to look as it does today? How quickly has the city changed? What are key trends? In this activity, you will explore why your city looks the way it does. The information generated in this activity will be used in the next activities, exploring future trends and future vision. It will also form the basis of your vulnerability assessment.

IN THIS ACTIVITY YOU WILL:

- ✓ Review historical photographs or stories about your city;
- ✓ Explore, in small groups, how your city has changed over the past several decades; and
- ✓ Compare group responses and discuss the changes you have noticed.

ACTIVITY 2.3.1: DEVELOPMENT TRENDS – PAST AND PRESENT EXPLORATION

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Overview of Past History

If historical pictures of the city or area of interest are available, begin with a slideshow, from oldest to most recent. This can be done with discussion, if time allows, or simply as a quick presentation. Pictures can be drawn from a broad range of areas—landscape images of the city and its surroundings, pictures of typical inhabitants, pictures of politicians, royalty or officials, social gatherings, transportation, etc. There is no “right” set of imagery; imagery can cover any aspect of and period of the past that seems relevant.

If imagery is unavailable, you can alternately begin with a short presentation by a local elder who has watched the city transform over time, or with a group discussion of changes you and your friends and relatives have seen over time. Again, this discussion can cover whatever period in the past your group finds easy to address.

One of the goals of this introductory engagement is to notice both key trends and also how fast things have changed. These changes can be easy to forget if you are living in and are a part of the change.

Step 2: Document past changes

Based on the overview of your city’s history, and taking into consideration the issues of concern in your city, discuss and select several points in the past, for example 30 years ago, 20 years ago, 10 years ago, and now, and 4 or 5 key categories that you will examine at each of those points in time. Categories could include population, water resources, waste management, transportation, natural resources, economy, urban infrastructure, land use, or social issues.

The time periods you select should relate to the age of the city, the rate of change of the city, the period over which participants can best document change, and the period of future change you will eventually want to evaluate. Even if your city is 1000 years old, if you are concerned with planning for the next 30 to 50 years you want to go back no further than 50 years in documenting the past. Conversely, if you are a new city or community with only a 10-year history at your current location, and in the last 5 years there has been exponential growth, then you might want to look at 10 years ago, 5 years ago, 3 years ago, and the present.



Hue, Vietnam 1950



Hue, Vietnam 1992



Hue, Vietnam 2012

The categories selected for exploration should include, but do not need to be limited to, issues of concern in your city. For example, access to drinking water, shelter, and livelihoods might be the primary areas of interest. Or, it might be urban flooding, waste management and land use. For both of these, you might also want to include population growth and economy. Do not worry about picking the “right” categories—the goal is to document a range of areas in which your city is changing.

Once you have selected time periods and categories, split into small groups of 4-8 people each. Each group will work together to explore in more detail the condition or status of each of the selected categories at each of the selected points in time. Everyone in the group is encouraged to contribute—there are no right or wrong answers, just what you remember from the past and notice about the present. The focus here is

on what you perceive about the past and how it has changed, not on collecting or analyzing data about the past. Results should be recorded as a matrix on big sheets of paper, with time across the top, each category listed down the left hand side, and discussion results filled in in the resulting grid. See Table 2.3.1 for an example.

Once all the groups have had a chance to fill in their charts, present your results to the full group. Subsequent groups can highlight additions or areas where their results differ from those already presented. Once all the groups have presented, discuss your results. Are there areas of change that other groups documented that yours did not? Do you agree with the things other groups have documented? Did your group or any other group come up with something that surprised you?

Table 2.3.1:

An example of the described exercise, as completed by the Climate Change Working Group in Lao Cai, Vietnam in May 2012.

CATEGORY	1980–1990	1990–Present
ECONOMY	Agriculture accounts for most of economy. Mostly people do farming within small scale.	Industry, services, and agriculture. Mining and processing. Agricultural production applies more scientific management. Con Minh and Hai Phong corridor, lots of development. Traffic infrastructure, railway system is expanded and increased quality. Before they got power from China but now they get power from here. Agriculture declining, focus is on industry, services, and trade.
POPULATION	Low density. Population < 10,000 Ethnic minority groups account for large percentage of local population.	Increased density. Population 120,000 in 2010 and growing quickly. Kinh people (national ethnic majority) accounts for majority of the local population (76%).
NATURAL RESOURCES	Land resource mainly used for agricultural production. Land cleared via slash and burn. People just used the land around them.	Shift in economic structure has shifted use of natural resources and the forest area. Forest has been reduced to about 40% of total area. Increasing use of natural resources such as minerals – iron, water resources (hydropower). Increased urbanization and growth of urban area. Land is more organized. Climate is a major resource because it helps attract people to the city.
URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE	2 highways – traffic was difficult. Infrastructure not very developed.	New roads (280 KM), railway. City up to standard of grade 3 city, urban areas. Expect to become a grade 2 city in 2015. Compared to the first period, comprehensive system of transportation. System of dikes for flood control developed to prevent flood.
SOCIAL ISSUES	80% illiteracy rate > 30% malnutrition rate 70% poverty rate	Forest area has decreased, so people face difficulties in changing livelihood. Systems of health, education, traffic, and other services meet the needs of 90% of the population, but 10% still lacking access. Colleges in the city – system of education. Reduction in poverty – less than 14%. Emerging issue of rich-poverty gap – inequality, more people are becoming severely poor, leading to social evils.