

Livable Cities Project Vietnam

Final Narrative Report

1/7/2016 – 30/6/2017

InterimReport:

Project: Livable Cities Project Vietnam

By HealthBridge Vietnam

Reporting period: 1/7/2016-30/6/2017

This report and process evaluation for the Vietnam Livable Cities (LC) Project was for the period from July 2016 to Jun 2017. This report was prepared by the Vietnamese LC project team with data and information collected from the reports of local partners as well as the field visit records.

In 7/2016 – 6/2017, HBV's LC team worked with local partners to improve public spaces, promote non-motorized transportation and conduct research on informal markets. We have seen some outstanding results: In Hanoi, we completed the construction of two low-cost neighborhood playgrounds benefiting about 3,000 residents including 500 children aged under 15. In addition, we continued to support the Hoi An city Government to implement the newly approved Park Master Plan. In 2017, the city improved seven public spaces, which is benefiting 5,600 local people. They have also started construction on two new city-wide parks identified in the Park Master Plan. We were also successful in advocating for the Hoi An Government to develop a strategic plan on non-motorized transportation. Thus far they have issued a decision to set up a city team to work on this task. The four-year pilot active safe route to school project in Ha Dinh ward (Hanoi) has now been completed. There results include creating a separate walking lane that students can use to walk to school everyday. This initiative received attention from the media and city government, who is interested in expanding the idea to other areas.

In summary, through the Vietnam LC project 2016 – 2017, the LC team contributed towards livable cities in local neighbourhoods and achieved the expected immediate outcomes.

1. Introduction

The Vietnam Livable Cities program is aimed at making urban neighborhoods more livable and conducive to healthy lifestyles. The program focuses on healthy transportation, public spaces and local markets to improve health and a cleaner environment, and gender equity and poverty reduction. Our vision and outcomes are as follow:

Vision:

We envision healthy, happy people living in cities with lots of fun and safe public spaces where people feel attached to their neighborhoods and neighbors; we envision cities where people can walk and cycle easily with accessible public transit; we envision cities where people have healthy and nutritious food; and we envision neighborhoods that are designed to honor our traditional culture of daily life.

Intermediate outcomes

1. Increased number of safe, accessible and fun parks, playgrounds and plazas in Vietnamese Cities and increased infrastructure changes that support recreation opportunities for children, girls and seniors.
2. Increased the number of people that walk, cycle and use public transit.
3. Increased number of people who can access affordable, healthy, fresh food in markets in urban areas.

To that end, in the Livable Cities Project 2016 – 2017, we focused our efforts in four areas and expected to achieve eight immediate outcomes as follow:

Immediate outcomes (objectives)

Improving urban parks, playgrounds and plazas

- #1. Increased number of pilot projects in the inner city of Hanoi that create a healthy, safe, fun park/ playground.
- #2. Increased number of policies that protect and manage parks, playgrounds and plazas in Vietnamese cities.

Creating safe walking and biking routes for urban dwellers

- #3. Increase our understanding of current traffic situation and opportunities to develop active transportation in Vietnamese cities.
- #4. Increased number of infrastructure improvements for safe walking route to school in Ha Dinh ward, Hanoi.
- #5. Increased media support for required policy changes for healthy transportation.

Preserving urban fresh markets

- #6. Increased evidence and arguments about preservation of urban fresh markets for life quality improvement.

Advocacy for policies to create favourable urban environment for prevention of non-communicable diseases

- #7. Increased understanding of the project team and our partners about the livable city concept and the New Urban Agenda.
- #8. Increased number of policies that make Vietnamese cities more livable.

2. Evaluation

2.1 Progress evaluation

Component #1: *Improving urban parks, playgrounds and plazas*

Table 1: Evaluation for component #1 - Open Public Spaces

#	Expected outcomes	Activities	Reach/ Results	Evaluations/ Outcomes
1	Increased number of pilot projects to create low-cost, safe and fun mobile parks/ playgrounds in the inner city of Hanoi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built a playground in Chuong Duong ward. This is the first playground of Hoan Kiem district. This activity was conducted in collaboration with Think PlayGrounds (TPG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> About 200 children aged under 15 in the neighborhood can come to play at the playground everyday. VND3,000,000 (\$150) was raised from the community (crowdfunding on FB) for the construction of the playground A playground management regulation developed by the project team and issued by the ward people's committee helped to ensure the long-term management and maintainance of the playground. 	This project has become a low-cost model to revitalize a public land to become a community public spaces. By proposing to the government simple solutions to prevent mis-usage and private occupation of public spaces, we ensure the longevity of the space.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built an inclusive playground in Mai Dong ward, Hai Ba Trung district. The playground had playing equipment for children, exercising equipment for youth, and relaxing areas for elderly. This activity was conducted in collaboration with TPG and the Youth Union of Hanoi Institute for Social-Economic Development Study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 300 children and 1,700 residents in the neighborhood can come to play and do exercise at the playground. A local enterprise contributed playing equipment equivalent to VND32,000,000 (\$1,500). Some local residents contributed exercise equipment and a tree equivalent to \$100. 	This is a model of successful collaboration between the Government social groups, enterprises, and local residents to develop a community playground for all.

#	Expected outcomes	Activities	Reach/ Results	Evaluations/ Outcomes
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A playground management regulation was adopted and issued by the ward people's committee 6 newspaper articles, 3 TV reports about the playground. 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with local authorities and community to design an inclusive neighborhood public space in Nai Hien Dong, Da Nang city. This activity was conducted in collaboration with TPG and Playground Ideas as a following step of the initiative that won the Climate Change Resilient Cities Challenge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A design was developed with the contribution from about 50 local residents. The team also developed a plan to raise funds for the development of the space. 	<p>Increased capacity to work with the community to design an inclusive playground and make a plan for fund raising.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings with People's Committee of Nhan Chinh ward (Cau Giay district, Hanoi) to advocate for building a playground for children of 0-5 years old. The playground will be built in a public landslot that was occupied by some surrounding families for gardening. This activity was conducted in collaboration with TPG and the fund will be from Urban 95 (this is a challenge-winning project of TPG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ward People's Committee agreed with a plan to collaborate with us to build the playground. TPG created a design for the playground. 	<p>The playground will be completed by mid-October 2017. Upon the completion of the playground, 150 children under five years old in the neighborhood will be able to come to play at the playgrounds everyday. In addition, 300 intellectually disabled and autistic children who are studying in the nearby Morning Star centre can also play there because there is playing equipment friendly to autistic children in the playground.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided technical support to Hoan Kiem district to improve their public gardens. This activity was a follow-up activity from our situational assessment research of public gardens in HK in the 2015-16 project. The district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical comments to designs of 7 out of 13 public gardens to ensure they are accessible and inclusive. 	<p>No outcome yet as the project is still underway.</p>

#	Expected outcomes	Activities	Reach/ Results	Evaluations/ Outcomes
		government invited us to meetings to comment on the designs and plans to improve the public gardens.		
2	Increased number of policies that protect and manage parks, playgrounds and plazas in Vietnamese cities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed a workplan for the development of Hue Park Master Plan and conducted situational assessment research and a park inventory as the first step for the development of the Park Master Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involvement of the Hue City People’s Committee to develop the workplan. Physical surveys of all 45 parks and green spaces, 100 community houses (with front yards that people are using as public spaces), and 35 sport grounds in the city. Maps of public spaces of 27 wards have been collected 	<p>Increased our understanding about the current situation of public spaces in Hue city. This will be a basis for the development of the Park master plan.</p> <p>Increased government participation in the development of public spaces.</p> <p>This activity is behind schedule due to the long heavy rains in Hue that delayed the physical survey and inventory process.</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An exhibition of Hoi An Park Master Plan at the Vietnam Urban Forum on Urban Development towards Green Growth and Climate Change Resiliency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> About 300 forum participants including local and foreign professionals, policy makers, and representatives of governments of cities 	<p>Increased understanding of the participants about the development of the park master plan in Hoi An city</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the implementation of the Hoi An Park master plan (field visits, email discussions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The city improved 7 neighborhood public spaces and started construction of two new city parks in 2017. About 5600 people benefited from the improved public spaces. 	<p>Increased capacity of Hoi An Government in development of PS.</p>

Component #2: Creating safe walking and biking routes

Table 2: Evaluation for component #2 – Creating safe walking and biking routes

#	Expected Outcomes	Activities	Reach/ Results	Evaluations/ outcomes
3	Increase our understanding of current traffic situation and opportunities to develop active transportation in Vietnamese cities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate Hoi An Government for the development of a non-motorized transportation (NMT) strategy. 	Decision 1196/QD-UBND dated 30/5/2017 by Hoi An city government to set up a city team for the NMT strategy development	Strong commitment from Hoi An Government to the development of NMT strategy development
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted research on NMT situation in Hanoi 	<p>A research report reviewing current policies relating to NMT development and assessing NMT infrastructure situation in Hanoi. The report identified policy gaps and made recommendations to improve NMT environment in Hanoi.</p> <p>A paper summarizing main findings of our research was developed and sent to the media.</p>	Increased our understanding about the NMT environment in Hanoi and provided information to the media to gain their support to improve the walking and cycling environment.
4	Increased number of primary school children walking safely to schools in Ha Dinh ward, Hanoi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed a physical survey of the walking environment around Ha Dinh primary school • Organized five meetings with community, school teachers, local authorities and transportation experts to develop a plan to improve walking routes to schools for children. • Piloted physical improvements: installed warning signs in areas close to schools; made separate spaces in lanes that were painted green for children walking to school. • Conducted communication to gain public support to the pilot initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A physical survey report, which identified and recommended fifteen necessary physical improvements to make it safer for children walking to school. The project team has decided to select the four sites that will be most easily implemented with low-cost for the first pilot. • The number of participants to the planning meetings were double than what was expected. They included not only school management boards, community leaders and the head of Green Living Clubs as planned but also leaders of the ward authorities, leaders of the Women’s Unions, Elderly Association, Study Promotion Association and all leaders of the ward’s Communist Party. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved walking environment in the intervention site in Ha Dinh ward • Increased awareness and support from the Government to the project. The Director of Hanoi Department of Transportation said in a newspaper article that DoT strongly supported and encouraged the establishment of prioritized walking lanes for school children to ensure their safety. DoT will collaborate with some districts to pilot and scale up the model. • Some efforts still needed to advocate for support from the district Government to allow the pilot in the future

#	Expected Outcomes	Activities	Reach/ Results	Evaluations/ outcomes
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A separate walking lane of 250m was created in a busy alley as a pilot in one month. More than 100 students used the walking lane everyday. • Tens of articles about the initiative (creating a separate walking lane), and five TV reports were produced. • More than 3,000 teachers and students and their families were communicated with about the benefits of walking to school. The local community of around 15,000 people supported the project. 	
5	Increased media support for required policy changes for healthy transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made a presentation, wrote articles and answered media interviews to support healthy transportation and recommend improvement to NMT environments and public transportation. 	<p>A presentation “Making a city great: walking streets” by Debra at a roundtable of the Hanoi Architect Association.</p> <p>About ten interviews with Debra, Hai, and Ha with TV, radio and online newspapers.</p> <p>An article about sustainable transportation to the Vietnam Urban Forum on urban development in responding to climate change</p> <p>An article with recommendations to improve the newly-launched BRT system of Hanoi. http://www.vnmedia.vn/dan-sinh/201701/go-kho-cho-buyt-nhanh-brt-can-dai-phan-cach-cung-va-cac-ha-tang-an-toan-khac</p>	<p>Increased NMT understanding among media about importance of NMT.</p> <p>This is an ongoing activity</p>

#	Expected Outcomes	Activities	Reach/ Results	Evaluations/ outcomes
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Component #3: Saving fresh markets

Table 3: Evaluation for component #3 - Saving fresh markets

#	Expected outcomes	Activities	Results/ Reached	Evaluations/ outcome
Saving market campaign				
6	Increased evidence and arguments about preservation of urban fresh markets for life quality improvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted research about informal markets in Hanoi: The project team mentored a student from the University of Montreal to conduct a research on street markets and fresh food access in central Hanoi. Presented at the workshop on traditional fresh markets in Hanoi organized by Hanoi Socio Economic Development Research Institute. 	<p>The research was published at https://sidewalkdiet.wordpress.com/</p> <p>A presentation and paper about our saving market campaign was delivered to 40 participants including local government officials, professionals, and media persons.</p>	Increased evidence and arguments to advocate for the preservation of informal market streets in Hanoi

Component #4: Policy Development

Table 4: Evaluation for component #4–Policy Development

#	Expected outcomes	Activities	Results/ Reached	Evaluations/ outcome
Policy Development				
7	Increased understanding of the project team and our partners about the livable city concept and the New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in Prepcom 3 - for Habitat III in Surabaya, Indonesia and delivered a presentation about our Hanoi saving market campaign. 	<p>Attended NGO sessions advocating for the New Urban Agenda.</p> <p>Shared our experience at a side-event, which had 30 participants.</p>	Increased our understanding of the draft New Urban Agenda and the NGO advocacy process.

	Urban Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended the National meeting to review the SDG 9 and 11 and prepared comments for the review document. 	Our comments to the review were sent to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, which was the Vietnamese focal point of the SDG.	No outcome yet
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2.2 Significant changes to the project

The research on NMT in Hanoi was not in the original plan. When developing the media plan, the project team found such research was necessary to provide NMT-supporting evidence and arguments to the media. We have to utilize a part of the budget for policy development to cover the research cost. This change has been approved by the Program Director.

The Senior Project Officer could not attend the Habitat 3 Conference as planned due to his visa problem. However we were able to view the main content of the New Urban Agenda on the conference website. This will be helpful for us in planning the program in the next four years as well as in fund raising activities.

In the development of Hue’s Park Master Plan, there were delays in the research phase because the physical surveys were conducted in bad weather (long heavy rains) in late 2016. In addition, the number of interviews with local residents was larger than the planned (1,800 interviews compared to 270 in the plan), which meant the research team had to extend the interview and data processing period. Therefore, the research report was not completed by June 2017 as planned. The research team proposed to extend the deadline to extend the deadline to October 2017. The unspent budget will be moved to next year.

After investigating Hoi An’s political context, we decided it was necessary to improve awareness of the city government about importance of NMT and advocate for their commitment to NMT development in Hoi An. This could be seen as a prerequisite for the development of the NMT strategy. Therefore, the last year’s efforts focused on the advocacy. As a result of our efforts, in May 2017, the city’s People Committees issued a decision to set up a city team for the NMT strategy, showing their strong support to the strategy development. The situational assessment research for the NMT strategy development will be moved to next year.

2.3 Sustainability of results:

- Our approach of engaging the community in building neighborhood playgrounds and public spaces has been successful in mobilizing resources from businesses and local residents. This will improve the local residents’ ownership and responsibilities in maintaining the public spaces. Future projects can consider to apply this model to raise funding from the community for public spaces development. In addition, the playground management regulations that we developed was new and Think Playgrounds can now apply these regulations for their newly-built playgrounds to strengthen the management of the spaces.

- The Hoi An Park Master Plan continues to provide a direction for public spaces development in Hoi An. The Government is keeping their commitment to develop public space in accordance with the Plan.

2.4 Lessons learnt:

The partnership with Think Playgrounds has been strengthened and supports the implementation of the parks, playgrounds and plaza component of the project. For the past two years, we have collaborated together to create five playgrounds in Hanoi and Da Nang cities. TPG also supported our research and advocacy activities for public spaces while we are advising the group in working with local authorities and fund raising activities.

As stated above, the project did not contract a consultant to conduct a media campaign to increase media support to NMT as planned but the project team had efforts to attract media attention by activities such as answering interviews and writing media articles. Therefore, there were a number of media reports produced during the reporting period to meet the project's immediate outcomes.

The Pilot of ASRTS in Ha Dinh ward has gained some successes in some initiatives to create safer walking route to schools. However, the team worked mainly with the ward authorities and local communities as opposed to working with the district government that is the direct supervisor of the ward authorities. The district government has not been provided with adequate information about the pilot, and therefore did not show their strong support or approval for the ward to continue with the pilot. In addition, a small fund allocated to the pilot (3,000\$/ year) was also a barrier as physical interventions frequently require a more funds. The project needs to select the most simple/ low-cost solutions, which limits the impacts that can be achieved.

3. Presentation/ Publications

- Kristie Daniel, Sarah Nestico, Policies that Support Local Fresh Food Markets: International Examples (Vietnamese version), Proceedings of Workshop "Public markets in Inner City", Hanoi Research Institute for Urban Social and Economic Development, 14/10/2016
- Dinh Dang Hai, Hanoi Saving Market Campaign (presentation), Workshop "Public markets in Inner City", Hanoi Research Institute for Urban Social and Economic Development, 14/10/2016
- Dinh Dang Hai, Sustainable Development: Urban transportation and life quality, Proceedings of workshop "Initiatives to support implementation of Vietnam Climate Change Resilient cities", Urban Development Agency (Ministry of Construction), 9/12/2016