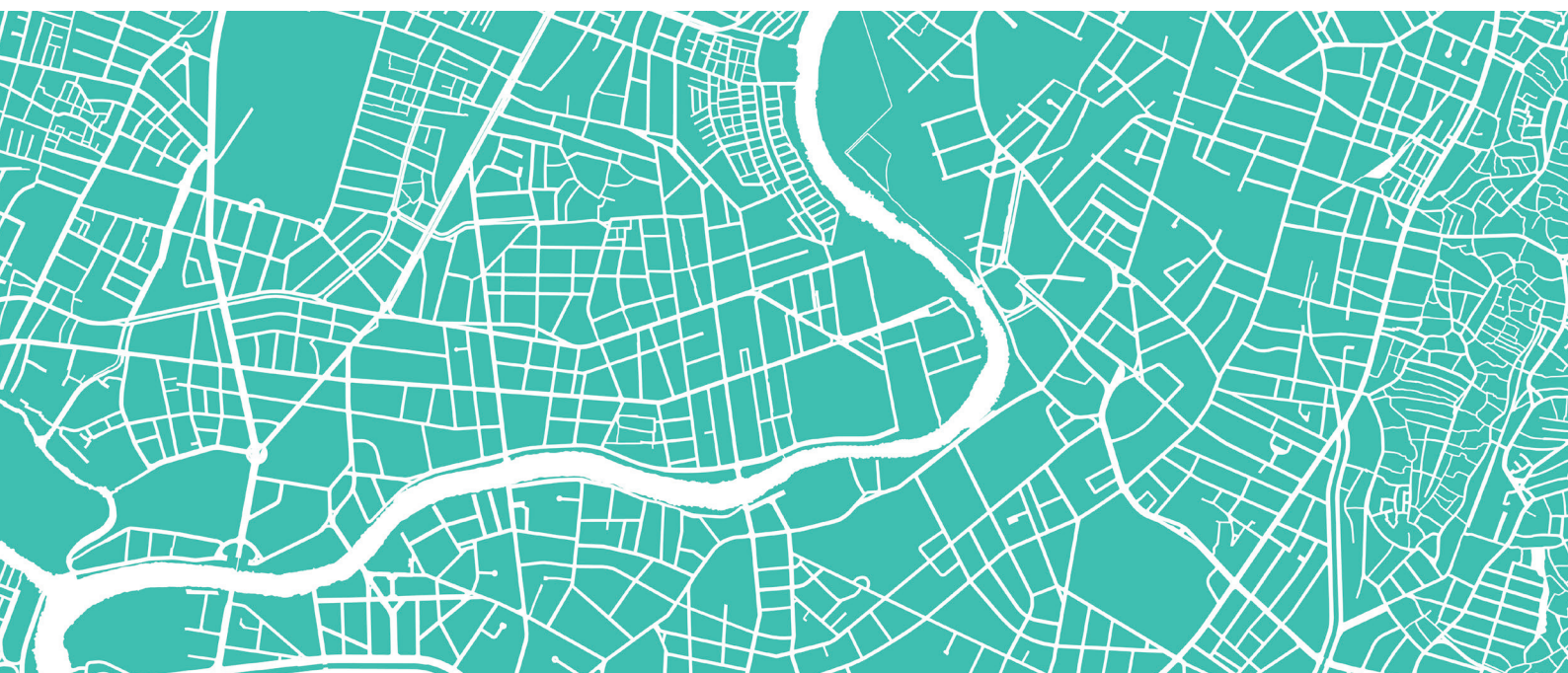# Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

Country Level Event
Vietnam

02 December 2021

UKBEAG
UK Built Environment Advisory Group

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Contents

Introduction

The Vietnam Country Level Event formed part of the Strategic Capacity Development Component being delivered by the UK Built Environment Advisory Group (UKBEAG) in collaboration with UN Habitat, in support of the FCDO Global Future Cities Programme. The programme for the country level event was developed in collaboration with the FCDO, UN Habitat, the Delivery Partner and City Stakeholders and was informed by the findings of the Capacity Needs Assessment that was undertaken by City Stakeholders earlier in the year.

The aim of the event was to bring together representatives from local government to build upon the momentum of the programme and to draw on the experience of a range of subject matter experts to consider some of the issues to be addressed as the projects move from design to implementation.

The event opened with a series of short presentations from city stakeholders to help promote wider awareness of the projects and their importance. This was followed by two workshop sessions which drew on the findings of a Capacity Needs Assessment that was undertaken earlier in the year. The first workshop considered what it takes to move effectively from data to action while the second built on this to consider what each stakeholder needs to do to deliver effective integrated & inclusive Urban Planning.

The event was supported by a range of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) who brought their knowledge and expertise to bear. The contributions from the Subject Matter Experts were also informed by the six topics which formed part of the Thematic Programme that had been delivered earlier in the year, namely:

1 Integrated & Inclusive Planning

2 Governance & Collaboration

3 Evidence-based Design & the Effective use of Data

4 Project Finance & Procurement

5 Implementation & Enforcement, Monitoring & Evaluation

6 Leadership & Change Management

The purpose of this document is to serve as a summary of the main contributors and the principal matters discussed.

Effective integrated planning works at all scales (i.e. national, regional, district and local) and needs to be inclusive (i.e. it should address the needs of all stakeholder groups, including vulnerable and marginalised groups and communities). To achieve this, it will typically include provision for a range of consultative and/or participatory planning activities.

Event Overview

Part I, Framing & Knowledge Sharing

1.1 Welcome & Introductions
Peter Oborn from the UKBEAG welcomed those present, invited them to make introductions and provided an overview of the event. UN Habitat Local Strategic Adviser Mr Thai Son Pham offered introductory remarks about the local context.

1.2 Project overview, Smart Ticketing System
Mr Le Hoan, Deputy Director of Management Centre of Public Transport (MCPT) of Ho Chi Minh City gave a short presentation on Development of a SMART ticketing system in HCMC, being led by the Department of Transport and the Management Centre of Public Transport.

1.3 Project overview, Digitised Drainage Information System
Ms Phan Pham Thah Trang, Head of R&D and Community of Infrastructure Management Centre (IMC) of Ho Chi Minh City gave a short presentation on Development of a digitised inventory of the drainage system in HCMC being led by the Department of Construction and the Infrastructure Management Centre.

Part II, Moving from Data to Action

2.1 *Ms Victoria Delbridge,* Head of Cities that Work, **International Growth Centre** gave a short framing presentation on moving from data to action.

2.2 *Mr Ben Snaith,* Researcher, **Open Data Institute** gave a presentation on the merits of open data.

2.3 *Mr Nathan Pierce,* Head of **Smart London** Team and Programme Director of **Sharing Cities, Greater London Authority,** contributed to the discussion.

Part III, Delivering Effective Integrated & Inclusive Planning

3.1 *Mr Jörn Peters,* Principal Strategic Planner and *Ms Ei-Lyn Chia,* Principal Urban Designer, **Greater London Authority** gave a presentation on the process of integrated strategic planning in London.

A discussion took place with participants following each set or presentations, the outcome of which is summarised on the following pages.

Principal Matters Discussed

The following provides a summary of the key matters discussed during GFCP's Vietnam Country Level event. The event considered the interventions in Ho Chi Minh City, in the context of their capacity needs assessment. The focus was on two areas. First, moving from data to action for better decision making, and second, integrated and inclusive planning, specifically to break down inter and intra government silos.

Generally

Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) is a critical hub in Vietnam and its importance is only increasing. The city's population is increasing at 3% or 200,000 per year. Despite holding less than 10% of Vietnamese citizens in its municipal boundaries, the city is an economic centre providing 20% of the country's GDP and 30% of national government revenue.

The GFCP interventions are a Smart Ticketing System (STS) for some of HCMC's public transport lines, and an Integrated Management System (IMS) for GIS (Geographic Information System) Drainage. The former reflects the city's response to its growth, wanting to connect its citizens, firms and markets. The latter reflects the city wanting to do this is in a sustainable and resilient way, countering future shocks and extreme climate impacts.

Current short-term focuses on the STS include completing the public engagement strategy as well as the development of a capacity building plan to facilitate implementation. Similarly, there is work in motion on institutional settings and financial models for the implementation of the STS. With the IMS of GIS Drainage, short-term focuses included developing a long-term strategy for the GIS of drainage system, a GIS integration strategy with the city's 2050 vision as well as the development of flood models in selected catchment areas.

The interventions have been developed within an institutional environment which appears to offer scope for greater inter-departmental coordination and collaboration. Currently, HCMC appears to have different plans under different institutions and departments. There is no unified, single city plan. At times, data is fragmented, with official sources not always complemented by reliable external sources, limiting application. These factors risk hindering implementation and progress.

Key Takeaways

- Broadly, for the integration of service delivery in HCMC, an **overarching vision** for HCMC, would benefit from greater alignment. Currently, key policy areas such as housing and climate change sit with different plans under different institutions. There appear to be no unified, single city plan, and this can result in different areas of city governance acting in different directions. This contrasts with other cities, such as London, the development of which is guided by the London Plan which sets out a long term strategy for the city. The absence of such a vision may limit the effectiveness of public services.

- **The economic benefits to better sharing of data, or open data, are significant.** While standards linked to data are necessary, they are not sufficient. HCMC would benefit from developing its own data strategy, one that is city-specific. This should include creating and optimising its own data sets and data usage. Generally, there is a need for regularly updated data that can provide information for decision making. With better data provision, as is evident with Greater London Authority, implementation and monitoring of interventions can occur. One such discussed and desired area was the use of operational data to develop aligned service schedules to complement the STS.

Ho chi minh city
Vietnam

- The IMT for GIS, and its potential to inform interventions when flooding happens in the city, is **an opportunity to crowd in and integrate the activity of departments.** With a coordinated system, policy decision-makers can anticipate and account for spillovers to neighbourhoods or areas outside of their typical mandate.

Going forward

- Partners noted the desire to **leverage the opportunity to work with international partners.** But for this, the right type of foreign consultant is important, as many do not understand the local context. Similarly, varied (and often contrasting) international technical specifications leads to difficulty in aligning development actors, in this case specifically for the smart ticketing system.

- Partners expressed interest in utilising the GIS dataset as an **integration platform** for other sources of data.

- Contributions from subject matter experts suggested that current and future interventions could benefit from **shifting away from the concept of smart cities towards that of open cities,** placing emphasis on using and sharing data to solve existing problems.

- Relatedly, the intervention **might benefit from a cost-benefit analysis of the economic and monetary impact of data sharing.** For example, Transport for London's open data initiative, while launched 1 year ago has had a massive monetary impact with more than £130M of efficiency gains and savings.[1] In many urban cases, the cost of not opening data is therefore much more than the cost of opening it.

- All intervention stakeholders desired **enhanced data quality and more cross-institutional collaboration.** For example, since flooding does not follow administrative boundaries or departmental boundaries, it has the potential to help in breaking down intra- and inter-governmental silos. Similarly, data quality can aid in engaging the private sector.

- Future interventions should pay attention to **who is not in the sample when translating data to action.** There will be invisible groups and there will be missing groups. Noting whose voice is not being heard – through data – and how to account for this is a potential role of citizens. This is particularly important if policy decision-makers want to deliver effective inclusive and integrated planning. This is particularly critical with HCMC's STS, particularly considering how limited the public transport system is in terms of numbers carried.

Attendance

Key Stakeholders

HCMC, Department of Transport/ Management Centre of Public Transport

HCMC, Department of Construction/ Infrastructure Management Centre

HCMC, Department of Planning and Architecture

MAUR/ TCIP/ DIC/ DOST

UICI/ DOST/ DOP

Subject Matter Experts

International Growth Centre

Open Data Institute

Greater London Authority, Central Planning Team (GLA)

Smart London

The aim of the strategic capacity development component is to complement the other elements of the Global Future Cities Programme, to consider some of the barriers and enablers to sustainable urbanisation and to help achieve the programme's long-term impact.

Links to Further Information

Copies of the presentations delivered during the event can be accessed by following this link:
https://tinyurl.com/2p938dea

We include below a variety of links we hope the City Stakeholders may find useful:

Data orientated urban transport reform:
https://www.globalfuturecities.org/sites/default/files/2020-08/Data-oriented-urban-transport-reform-FINAL-Jan2019.pdf

Data for decision making in the COVID-19 crisis:
https://www.theigc.org/blog/data-for-decision-making-in-the-covid-19-crisis/

Urban Data Innovations:
https://www.theigc.org/blog/urban-data-innovations-three-cities-showing-their-smarts/

Urban management, Data lessons from Amman:
https://www.theigc.org/multimedia/video-urban-management-data-lessons-from-amman/

Creating successful data systems: Data lessons from Cape Town:
https://www.theigc.org/multimedia/creating-successful-data-systems-data-lessons-from-cape-town/

Building city resilience, Data lessons from Cape Town:
https://www.theigc.org/multimedia/building-city-resilience-data-lessons-from-cape-town/

Making our cities 'open':
https://theodi.org/project/open-cities/

Make better use of data in your city:
https://theodi.org/article/data-enabled-cities/

Becoming more open, the view from four European cities:
https://theodi.org/article/becoming-more-open-the-view-from-four-european-cities-report/

An emerging technology charter for London:
https://www.london.gov.uk/publications/emerging-technology-charter-london

Designed to succeed, Building authorising environments for fast growing cities:
https://www.theigc.org/publication/designed-to-succeed-building-authorising-environments-for-fastgrowing-cities/

London datastore:
https://data.london.gov.uk/

The London Plan:
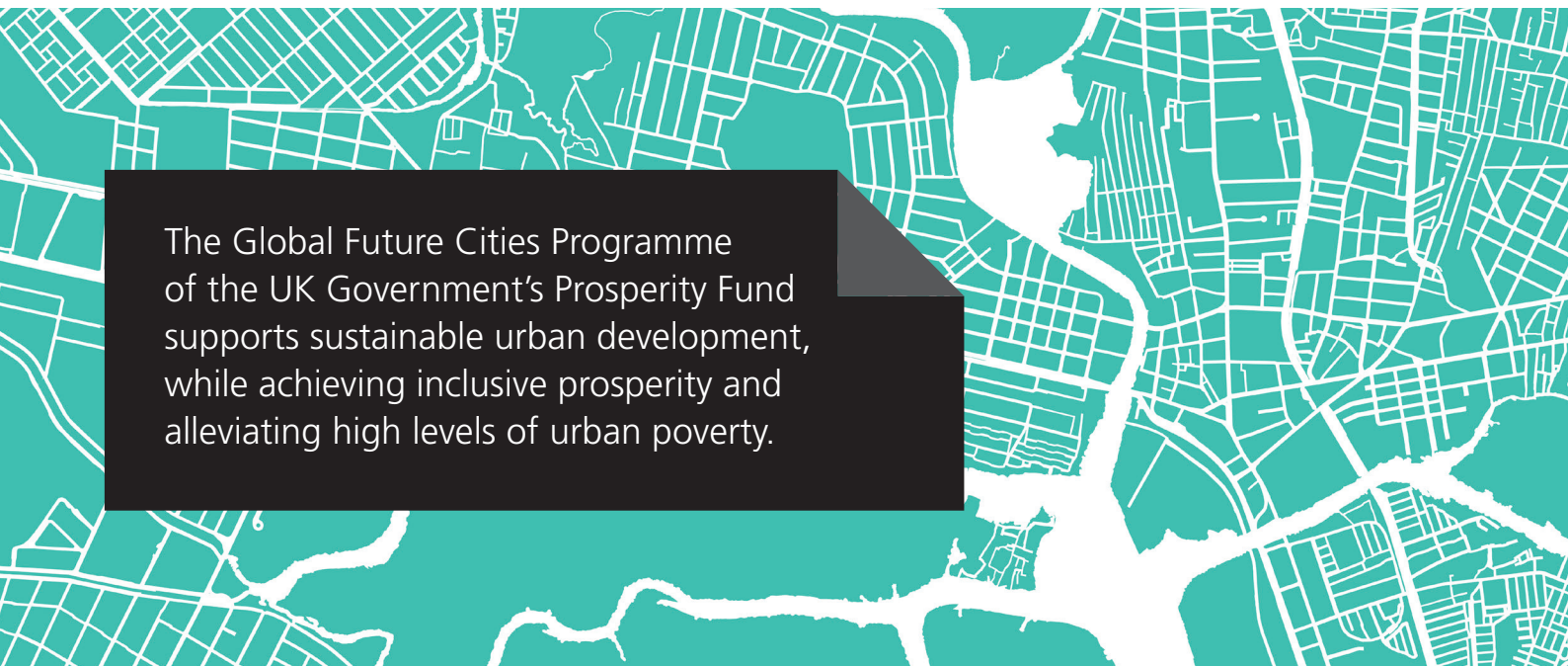*https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan*

For further information about the programme, please contact
Adrian Malleson at **adrian.malleson@riba.org**

The Global Future Cities Programme
of the UK Government's Prosperity Fund
supports sustainable urban development,
while achieving inclusive prosperity and
alleviating high levels of urban poverty.

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