

Integrating Climate Change into Socio-Economic Development Plans

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INTRODUCTION

The Government of Vietnam approved a National Strategy for Climate Change in 2011, identifying long-term policy objectives to 2020 and short-term priorities for the period 2011-2015. To implement this strategy, a National Action Plan on Climate Change was approved in 2012 (Decision 1474). At that time, the five-year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP) 2011-2015 had already been approved, but climate change actions were not included as priorities due to the timing of the strategy and action plan approvals. In 2013, recognizing that climate change needed to be integrated more effectively into all levels of government socio-economic development planning, the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) approved Decision 1485 (17 Oct 2013), promoting the integration of climate change and providing guidelines to planning agencies in line ministries and provinces. This new policy is not mandatory, but even so Vietnam's 64 provinces and cities have done little to adopt these guidelines or to integrate climate change into their provincial level public expenditure planning process (Socio-economic development plan, or SEDP). One exception is the city of Da Nang, in central Vietnam, where climate change has been integrated on an experimental basis into the city's SEDP preparation process¹. This paper explores the process followed by Da Nang and the lessons it offers for other cities and provinces.

¹ The MPI Guidelines have also been adapted for application at the commune level by CARE International as part of the project: Community-based Adaptation in the Mekong Delta. Under this project, CARE supported commune leaders to apply modified guidelines in 3 communes in An Giang province and 2 in Soc Trang. The results of the commune-level prioritization were passed on to the district level to incorporate in district SEDP. CARE has published the lessons from their experience in a Guidelines document (CARE, 2015).

RATIONALE

Many cities are likely to be strongly affected by climate change because, like Da Nang, they are situated at the mouth of major river systems, and so affected by storms, floods and sea level rise (World Bank, 2010; World Bank, 2011; UN Habitat, 2011). There have been increasing efforts to identify climate vulnerabilities at the city level and to create plans for appropriate adaptation responses in many countries (Preston et al., 2011; Carmin et al., 2012; Heidrich et al., 2013). However, planning has not led to meaningful outcomes for at least two reasons: 1) there are few sources of funding dedicated to implementing climate adaptation measures; 2) there are already plans for adaptation measures, or measures consistent with adaptation, but they are not being implemented (Agrawala and van Aalst, 2008). This is the case in Vietnam, where a study assessing the country's local government Climate Action Plans identified the lack of implementation as their greatest weakness (Nguyen et al., 2015).

The integration of climate change into development planning, sometimes referred to as mainstreaming, has been promoted by development agencies and researchers at multiple scales from national planning to the project level (UNDP-UNEP, 2011; Lebel et al., 2012; CARE, 2015). Such integration would reinforce mechanisms for implementation of measures to respond to climate change, including consideration of the impacts of both current climate risks, often considered as disaster risk reduction; and future climate conditions, which may pose different, or more severe, risks. Planning at all levels should consider not only specific measures to reduce climate risks and vulnerabilities, but also should screen other plans and proposed investments to ensure that new activities are not maladaptive, i.e. they do not inadvertently increase climate risks (UNDP-UNEP, 2011). For example, when sea level and extreme precipitation are likely to increase flood risks in low-lying peri-urban flood plains, it would be maladaptive to expand urban development into such areas, and a process that integrates climate

change should identify such maladaptive plans at an early stage so they can be rejected or modified.

The poor are more vulnerable to extreme climate events such as floods and storms because their housing, health, livelihoods and access to services are less secure and can be undermined by impacts from climate events (Moser and Sathertwaite, 2010; UNDP-UNEP, 2011). Unless climate vulnerability issues are addressed in development plans, social and economic benefits for the poor will not be realized, threatening development gains. Therefore, climate change considerations should be carefully integrated in development planning, budgeting and program implementation. Climate adaptation is a development issue, not an environmental issue (Lebel et al. 2012), so planning and action must involve all sectors.

There is mounting evidence that climate change will impose dramatic costs on many sectors. High cost, long-lived infrastructure – such as transportation, irrigation, water supply and urban development infrastructure – is often highly vulnerable to changes in precipitation, flood patterns, and sea level rise. Planning in these sectors must specifically address climate risks, while the energy sector must increasingly address the need to reduce carbon emissions (Halsnæs et al., 2008). While mainstreaming is needed at all levels of development decision-making, the local level is crucial in climate adaptation because most vulnerabilities and adaptation measures are highly contextual. Therefore, local planners and decision makers need to be able to assess their specific conditions and propose appropriate actions. This requires improved vulnerability assessment as part of the integration process, as well as mechanisms for coordination and prioritization and trade-offs in the case of policy trade-offs (Lebel et al., 2012). A useful starting point is a “no-regrets” strategy that makes sense even under current conditions, and supports a wide range of uncertain future climates (Hallegatte, 2009).

Note that most recommendations for mainstreaming, including those addressed

in this paper, refer only to incorporating climate change into existing decision-making processes. They do not address the broader question of whether the nature of climate vulnerability and resilience-building require more fundamental changes to political decision-making to better integrate the experience, knowledge and values of vulnerable groups whose views are typically under-represented in the policy process (Friend, et. al. 2014).

In Vietnam, annual public investment in development projects is managed through a socio-economic development planning process that aggregates up from the district level to the province. This is coordinated at the provincial level by the Department of Planning and Investment (DPI) and approved once every five years, based on criteria and targets approved by political leaders. Provincial SEDPs are reviewed and updated annually with specific project and budget details, and forwarded to the national level, where funding priorities are aligned with national policy and approved by the government for allocation to the provincial line agency responsible for implementation. At the national level, a series of policy decisions have promoted the mainstreaming of climate change into development planning by establishing requirements for climate planning at the ministry / sector and provincial levels and through establishment of a policy coordination mechanism (Japan Ministry of Environment, 2015). But while MPI recognized the need to include climate change considerations in this process through Decision 1485, we could not find any provinces except Da Nang that have piloted the guidelines it issued, and few provincial level climate action plans have been implemented (Nguyen et al., 2015).

THE MPI GUIDELINES

MPI developed a tool for line ministries and provinces to integrate climate change adaptation measures into their public expenditure planning process at multiple scales. This Adaptation Prioritization Tool (APRT) was developed with

technical support from the World Bank and issued as part of Decision 1485. Although the wording of the Vietnamese language version is somewhat ambiguous, it appears that the intent of the tool was to enable budget and planning officers within ministries and provinces to identify priorities for adaptation actions as part of the public expenditure management process, which is managed through the socio-economic development plans. The purpose of the tool is somewhat unclear, which does not make it easier to use. However, interviews with MPI suggest that it is meant to screen relevant public investment proposals (that is, full and detailed project proposals) to determine if they match priorities for climate adaptation, and if so to prioritize these. The APRT identified 4 steps for prioritizing climate actions, and specified a set of questions to be addressed in each step:

1. Confirm objectives for climate change adaptation: Are previous climate adaptation objectives still relevant? Are new objectives needed? Are the indicators and reference values (targets) applied in the current SEDP still appropriate?
2. Classify and screen climate adaptation actions by priority objectives: link potential climate actions to each of the priority objectives defined in #1. Which sector or administrative agency (province, district) is responsible for each adaptation action? Which actions are most urgent? Which fit best with NTP Strategy and priorities (see below)?
3. Use multi-criteria assessment to compare the proposed climate adaptation actions.
4. Identify the highest priorities for support from the national budget.

In this way, the APRT process is analogous to sectoral planning, where sector-based objectives and targets are established to guide public investment priorities. The challenge is that climate adaptation measures must be

adopted by multiple sectors. The APRT process relies on qualitative and quantitative indicators and criteria for scoring climate objectives and sector priorities that are set by MPI, such as whether the measures have minimal or no impact on key development objectives (e.g. sustainable resource management); or the number of farm households affected by a particular measure; or the size of a watershed for which water management will be strengthened. The process is subjective, leaving broad room for interpretation (e.g. as to what measures might or might not affect sustainability). The process does not screen other plans or projects to assure that they are not maladaptive. In the Decision 1485 document, climate change priorities for the period 2012-2020 identified in the National Action Plan on Climate Change (Decision 1474) were adopted to provide guidance on priority measures to be integrated into annual SEDP's at the provincial and national levels for 2014, 2015 and subsequent years. These priorities were:

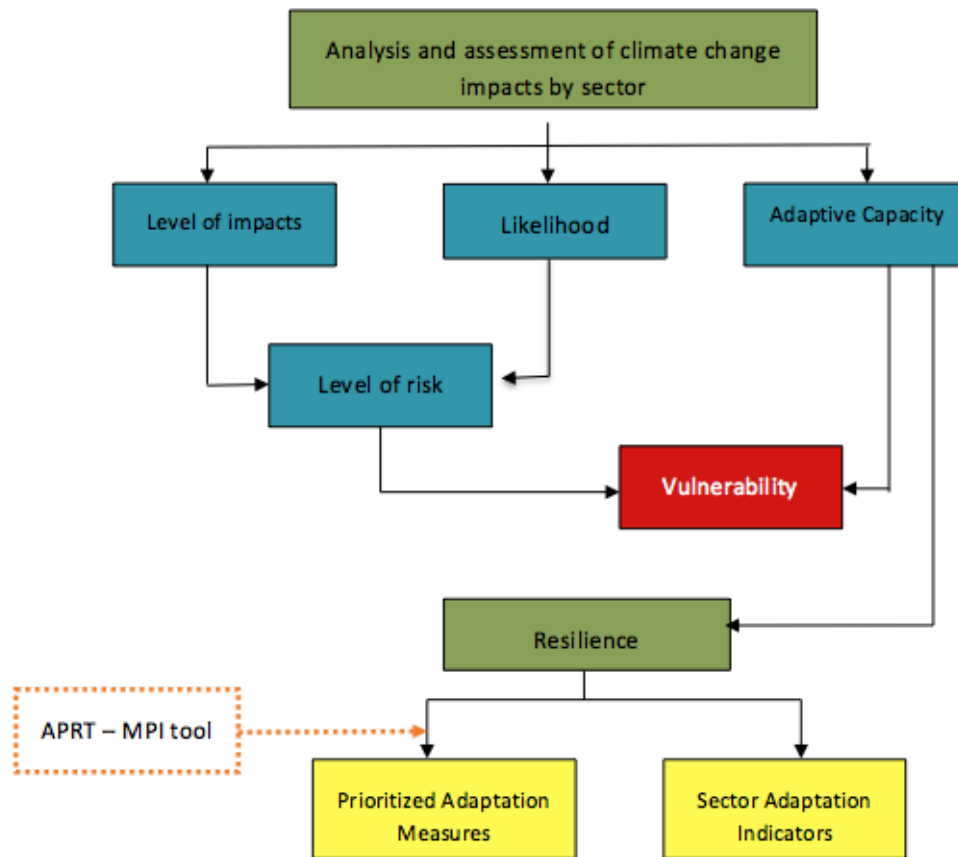
- Strengthen the capacity for climate change monitoring and early warning of natural disasters.
- Ensure food and water security.
- Proactive response to natural disasters, prevention of floods in large cities, strengthening river and sea dykes and safe water reservoirs.
- Strengthen capacity of management and improvement of climate change policies.
- Mobilize the participation of various sectors, professional associations and non-governmental organizations in responding to climate change, support communities to respond to climate change.
- Awareness raising and human resource development.
- Science and technology development to be used as a basis for policy formulation, impact assessment and identification of measures for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

MPI Decision 1485 and its accompanying guidelines were recommended for adoption by line ministries and local governments. Articles 2 and 3 of the Decision state "These Guideline are a supporting tool to strengthen the capacity of planners and policy makers for climate adaptation at line ministries and provinces" and "planning bodies from line ministries and Department of Planning and Investment of provinces shall explore the application of the climate change adaptation prioritization tool, and mainstream the priorities into the SEDP process... following the Guidelines..." (unofficial translation). In fact, there appears to have been very little follow-up from MPI since Decision 1485 was issued, either at the line ministry or provincial levels and no attention how the guidelines can be implemented in practice.

METHODOLOGY

To explore the Da Nang experience with integrating climate change into their SEDP, the authors combined their direct experience (one of the co-authors was closely involved with implementation as a staff member of the city's Climate Change Coordination Office) and semi-structured interviews with seven other city officials from the Department of Planning and Investment, Department of Transport, Department of Industry and Trade, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Environmental Protection Agency and an expert from the non-governmental Da Nang Association of Science and Technology. The interviews explored the following aspects of the process: i) the entry point for integrating climate adaptation in the SEDP process; ii) leadership and coordination; iii) awareness raising and capacity building; iv) stakeholder engagement; v) prioritization of potential projects; vi) scaling up for effective integration of climate adaptation.

FIGURE 1: PROCESS FOLLOWED BY DA NANG FOR PRIORITIZING ADAPTATION MEASURES



PROCESS TO INTEGRATE CLIMATE ADAPTATION INTO SEDP

Da Nang is a city with a population of just over one million, located on the central coast of Vietnam. It is subject to a seasonal monsoon climate, with heavy rains and occasional typhoons between September and December. Most of the city lies in a low coastal plain, through which several major rivers pass. Through its participation in the Asian Cities Climate Change Resilience Network (ACCCRN), Da Nang has undertaken climate vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning, including flood modelling and stormproof housing initiatives, as well as studies in several other sectors, with support from the Rockefeller Foundation. The city also established a Climate Change Coordination Office (CCCO) under ACCCRN

in 2011. But the authority of the CCCO is limited. Planning, funding and implementation of public investment projects are under the jurisdiction of specific technical departments or other agencies, such as the Department of Transport, the Department of Construction, the Department of Health, or the Da Nang Water Supply Company.

The CCCO initiated efforts to integrate climate adaptation into SEDP by suggesting an experimental or pilot approach with DPI, applying the guidelines released by MPI together with prior analysis of climate vulnerabilities. CCCO was supported through a long-term collaboration with the Institute for Social and Environmental Transition (ISET), which provided direction and technical support to the ACCCRN program in Vietnam. In 2014, CCCO and DPI initiated a pilot activity to identify climate adaptation priorities together with representatives of four technical

departments in Da Nang – Agriculture and Rural Development, Transport, Natural Resources and Environment, and Industry and Trade – in order to develop adaptation measures for these four sectors. Four sub-groups were formed, comprising at least one technical staff member from CCCO, one from DPI, and one from the relevant technical department, supplemented by outside experts as required for specific technical issues. The sub-groups were guided by CCCO to use existing information following the process outlined in Fig. 1.

The sub-group process included a series of consultation meetings at which the team discussed results of climate change impact and vulnerability assessment, adding technical input and new data to previous analyses undertaken by CCCO and other agencies. All of the groups worked through the steps shown in Fig. 1. Group members worked together to clarify the process they would follow and ensure consistency between the sub-groups. Inputs to the process included Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE)'s guidelines on Assessment of Climate Change Impact, as well as the ISET climate resilience framework (Tyler and Moench, 2012), and MPI's prioritization tool. The team was trained by CCCO on materials that were unfamiliar to them, such as the resilience framework, to aid them in identifying and assessing measures to improve resilience. CCCO served as technical support to each of the sub-groups, particularly on climate vulnerability analysis, while DPI provided support mainly on the prioritization process.

Data sources for the vulnerability assessment relied mainly on prior analyses of climate impacts and adaptation needs, which have been undertaken under the National Target Program to Respond to Climate Change (NTP-RCC, 2012) requirements for climate action plans at the provincial level and at the level of national ministries. Using this information on climate change vulnerability and risk, the working group technical experts collected existing documents and plans for the relevant sectors, as well as

climate change planning or disaster risk reduction plans for the national and ministerial levels.

The entire working group convened several times during the process to compare progress between the different sub-groups and to ensure consistency. Draft priorities were also shared with the entire group in order to address potential conflicts or contradictions between the proposals coming from different technical departments in different sectors. Because of the need to absorb unfamiliar concepts and new procedures of collaborative planning, as well as unfamiliar data sources, this process took several months to work through. However, with these inputs and with guidance from CCCO and DPI, the teams were able to identify specific sectoral priority projects for adaptation and in each case specified a small number of indicators or targets to measure success in increasing resilience.

A new city-wide SEDP plan was developed in 2015 for the period 2016-2020, and the second stage of the integration process involved incorporating climate resilience priorities into this plan.

DPI used expert consultants to draft its SEDP strategy document, and the CCCO worked with these consultants to identify suitable language and examples for the strategy document, which was to be approved by the province's political (Communist Party) leadership. The CCCO worked extensively with five groups, each representing one of the priority sectors for the city's development over this period: environment, culture and social services, high-tech industry, infrastructure, and tourism. Each group was informed by the CCCO about resilience concepts and principles to understand how to include these in their review of the draft sections of the SEDP strategy. The five-year strategy document is framed at a fairly general level, but each of the five groups identified wording and priorities for their own section to address climate resilience, without undue emphasis on climate change in a document that covers the entire breadth of socio-economic development in the city.

TABLE 1: MATERIALS USED AND COST INCURRED IN HOUSING CONSTRUCTION IN DIFFERENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS

ACTION AREAS	PRIORITY ACTIONS FOR CITY IMPLEMENTATION – DETAILS TO BE DEVELOPED BY RESPONSIBLE TECHNICAL UNITS FOR ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION PLANS
COMMUNITY SAFETY	<p>Ensure sufficient food and water supply in emergency conditions</p> <p>Public health authorities undertake active measures to control vector-borne and new contagious diseases (e.g. SARS, MERS).</p> <p>Ensure secure electricity supply, especially in dry season.</p> <p>Encourage private enterprises to develop disaster risk reduction and response measures protecting workers and securing their facilities and structures from damage.</p>
RESILIENT URBAN INFRASTRUCTURE	<p>Incorporate ecosystem-based approaches to flood management in urban land use and spatial design.</p> <p>Develop specific measures to address water security issues and manage water use in dry season.</p> <p>Update climate vulnerability maps for public and planning application, in order to increase awareness and reduce damage and injury from extreme climate events.</p> <p>Increase forest cover and green space in the city and especially riparian and coastal zones.</p>
NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND USE	<p>Protect biodiversity, touristic landscapes and natural ecosystems in Son Tra and Ba Na.</p> <p>Develop long term plans for water resource management, particularly in river basins controlled by Da Nang (Cu De, Tuy Loan rivers).</p>
STRENGTHEN EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF CLIMATE CHANGE	<p>Build a healthy cultural environment including awareness and knowledge of changing climate risks.</p> <p>Continue innovative programs and integrate content on climate impact and adaptation in schools.</p> <p>In climate vulnerable areas, assess the need for multi-purpose community flood shelters.</p> <p>Strengthen the application of information technology in teaching, learning and managing for climate change.</p>
SOCIAL SECURITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH	<p>Strengthen resource mobilization for disaster risk reduction, particularly in the health sector, and particularly for areas vulnerable to climate disasters.</p> <p>Strengthen disaster response measures in the public health sector.</p> <p>Increase cross-sectoral collaboration and coordination to manage health risks and emergencies in the context of climate change.</p> <p>Apply information technology to the work of the emergency response center and its management, including expanding warning systems to public health epidemics and other emergencies.</p>
CLIMATE RESILIENCE TARGETS BY 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By 2020, 100% of schools have incorporated climate change into the applicable education curriculum. - By the end of 2020, 100% of climate vulnerable households have safe housing.

The climate change adaptation references were discussed and inserted in document sections dealing with the city's development outlook, goals and vision, and specific objectives for SEDP 2016-2020. The final document was extensively reviewed by senior officials and political leaders before approval, and most of the resilience content was accepted. At the end of the process, climate adaptation was clearly integrated into the development strategy and priorities for the city overall, and each of the five key sectors had an explicit set of priority projects as part of their proposed work plan (see Table 1).

There is no specific financial plan associated with the 5-year SEDP. It is a general strategy, which is reviewed every year, when DPI assesses progress compared with targets and indicators, develops a detailed financial plan and negotiates the city's budget with the Ministry of Finance for the coming year. At this time, the priorities for public investment for the year are finalized from the list of sectoral projects, which includes those in Table 1 associated with climate resilience. CCCO is not involved in this review, which is undertaken entirely by DPI.

DISCUSSION

Interviews with technical sector participants confirmed that leadership of the process of integrating climate change into SEDP was provided by CCCO, working together with DPI. At the outset of the process, the participants were confused about what kinds of projects constituted climate adaptation, why they might be needed, and how they could be prioritized. While various training courses and guidelines had been offered by MoNRE and MPI on these matters, and some of the Da Nang officials participated in these courses before this exercise, they reported that the trainings were not useful because they were offered at too general a level and did not provide specific and practical examples, tools or procedures. In the absence of a familiar mechanism for undertaking this kind of procedure, the technical departments relied on

the advice of CCCO in particular, and reported that they understood the requirements of integrating climate change mainly through the experience of actually doing it. The process of interaction to coordinate sector level plans led to shared learning between all the technical groups of how to identify climate adaptation measures, and how to prioritize between different potential projects.

It is particularly important to consider the role of the CCCO in Da Nang. This office is unique in Vietnam. It is not a standard administrative bureau of the city, but was set up through the support of the Rockefeller Foundation under the ACCCRN program. While the office no longer receives financial support from ACCCRN, it continues to operate with the support of the city government. The office is not under the administrative jurisdiction of any single technical department, but instead is organized directly under the People's Committee and reports to the city's Standing Committee on Responding to Climate Change, which includes senior representatives of most of the city's key technical departments.

The participants in SEDP integration reported that while the MPI APRT tool was relatively simple and easy to understand, many of the qualitative criteria and indicators for scoring and comparing proposed projects were difficult to define and appraise, leading to extensive discussion about the appropriate meaning and rating in the case of any particular criterion or project. One of the challenges uncovered in this pilot activity was that technical departments expected DPI to score the different sectoral projects and determine priorities, as part of their SEDP priority-setting role. However, the APRT priority-setting and scoring tool required the assignment of scores based on detailed technical knowledge of a project's outcomes (such as the number of farmers affected; or the size of a watershed to be protected) that DPI could not assess on its own. From DPI's perspective, it became clear that departments should undertake prioritization before they submitted their project list to DPI,

using the criteria and scoring tools provided by MPI. This was a departure from standard practice.

The benefits of the process were that it provided an opportunity for participants to gain a deeper understanding of adaptation projects and priorities through interaction with CCCO and DPI in their technical sub-groups. This was a new way of working that ensured collaboration across sectoral and disciplinary boundaries to provide practical conclusions based on experience of the technical staff. The participants were satisfied with the results, and came away from the experience with a recognition of how the process of integrating climate change into SEDP could be implemented in practice.

However, the process was time-consuming, and represented a significant additional task on top of the technical officers' regular workload. Because this was an experimental and unprecedented effort, all the participants expect that the time involvement could be reduced if they were to repeat it, because they were now familiar with the basic requirements of the process and much of the analysis could be carried over to the next year. But realistically, if the process were to be repeated, it is likely that some participants would change due to promotion or re-assignment. Because the process is different from standard practice, there would always be a certain amount of additional effort to train participants and ensure they understood the task. The additional time and effort needed for this kind of effort has been referred to as "mainstreaming fatigue" (Agrawala and van Aalst, 2008).

In addition, the MPI guidelines do not help DPI or technical agencies to assess sectoral plans for their potential maladaptive effects, so in terms of integration of climate change, the process is still only partial. All ministries are supposed to be responsible for their own sectoral planning to integrate climate change and to screen plans for climate vulnerability effects, but it is not clear whether the guidelines and screening for this process, or for MPI review, are adequate. While it is beyond the scope of

BOX 1: WHAT DOES "COORDINATION" MEAN?

In Vietnam, government agencies operate on a command-and-control basis within their own jurisdiction. There are few mechanisms for coordination at the political or operational level. This creates many difficulties, but one is that government staff do not understand the term because they have no experience of it. Local government organizations frequently misinterpret coordination to mean "control". This becomes problematic very quickly as one department has no authority over another, and the confusion contributes to the failure of coordination roles. But coordination in climate planning does not mean control. Coordination includes the following functions:

- Technical support and capacity building to key stakeholders to ensure shared understanding of concepts of climate change, impacts, vulnerability, adaptation and resilience;
- Convening stakeholders for planning;
- Support for data sharing;
- Comparing assumptions, procedures, and priorities between different sectors to ensure consistency;
- Facilitating planning and followup processes to be led by other technical departments (e.g. by providing tools, trainings, hosting meetings, process guidance);
- Ensuring good communications between parallel planning efforts in different departments or working groups;
- Monitoring progress of planning and implementation;
- Reporting to senior city leaders and heads of departments on climate resilience issues

this study, it would be worthwhile to assess sectoral planning and oversight to determine the extent to which Climate Action Plans are being formulated and implemented effectively to avoid inadvertently increasing climate vulnerability.

Finally, the qualitative and quantitative criteria for establishing priorities between different adaptation projects to achieve desired objectives, while sensible, are difficult to apply and may rely on data that is hard to obtain. The guidelines need to make clear that the responsibility for collecting this data and determining priorities within any sector lies with the sectoral planners, not with DPI.

Despite increasing experience with planning for climate change, through many national and local projects, through the provisions for Climate Action Plans by provinces and ministries, and through the issuance of MPI's Decision 1485, there are still very few examples in Vietnam of climate change responses being integrated into local government planning processes. Local government officials are reluctant to initiate a new procedure when it departs from precedent or standard practice. Even with national level guidelines that provide direction to local government agencies, it has proven very difficult to integrate the many new climate resilience planning activities into standard practice. The experience of Da Nang helps to explain why.

In Da Nang, the role of the CCCO was crucial. This organization took the initiative to approach DPI and propose practical measures to proceed with integrating climate resilience into SEDP, based on their own experience with resilience planning and adaptation project implementation. They obtained the support of government leaders and senior officials to introduce this activity, because it required the commitment of staff time from several key technical agencies. Because they understood climate resilience they were able to explain and support vulnerability assessment and prioritization discussions in other sectors. CCCO played several key roles in the process: they provided overall guidance and support on the process, when other agencies, including DPI, did

not see a way to get started. They provided training on resilience concepts and measurement for other technical agencies. They facilitated discussions on planning approaches and technical issues, so that multiple departments and agencies could agree on a common set of terminology and a set of tools and approaches. They convened and organized technical working groups, and helped to ensure consistent agendas and positive progress in their work through a clear vision of objectives and products.

The MPI APRT tool was reported to be simple to use, and easily adjusted to reflect local conditions, but the key to its application in Da Nang was the experience and skills of CCCO with the climate resilience framework, with undertaking climate vulnerability assessment in multiple sectors, and in collaborative, cross-sector planning to build resilience. CCCO also had executive-level commitment within the city for their work on climate resilience planning, so that they could approach other departments, including DPI, with the support of senior officials. These conditions were crucial to allow the initiative to take shape, to ensure that participating technical staff could be trained and supported to understand how to integrate climate change in their sector plans, to provide vulnerability assessments as the basis for identifying project responses and to provide technical support to all the participants to ensure the quality of results.

In short, the process of integration of climate change and climate adaptation into local government planning in Da Nang achieved results because it was led by a local organization that could contribute the following crucial elements to the integration process:

- Executive-level support and rationale for the integration of climate change into planning;
- Conceptual framework that included climate vulnerability assessment and practical resilience-building approach, so that all sectors understood the concepts and methodology;
- Technical understanding of climate data,

uncertainties and impacts, in order to use available data and guide vulnerability and risk assessment;

- Training and capacity building for technical officials and sector planners;
- Shared climate data and access to other data sources;
- Skills in collaboration and coordination, including resolution of conflicts and contradictions between the different sector-level plans through dialogue and shared learning.

The MPI guidelines assume that these conditions can be met, because there is no way to implement the guidelines without these conditions. But in most Vietnamese provinces this is a major constraint, because some or all of these conditions do not exist. We conclude that the integration of climate change into local government planning procedures cannot be resolved simply by issuing guidelines from the central government. In the Da Nang case, these other conditions were important in contributing to a successful result.

In relation to other cities, there is growing recognition at both the national and local levels that climate change will have a big impact on cities throughout Vietnam. All provinces and ministries have prepared Climate Action Plans. But these plans have not been integrated into regular SEDP planning processes, nor have the recommended action measures been implemented (Nam et al., 2015). The plans have been prepared under the authority of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DoNRE) in each province, but other sectors and departments are not familiar with them. DoNRE cannot influence the planning activities of other departments, and so the plans are not helpful in integrating climate change into provincial and sectoral investment priorities. Neither does DPI play a role in ensuring that the Decision 1485 guidelines are followed at the provincial level. The role of

DPI is to respond to, aggregate and prioritize the plans proposed by the various technical sectors in the province according to general strategic guidelines, not to initiate planning measures or issue directions to other departments. So in most provinces, there is no leadership or coordination mechanism to support the implementation of the MPI Guidelines and to integrate climate change considerations into development planning.

CONCLUSIONS

Part of the reason MPI's Decision 1485 is not applied by provinces is that it is not useful in its current form. The tool purports to screen public investment proposals and determine if they match adaptation priorities. But a screening tool cannot determine whether a project is appropriate for climate adaptation in any given location. Only an assessment of local climate vulnerability and risk can identify the priorities for adaptation. As the process described above makes clear, before provinces can implement MPI's Decision 1485, they must understand the climate impacts and vulnerabilities they face. They must have identified objectives for climate adaptation and response. They need a process for considering potential climate response measures, and a mechanism for consultation, dialogue and shared learning across sectors in order to coordinate and prioritize climate responses according to a consistent framework and approach. Otherwise, different technical departments may not understand the issues or the terminology and may generate technical proposals that cannot be prioritized, or that actually increase climate vulnerability. DPI on its own cannot provide advice here, nor resolve priorities for climate response, because they do not have the technical expertise to assess project scoring according to the criteria set by MPI, so the coordinated input of various technical departments is essential. These functions require the skills and capacity of a small coordination group, like CCCO in Da Nang. In the absence of this kind of organization, the independent technical departments are likely to be paralyzed and unable to proceed in a coordinated fashion. Finally, when the process is

time-consuming and voluntary, provinces have little incentive to commit the required effort.

In the Da Nang case, the capacity of CCCO for climate vulnerability and coordinated planning was built through their experience under ACCCRN and other projects. They were able to provide leadership and guidance for DPI and for the other technical departments in order to identify priority climate response projects. Because they understood the function of coordination (see Box 1) they were able to effectively coordinate this process without intruding on the independent authority of the technical departments and of DPI. This skill in coordination, together with the political support of city executives, was crucial to a successful result in integrating climate change into SEDP. Such a function is not typical in local government in Vietnam, because it requires technical expertise in climate change and climate uncertainties for planning, skills in communication and capacity building, as well as high level recognition and support from the executive level of the city government.

The Government of Vietnam, through MPI, has proposed the integration of climate change into local socio-economic development planning processes. This will be essential to mainstreaming of climate change considerations in public sector planning and investment decision-making across all sectors. However, this policy decision has not been accompanied by adequate consideration of the conditions needed for implementation. In particular, the experience in Da Nang suggests the importance of a provincial level coordination function that can facilitate the integration of climate responses in the planning and operational decisions across multiple technical departments within local government. Without this kind of function, there is no way to

translate recognition of climate vulnerabilities into coordinated and effective multi-sectoral responses.

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