

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN URBAN HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADING PROJECTS
IN VIETNAM**

**Burgerparticipatie in stedelijke huisvesting en infrastructuur projecten
in Vietnam**

Thesis

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Abbreviation

ACCA	Asian Coalition for Community Action
ACHR	Asian Coalition for Housing Rights
ACVN	Association of cities of Vietnam
CDF	Community Saving Fund
CDS	City Development Strategy
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CPV	Communist Party of Vietnam
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
IT	Informatics Technology
NDUDP	Nam Dinh Urban Development Project
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PAPI	The Viet Nam Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index
PAR	Public Administration Reform
PC	People's Committee
PMU	Project Management Unit
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDRO	United Nations Disaster Relief Organization
UPIH	Upgrading Projects of Infrastructure and Housing
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VND	Vietnamese Dong
VUUP	Vietnam Urban Upgrading Project
WB	World Bank

Chapter 1. Introduction and research overview

1.1 Introduction

As proven throughout history over many centuries, cities were the evidence of development and prosperity of a nation. Cities are the source of progress, where almost all economic activities happen and they are also the centers for productivities and housing and other important basic services. Cities are centers of business and technology and social development. According to the development theories (King 1990, Todaro 1997, Friedmann 1986, Becker et al. 1992, IRBD 1991) the urbanization rate always accompanies the economic development and diversification. Most of the countries in Asia and especially in South East Asia, with a strong economic development over the past two decades are also the countries with highest urbanization rate. Cities become strategic positions in the globalization process (Berner, 1997) and with a continuous growth of an economy, the buildings within cities transform into national symbol buildings (Knight and Gappert, 1989).

South-East Asia is a region of developing countries, which were still being considered as less developed countries not very long ago. However, as mentioned in the UN-Habitat report (2007), in the last two decades, the urbanization rate of this region is 1.75 times faster than the world's urbanization rate. Ironically, as the process has accelerated, cities in Africa, Asia and Latin America have collided with urban problems that are not accompanied by development, instead it is characterized by poverty, filth, dilapidated houses, insecurity of land tenure, unemployment and lack of infrastructure services like pipe-borne water, electricity, safety, access to roads, etc. (World Bank, 1995).

In the development and urbanization process, the cities of Vietnam have also faced similar problems and people are often concerned about problems that directly affect their living conditions in which housing and infrastructure issues are very significant. The Vietnamese Government and international agencies such as the World Bank and the Asia Development Bank have also focused on the problems of infrastructure and housing, thus many related projects have been carried out in many cities in Vietnam. In these projects, due to the legal regulations in 2007 Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy, the involvement of the affected community is required. Thus community

participation is one of the important issues of these projects. This research will focus on the area that has received increasingly much attention by government leaders, policy makers, the general public and agencies namely community participation in upgrading projects in infrastructure and housing in Vietnam. It especially examines the relations between communities and government (mainly local government) and how these affect the outcomes of these upgrading projects.

In order to begin, this chapter provides an overview of the research to the readers. This chapter is organized into five sections as follows. This introduction section provides an overview of the chapter. Section 1.2 presents the reasons for undertaking this research and focuses on the importance of community participation in projects, especially the infrastructure and housing upgrading projects. Section 1.3 provides the objectives of this research. The research problems as well as the research questions are followed in Section 1.4. Finally, Section 1.5 describes the thesis structure by outlining using short introductions each chapter.

1.2 Justification of the research

Vietnam is a communist country but since 1986 it has gradually changed from a centrally planned economy to a market economy. In the ‘Doi Moi¹’ process, the Vietnam Government has been making administrative reforms at all levels, transferring some tasks and functions from the central government to lower levels and especially beginning the decentralization process. According to Painter (2003), Public Administration Reform (PAR) in Vietnam is an ambitious programme that seeks to implement ‘rule by law’ within a centralized, state management framework. It is a political strategy by the key party and state officials with the aim of institutionalizing and legitimizing the transition to the ‘socialist-oriented market economy’ through creating a system of rule-bound public administration which is consistently good in quality of performance.

One of the effects of this process is to improve the land administration, urban infrastructure services provision and management. However, Irvin (1995) and Dao (1997) argue in their research that although there have been many improvements in administrative reforms, the participation of community, ordinary people and all

¹ ‘Doi Moi’ is the name given to the economic reforms initiated in Vietnam in 1986 with the goal of creating a "socialist-oriented market economy", where the state plays a decisive role in the economy but private enterprise and cooperatives play a significant role in commodity production

economic sectors in many aspects such as, planning, investing, providing finance, operating and maintaining the infrastructure services as well as making land use plans and access to land use rights have not been greatly improved.

In recent years, there have been significant improvements in the governance due to the policy changes, especially after the enforcement of the Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy (2007) issued by Vietnam National Congress (Ordinance 34/2007/PL-UBTVQH11), and the result is that in many localities in Vietnam, the people and community have been step by step participating in the process of planning, implementing and monitoring of approved plans as well as urban housing and infrastructure upgrading projects. It shows the growing importance of participation of the community and affected people in the decision making process especially in spatial planning and providing services as well as the need to transfer responsibility for meeting basic human needs to local authorities. This involves local governments entering into a dialogue with their citizens, local organizations and private enterprises to adopt an approach that enables the latter to take a more active part in policy implementation (Ngo, 2008).

Community participation in urban projects, especially in Upgrading Projects of Infrastructure and Housing (UPIH) is not a new concept. It has been applied in many countries and introduced to Vietnam many decades ago. There are a number of community driven projects that have been implemented in Vietnam. However, there are few researches that have focused on community participation in UPIH in Vietnam and it could be argued that the important role of community participation in these projects has not had enough attention drawn to it. Many articles, review papers, PhD theses and seminars have been written about this including Painter (2003, 2005, 2006), Fritzen (2006), Dao (1997), Minogue and Hung (2004), Phan (2012) who all discuss about Public Administration Reform (PAR), its problems and prospects. They mainly mention the economic and political issues but the issue of participation, especially community participation along with the impact of local government capacity under PAR has not focused upon. The community participation in housing and infrastructure projects is very important for the people within the communities, thus much attention has been paid to it by the affected neighborhood communities as the project outcomes have a direct effect on them. Moreover, it could be argued that it is a basic right of the people to be involved in their own development (UN Habitat, 1996).

For this reason, the research will be carried out to investigate the difficulties and constraints relating to community participation in Upgrading Projects of Infrastructure and Housing (UPIH) within existing local government systems, the motivations, behavior and perceptions of different stakeholders especially how the local government influences the community participation process at the grassroots level. It is expected that through this research, community participation and support from local government capacity will show good outcomes in Upgrading Projects of Infrastructure and Housing (UPIH) as it follows Cuthill and Fien's (2005) argument that the community requires support from local governments to be able to participate effectively (Cuthill and Fien, 2005:63).

1.3 Objectives of the research

This research has been conducted to explore the role of community participation in UPIH to determine the elements, especially the support from local government capacity, that have the effects on community participation and the outcomes of the project and to identify from those elements what contributes to the good outcome of UPIH. The main objectives of this study are as follows:

- To review the current context of community participation in Vietnam.
- To investigate the process of community participation in UPIH within the study areas,
 - To understand how community participation in UPIH takes place and how local government capacity influences community participation.
 - To identify the elements that contribute to good outcomes of UPIH.
- To identify the transcending trends of community participation in relationship to local government capacity and outcomes in UPIH in the study areas.
- To propose and recommend the most appropriate community participation approach for UPIH with an orientation to successful project outcomes leading to sustainable performance in Vietnam.

1.4 Research problem and questions

This research has been conducted to address the following main research question.

How does community participation affect the outcomes of infrastructure and housings upgrading projects in cities of Vietnam and to what extent does government capacity serve as a precondition to reach high quality community participation?

Answering this question will help us to understand the relationship between community participation and the outcomes of the urban upgrading projects under the influence of local government capacity in Vietnam. It is expected that local government capacity will have influence on the community participation and this in turn will have an effect on the outcomes. This research question will be answered by responding to the four defined research sub-questions. These sub-questions are as follows:

1. In what Vietnamese context, especially regarding PAR, is community participation developed?
2. What are the characteristics of community participation in UPIH in 4 selected cities of Vietnam?
3. What is the local government capacity in 4 selected cities and how is it related to the community participation in UPIH?
4. What is the outcome of the UPIH in 4 selected cities with respect to community participation?
5. What are the best ways to engage and support community participation in UPIH that have a potential to improve and produce a good outcome of the project in the case study areas, which can be disseminated and replicated in other similar cases?

1.5 Thesis structure

The thesis consists of 10 chapters and the brief outline of the chapters is presented as follows.

Chapter 1 is an overview of the research including a brief justification for why this research is important especially in the Vietnamese context. The objectives of the

research have been presented. The research problem statement and questions are conveyed and an introduction to the overall structure of the thesis is also presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2 provides the literature review of local government capacity and community participation. It includes related concepts consisting of outcomes and the relationship between community participation and outcomes, which also describe the process of how to achieve the objectives of the research.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology and the approach used in the research. For this research, a qualitative multiple case study design was conducted.

Chapter 4 presents an overview of the case study areas starting with the overview of the administrative structure in Vietnam. It followed by the investment procedures for housing and infrastructure in Vietnam. General information on the public administrative reform and community participation in Vietnam are presented together. There is an overview of the location, population and a brief description of the community participation project in the following four cities Vinh, Viet Tri, Nam Dinh and Can Tho.

Chapter 5, chapter 6, chapter 7 and chapter 8 describe the findings and analysis of the research in Viet Tri, Vinh, Nam Dinh and Can Tho respectively. A comprehensive picture of community participation within the project has been constructed in relationship to the local government capacity and the outcomes of the project. These chapters have been formulated to make a major contribution to answering the research questions.

Chapter 9 presents the patterns of community participation and provides multiple-case comparisons. This chapter focuses on the analysis of four cases in the four cities with the objective of finding relationships between aspects of local government capacity, community participation and outcomes within each case, based on the previous chapters. Moreover, this chapter reveals patterns that go beyond four single cases, and explicitly shows how strong the patterns are and discloses case transcending patterns.

Chapter 10 provides the overall conclusion of this research, the research contribution, the scientific value and recommendations for projects within the practical context of Vietnam. Discussions examine the most feasible approaches for community

participation for housing and urban infrastructure upgrading projects in developing countries like Vietnam. This chapter also discusses the identified areas for future research.

Chapter 2. Literature review

2.1 Introduction

During the last decades, the concept of ‘participation’ has been widely used as part of the development discourse. Within this discourse, the concept refers to the participation of citizens in the social arena, in the ‘community’ or in development projects (Gaventa and Valderrama, 1999). Community, residents and citizens are often used as interchangeable words that mean the involvement of people other than public officials and professionals in the governmental domain. In the area of neighborhood planning and upgrading, neighborhood improvement and renewal have received considerable attention and funding in many countries (Checkoway, 1985; Susskind & Elliott, 1983). Community participation has played an important role in many revitalization programs (see Churchman, 1987, for an extensive review).

Cavaye (1999:1) argues that the “government needs to develop a multiple response to the changing situation of community” and Cuthill and Fien (2005:63) also argue that the “community requires support from local governments to be able to participate effectively”. The implementation of participatory processes will not facilitate effective collaboration unless new and fundamentally different ways of thinking and working by governments have been developed (Cuthill and Fien, 2005). Governments need skills and resources to make community participation work. There are important reasons for encouraging the participation of the community sector. One reason is that, through community participation the government can gain more insights into local situations and needs and thus can plan and implement relevant programs and projects. Another reason is that people are more likely to support government efforts if they are actively involved in the development process.

This chapter enables the researcher to identify the gaps in the research which relates community participation projects. Through a literature review, the research framework was formed. Following this introduction, the discussion of local government capacity and community participation are presented in Section 2.2 and Section 2.3. Section 2.4 outlines the Outcomes with its criteria. Section 2.5 provides the detailed discussion of community participation in relationship to local government capacity and its outcome. Finally, Section 2.6 provides the conclusion to this chapter.

2.2 Local government capacity

During the last decades, there has been a wave of local government reform in many countries throughout the world following economic-political changes and economic policy reconstruction (Wallis and Dollery, 2002). Before discussing the local government capacity, the term ‘government’ should be defined as is widely used. According to Finer (1970: 3-4), ‘government’ is defined as:

- ‘the activity or process of governing’ or ‘governance’
- ‘a condition of ordered rule’,
- ‘those people charged with the duty of governing’ or ‘governors’ and
- ‘the manner, method or system by which a particular society is governed’

A government is an organization with formal goals and tasks, and clear lines of responsibility and accountability, and it is necessary that it is hierarchical. Governments as organizations have well-institutionalized structures (Edelenbos and Teisman, 2008). According to Kooiman (1993) in recent years, the new patterns of interaction between government and society can be observed in areas such as welfare, environmental protection, education and physical planning. It is called governance. These new patterns are aimed at discovering other ways of coping with new problems or of creating new possibilities for governing.

Governance can be simply described as the ‘directed influence of the societal processes’ (Klijn and Koppenjan 2000:136). Rhodes (1996) stipulates that governance refers to self-organizing, inter-organizational networks and these networks serve as governing structures for authoritatively allocating resources and exercising control and co-ordination. Edelenbos (2008) mentioned in his work that governance refers much more to a process of working and to joint efforts between different organizations. Because of the complex relationships between these organizations, governance is a less formal approach to steering the public domain. Government authority offers room for a more dynamic interaction based on interdependence (Alexander, 2001; Castells, 2000). Besides, Fukuyama (2013) argues that governance is a government’s ability to make and enforce rules and to deliver services, regardless of whether that government is democratic or not. Rhodes (1996) has explained the concept of ‘governance’ which is widely used. In situations where governments use horizontal ways of steering and

operate in a multi-actor situation, the term Governance is most often used (Rhodes, 1997; Pierre and Peters, 2000). It can be explained as the situation where governments directly influence the societal processes (Kickert et al, 1997) and cooperate horizontally in a multi-stakeholders situation. These stakeholders have different and sometimes conflicting objectives and interests. (Kickert et al, 1997). “The development of ideas and theories on governance has long been based on an image of government as standing above society and being able to ‘steer’ it” (Kickert et al, 1997:3). According to Rhodes (1996), governance has not currently been treated as a synonym for government. Rather governance implies a change in the meaning of government, referring to a new process of governing; a changed condition of order rule; the new method by which society is governed (Rhodes, 1996). He also mentions that ‘governance’ can be used as ‘corporate governance’ or as ‘good governance’.

Along with the Edelenbos’ arguments on governance, Peters and Pierre (1998, 225) have provided the concept of governance based on the elements that are for steering society through a less direct means. They mention that in the governance arguments the state or government does not become utterly important. The government organizations remain a part of the network and they are dependent on the other actors to the same extent that those actors are dependent on the government. It loses the capacity for direct control and replaces it with a capacity for influence. They argue that these changes would, in turn, have implications for the meaning of democracy or they would increasingly involve private and public actors in the policy and administration. It shows that the community participation element already exists in the governance concept. In this thesis, it focuses on government capacity to create the governance or specifically, it focuses on the government capacity to create foundations for the involvement of public actors in policy and administration. The term government capacity or local government capacity is widely used, but does it have a distinct meaning?

According to Morgan (2006), Capacity is about empowerment and identity, properties that allow an organization or system to survive, to grow, diversify and become more complex. To evolve in such a way, it is a system that needs power, control and space. Capacity is about the creation of public value. All countries, regardless of their level of development, have many examples of effective capacity that subverts the public

interest. Thoughts regarding capacity have been influenced by ideas to do with participation, public sector reform, civil society and empowerment. (Eade, 1997).

According to Christensen and Gazley (2008: 266), “capacity is defined sometimes as a purely internal organizational quality, comprising human and capital resources, and other times as a concept with both internal and external dimensions” (examples include; networks of supportive relationships, external financial support, political support and sources of training) (Brinkerhoff, 2005; Forbes and Lynn, 2006). Dimensions of capacity are both quantitative and qualitative, and have tangible and intangible dimensions, for example not only the number of staff but their specialized skills as well as the strength or quality of organizational leadership (Glickman and Servon, 1998; Chaskin, 2001; Eisinger, 2002; Sowa et al., 2004). Sowa et al. (2004) suggests that a concept comprising of both ‘structures’ and ‘processes’ is the best view of capacity. In its most simple terms, capacity represents an organization’s ‘ability to perform work’ (Yu-Lee, 2002: 1).

Brinkerhoff and Morgan (2010:3) mention the concept of capacity, based on the degree that an organization or a network of organizations develop and integrates five capabilities. These five capabilities include:

- (1) *The capability to commit and engage.* Actors are able to: mobilize resources (financial, human and organizational); create space and autonomy for independent action; motivate unwilling or unresponsive partners; plan, decide, and engage collectively to exercise their other capabilities.
- (2) *The capability to carry out technical, service delivery, and logistical tasks.* Actors are able to: produce acceptable levels of performance; generate substantive outputs and outcomes; sustain production over time; and add value for their clients, beneficiaries, citizens, etc.
- (3) *The capability to relate and attract support.* Actors can: establish and manage linkages, alliances, and/or partnerships with others to leverage resources and actions; build legitimacy in the eyes of key stakeholders; deal effectively with competition, politics, and power differentials.
- (4) *The capability to adapt and self-renew.* Actors are able to: adapt and modify plans and operations based on monitoring progress and outcomes; proactively

anticipate change and new challenges; learn by doing; cope with changing contexts and develop resilience.

(5) *The capability to balance diversity and coherence.* Actors can: develop shared short- and long-term strategies and visions; balance control, flexibility, and consistency; integrate and harmonize plans and actions in complex, multi-actor settings; and cope with cycles of stability and change.

The concept of local government capacity is a meaningful one (Gargan, 1981; Foster-Fishman et al, 2001) as it relates to the emergent combination of attributes that enables a governance system to create development value (Morgan, 2006).

In the public sector, government capacity has been broadly defined as ‘government’s ability to marshal, develop, direct and control its financial, human, physical and information resources’ (Ingraham et al., 2003:15). According to Bowman and Kearney (2010), government capacity refers to a government’s ability to respond effectively to change, make decisions efficiently and responsibly, and manage conflict. They mentioned that much of the research on government capacity has focused on the administration dimension of government operations, evaluating items such as financial management, information technology, human resources and infrastructure planning. But there are important factors that should be considered which makes one government more capable than another that is the quality of its leadership. (Bowman and Kearney, 2010:4)

In general, government capacity is defined as the capability of the political and administrative system to perform the management and administration of financial, human, information resources to effectively administer infrastructure and supplying public goods to meet the local community expectations and solve problems (Brusis, 2003; Grindle, 1996). Looking in more detail at the nature of government capacity, we will look at its foundation components or elements such as financial resources, human resources, structure, and information (Foster-Fishman et al. 2001). Christensen and Gazley (2008) also mention that capacity is characterized as a function of (1) organizational infrastructure, (2) human resources, (3) financial resources and management systems and (4) political characteristics of the external environment.

According to Fukuyama (2013), the commonly used measure of governmental capacity is extractive capacity. He focuses on the resource extraction that enables the

government to operate in other domains. He also recognized that beyond the extraction, another critical measure of capacity is the level of education and professionalization of government officials. A higher level of education and professionalization of government officials have positive effects on the goals, objectives, and priorities of the government. An example of this are the central banks in the developing countries that were well-prepared against the debt crises in the early 21st century, they had a significantly high degree of professionals in their staffing. Another example comes from the reform in the United States during the Progressive Era in which a key aspect was the replacement of incompetent political patronage appointees with university-trained agronomists, engineers, and economists. It shows that human recruitment and administration management are very important factors.

Local government management capacity is determined by capability in three general areas: Policy Management, Resource Management and Program Management (Burgess, 1975; Gargan, 1981).

- Policy Management: "...to perform on an integrated, functional cross-cutting basis the needs assessment, goal setting, and evaluation functions of management; to establish priorities and to mobilize and allocate resources; to guide relations with the community; and to initiate and guide the planning, development, and implementation of policies, strategies, and programs that are related to sustaining or improving the physical, socioeconomic, or political conditions that have a bearing on the quality of life in a community." (Burgess, 1975: 707)
- Resource Management: "...to carry out the administrative and organizational support functions and their management which together constitute an organization's basic capabilities and bottom line asset...It encompasses personnel administration; property management; information management; and financial management.." (Burgess, 1975: 707)
- Program Management: "...to perform the administrative functions and tactical requirements of executing policy by undertaking programs, activities, or services... It provides leadership for the specific functional units of government that provide public service..." (Gargan, 1981: 650)

The local government capacity has the following criteria (Burgess, 1975; Gargan, 1981; Foster-Fishman, et al., 2001)

- **Policy Management**

Policy management starts with need assessment and goal setting in which the community and social values have to be clarified and articulated. Following this, priorities need to be established. In this step, the alternatives and priorities should be developed. Based on the needs, goals and priorities, the desired state or vision that the project is trying to achieve should be formed.

- **Resources Management**

In the management of resources, it is important to start with personnel administration. In this process, Staff and member roles, responsibilities; labour relations; employee recruitment standards need to be clearly clarified. Along with the personnel administration, property management should be carried out. This deals with the issues of facilities, equipment, materials and real property. The financial management issue is crucial in resources management. It includes mobilization of financial resources; allocation of financial resources and forecasting revenue. In the present era of information technology, information is very important. Information management plays an important role in resources management. Information management includes activities dealing with manual and computer-based record keeping systems. It helps the effective communication between actors, and it guarantees a response to feedback. Moreover, information management also works with a monitoring system and adapts to evaluation information.

- **Program Management**

Program management starts with an administrative function. The administrative issues include internal operating procedures; work organizational structure; planning and scheduling; work standards and evaluation measures. There is an important factor of program management that is effective leadership. It is the skill for conflict resolution and communication and the ability to develop positive internal and external relations.

Synthesizing the scholars' concept of (local) government capacity, we define it with two key dimensions that have been focused upon by most of the authors: resources management and administration management (cf. Burgess, 1975; Gargan, 1981;

Foster-Fishman, et al., 2001). Resources management has to do with the recruitment and selection of the right people to do the job; to define their roles, responsibilities and the mobilization and allocation of financial and informational resources to implement the work (Foster-Fishman et al, 2001). Sufficient human and financial resources have to be created for the development and implementation of participatory projects. There must be a communication and learning orientation as participatory projects demand coordination between government and the community, and the receptive and learning attitude to find the right approach suitable for the specific context of participation (Edelenbos, 2005).

Administration management is about the ability to set goals and priorities: it is about clarifying and articulating public and community values and goals and priority setting thereof. It also deals with the creation of well-operating organizational structures and operating procedures. Moreover, it is about effective leadership: the ability to develop well-functioning internal and external relations (Foster-Fishman et al, 2001). For participatory projects, it is important that community values and goals are explored and attuned to the priorities of the government. In this connective leadership becomes important; people who have the ability to align different values and interests and to find common ground. Government organization also has to be in place in order to give feedback on the results derived from participatory projects to the governmental organization (Edelenbos, 2005). Government capacity occurs when various parts of the community collaborate to identify its problems and needs, reach working consensus on goals and priorities, agree on ways and means to implement those goals, and collaborate effectively (Eng, 1994). Leadership in local government has been defined as ‘the ability to overcome resistance to particular courses of action, notably to cause others to agree to something they were not necessarily initially predisposed to’ (Leach and Wilson, 2000: 49). This leadership includes the community leadership role which, as Helen Sullivan has argued, is the ‘formalization of local government’s enabling role, as an expression of citizen ‘voice’ and as an expedient device’ (Sullivan, 2007:145). Community leadership is simply defined as; ‘the pursuit of community well-being through strategic interventions that would not otherwise have happened’ (Sullivan and Sweeting, 2005: 22).

As highlighted in the literature above, the local government capacity refers to the capability of the administrative system to perform the administration and management

of financial, human and information resources through policy and organizational structure to serve people and supply public goods, solve problems and meet the local community expectations. In order to answer the research question and following Cuthill and Fien (2005:63) argument that the; “community requires support from local governments to be able to participate effectively”, the issue of community participation will be discussed in the next section.

2.3 Community participation

The term community participation embraces many forms of citizen action for community problem solving, including self-help and social support groups (Bracht and Tsouros, 1990: 200). Bracht also listed other terms similar to community participation that are commonly used, like citizen participation, citizen involvement, community involvement, community partnership/collaboration (Butterfoss, 2006).

The term *community* is commonly used in everyday life. Community can be groups with shared needs living in a “certain geographical area” (Bichmann and Shrestha, 1989: 468). However, heterogeneous groups and individuals can form a community and collectively take action to attain shared and specific goals (Mattessich and Monsey 1992: 28). Furthermore, individuals may belong to multiple communities at the same time, and the core meaning of community is that something is “shared” (LaBonte, 2005: 84).

A definition of community can be categorized in terms of ‘place-centered’ features such as geographical terms, or ‘people-centered’ characteristics that may be used to describe a group of people who share the same basic interests (Rifkin et al., 1988: 933; Kelly, 2001: 6-7). A place-centered community is a community that is defined in geographic terms and refers to a group of people living in the same place or one locality by “sharing the same basic values and organization” (Rifkin et al., 1988: 933). A people-centered community refers to a group of people who have “a common cause, a common interest or common ideas” (Kelly, 2001: 6). However, the interest of such a group of people can change over time and therefore, community members can also change over time (Rifkin et al., 1988: 933). In urban related issues, people’s attachments to place are often intertwined with their sense of community (Pretty et al., 2003). The sense of community are feelings of membership or belongingness to a group, including an emotional connection based on a shared history, as well as shared

interests or concerns (Perkins and Long, 2002). Both sense of community and place attachment manifest themselves behaviorally in participation (Manzo and Perkins, 2006).

Nelson and Wright (1995) emphasize the participation process as a transformative tool for social change. Paul (1987) mentioned that participation is the involvement of people with significant control over the decisions concerning the organization to which they belong. He argues that some development scholars and practitioners regard participation as an end in itself, whereas others see it as a means to achieve other goals. Many of them view participation as an instrument to enhance the efficiency of projects or as the co-production of services. In addition, the involvement of community members is intended to produce better decisions, and thus more efficiently benefit the rest of society (Beierle, 1999; Thomas, 1995). According to Bracht and Tsouros (1990: 201), community participation “refers to the social process of taking part (voluntarily) in either formal or informal activities, programmes and/or discussions to bring about a planned change or improvement in community life, services and/or resources”. Conning and Kevane (2002) note that in community involvement projects, it tends to be more effective if the communities have egalitarian preferences and it may pose a challenge with heterogeneous communities. Although participation can occur at many levels, a key objective is the incorporation of local knowledge into the project’s decision making process (Mansuri and Rao, 2004). It is argued that incorporating local knowledge in the project can improve targeting and guarantee a higher-quality monitoring of the program implementation (Chambers, 2014; Ostrom et al., 1994; Uphoff, 1986; Narayan, 1998). Such advantages are only likely to be realized when there are institutions and mechanisms to ensure accountability (Mansuri and Rao, 2004).

While governments often cherish their perceived independence and authority, the reality in Western Europe, but also outside this geographical area, is that they are becoming increasingly aware that they are not capable of developing and implementing policies without the support from and the contributions of others (Koppenjan and Klijn, 2004). Moreover, according to Samuel (1986: 46), “... community participation may be thought of as an instrument of empowerment. According to this view, the development should lead to an equitable sharing of power

and to a higher level of people's, in particular the weaker groups', political awareness and strengths".

According to Choguill, it is understood that individual citizen participation in decision-making would bring little benefit for the community as a whole. Thus, the term *community participation* is suggested instead of *citizen participation*, considering individuals as members and representatives of a fully organized community. (Choguill, 1996)

Irvin and Stansbury (2004) outline the advantages and disadvantages of citizen participation as follows (see Table 1 and Table 2)

Table 1. Advantages of community participation in government decision making

	Advantages to community participation	Advantages to government
Decision process	Education (learn from and inform government representatives) Persuade and enlighten government Gain skills for activist members	Education (learn from and inform citizens) Persuade citizens; build trust and ally anxiety or hostility Build strategic alliances Gain legitimacy of decisions
Outcomes	Break gridlock; achieve outcomes Gain some control over policy process Better policy and implementation decisions	Break gridlock; achieve outcomes Avoid litigation costs Better policy and implementation decisions

Source: Irvin and Stansbury (2004: 56).

As shown above community participation has advantages for both the community and the government in the process of making decisions as well as the outcomes of the process. The main advantages in the decision process is mutual education, a better understanding between the two main actors as well as an increasing trust and building connections between them. The advantages do not only result in the process but also in the outcomes as it helps to achieve the goals and objectives, reduce the deadlock and moreover, it yields better policies and better implementation decisions for projects.

Table 2. Disadvantages of community participation in government decision making

	Disadvantages to community participation	Disadvantages to government
Decision process	Time consuming (even dull) Pointless if decision is ignored	Time consuming Costly May backfire, creating more hostility towards government
Outcomes	Worse policy decision if heavily influenced by opposing interest groups	Loss of decision-making control Possibility of bad decision that is politically impossible to ignore Less budget for implementation of actual project

Source: Irvin and Stansbury (2004: 58).

There are some disadvantages for implementation of community participation in government decision making. The issues that give the most disadvantages in the decision process with community participation are time consuming. It can create problems for the government if there is no budget for community participation or it is pointless if the decisions made by the community are ignored. The outcomes could also face disadvantages especially a bad decision that has been heavily influenced by opposing interest groups or there being a shortage of budget for implementation which has been caused by a costly budget for community participation. According to many researchers, the community-based approach may face some limitations which include: (i) difficulties in creating mutual trust between communities and stakeholders; (ii) difficulties to integrate the community in the preparation and management of the project (Lizarralde and Massyn, 2008); (iii) reluctance on the part of the key-stakeholders especially governments to give substantial power to communities (Ishmail, 2005) and (iv) in decision making, the reduction of participation to sweat equity instead of active participation (Davidson et al., 2007).

In many projects, the advantages of community participation have excessively been paid attention to, so that people believe that it is the only acceptable method towards sustainable development (UNDRO, 1982; CIDA, 1999). Despite the limitations of recent discussions about the disadvantages and negative aspects of community participation, it is suggested that this approach needs to be carefully considered and should not be overestimated in developing countries (Emmett, 2000)

In reality, the performance of community-based projects depends on a complex interaction of participants, interests, objectives, resources and processes that go beyond the benefits of the participation of the beneficiaries. This does not mean that the participation of beneficiaries is not positive, in fact, it is crucial (Lizarralde and Massyn, 2008). Increased community participation and improved local government capacity will lead to better outcomes of the projects. As a properly structured interaction and deliberation process among stakeholders can help to create more effective and innovative solutions to complex public issues (Fung and Wright, 2003; Bogason and Musso, 2006; Wagenaar, 2007). Changes and reforms will help to reduce the constraints of participation and have impacts on the outcomes. Agency actions (or inactions) have a significant impact on both Process and Outcome success (Chess and Purcell, 1999). Agencies contribute to success, according to researchers, by providing technical assistance (Elder, 1982; Lynn, 1987), initiating approaches to engage in and improve dialogue with neighborhood people (Torgerson, 1986), engaging liaisons to encourage participation (Rosener, 1981), making a commitment to follow recommendations (Rosener, 1981), and providing neutral, competent facilitation (Beltsen, 1995), among others.

In this study, we follow the line of thought in defining community participation as *the formal or informal activities voluntarily undertaken by organized individuals who share interests and goals in programmes to bring about a planned change or improvement in community life and services* (c.f. Bracht and Tsouros, 1990).

We develop community participation in two dimensions of depth and width of participation, following the work of Berry et al. (1993) who departs from the concept of strong participation. Inspired by Dahl's "precondition for a polyarchy", Berry, et al. (1993, 55) have formulated two dimensions of participation that are important for a system of strong participation. These are the width and depth of participation, which together determine the strength of participation in the policy process.

1. Width of participation

Several authors have studied the characteristics and motivation of those who actively engage in participatory processes. In the literature on participation, there is much debate on the inclusion and exclusion to participatory processes (Young, 2000; Edelenbos, 2005). By the width of participation, the number and variety in background

constitutes a useful analytical tool (Edelenbos, 2000). There is a variety of ladders of participation developed by different scholars and organizations. The first and most well-known is Arnstein's ladder of participation with eight rungs related to the distribution of power. Based on that, Choguill developed a participation ladder for developing countries. Other scholars like Edelenbos and Monnikhof (2001) also proposed ladders for participation. Alternative terms have also been suggested by other scholars for different rungs of the ladder (e.g. Biggs, 1989; Pretty, 1995a, b; Farrington, 1998; Goetz and Gaventa, 2001; Lawrence, 2006). The first two rungs in Arnstein's and Choguill's ladder represent the level of non-participation. In all the five models of participation ladder, the lowest level of participation is identified as Inform or Informing. The ladders can be divided from 3 to 5 and 6 rungs to the highest level of participation of Co-decide (Citizen control/ Empower/ Participate).

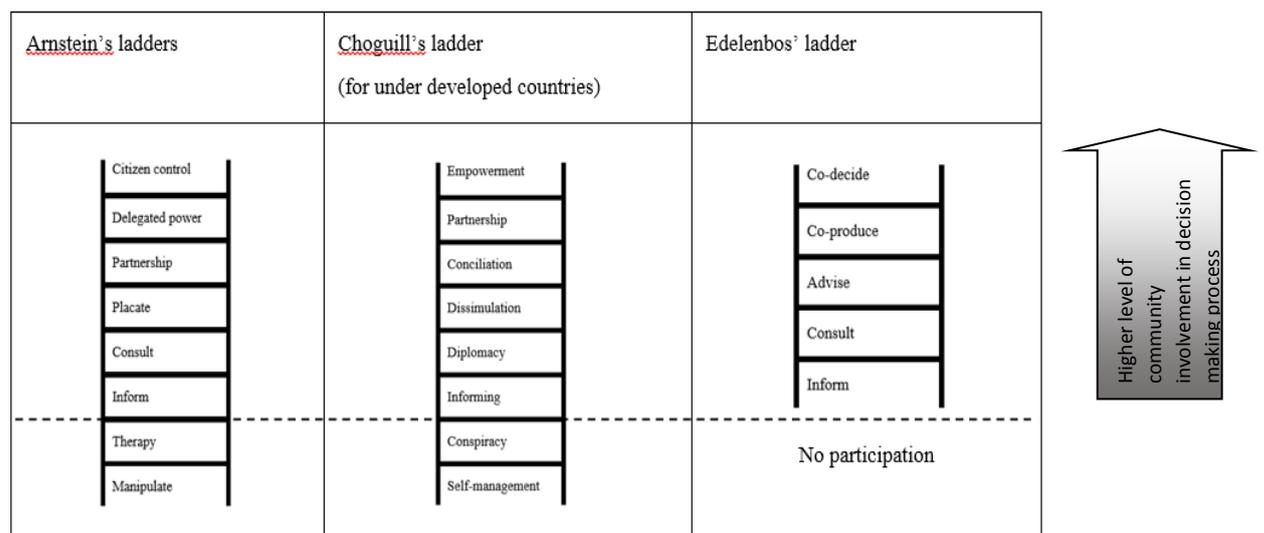


Figure 2 : Participation ladders

In this paper, the participation ladder outlined below is used as it focuses on dimensions which are the most relevant to the cases being investigated (Edelenbos 2000, 43–44):

- Informing:** To a large degree, politicians and administration determine the agenda for decision making and inform those involved. They will not use the opportunity to invite interested actors to have input in policy development. This is the lowest level of depth of participation

- **Consulting:** To a large degree, politicians and administration determine the agenda but regard those involved as a useful discussion partner in the development of policy. Politicians do not, however, commit to the results of these discussions.
- **Advising:** In principle politicians and administration determine the agenda but give those involved the opportunity to raise problems and formulate solutions. These involved actors play a full-fledged role in the development of policy. Politicians are committed to the results in principle but may deviate (if accounted for) from them in the final decision making.
- **Coproducing:** Together politicians, administration, and those involved determine a problem-solving agenda in which they search for solutions together. Politicians are committed to these solutions with regard to the final decision making, after having tested this outcome in terms of prior conditions.
- **Co-deciding:** Politicians and administration leave the development and decision making of policy to those involved, and the civil service provides an advising role. Politicians simply accept the outcomes. The results of the process have an immediate binding force. This is the highest level of depth of participation.

Thus, we see the community participation from concept provided by Bracht and Tsouros (1990) as the voluntary activities which are undertaken by organized individuals who share interests and goals in program and bring about a planned change or improvement in community life and service. The community participation has two dimensions which are the width and the depth of participation. Before discussing the relationship between community participation and outcomes influenced by local government capacity, the outcomes and its characteristics will be discussed in the next section.

2.4 Outcomes

The outcomes of the problem solving process do not only “reflect the goals of parties at the outset of the process” (Koppejan and Klijn, 2004: 61). Plantz et al. (1997) argue that outcomes are usually benefits or changes in the participants’ knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, behavior, condition or status. For programs or projects, “most often, an

outcome represents a change for the better” (Plantz, 1997: 17). Buckmaster (1999: 188) mentions that “outcomes are the intended effects of services on people”.

When assessing the project, the outputs and outcomes of the project are often being considered. There are many differences between outcomes and outputs of the project. In economics, output is the amount of energy, work, goods or services produced by a machine, factory, company or an individual in a period. It is also the desired result from a project. The Project Management Institute’s Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMI, 2000) defines project output as “any measurable, tangible, verifiable result or item that must be produced to complete a project or part of a project” (PMI, 2000: 200). The output of an urban project is not only the tangible commodities achieved by the construction process but it also includes services provided by that project. However, according to Fletcher and Snee (1985:74), the measurement of output may not be 'perfect' in the sense that there may be differences in the *quality* of the products that are produced. They argue that the measurement of output of the service is always difficult, often ambiguous and, sometimes, an impossible task.

In that situation, many scholars choose outcomes that can be measured. According to PMI (2000), the project outcomes are either tangible or intangible (Nogeste & Walker, 2005). According to Nogeste and Walker (2005), the tangible outcomes can be operationalized and can be measured and monitored whereas the intangible outcomes can be operationalized on a high to low perception scale with an agreed measure of success or failure. Often, intangible outcomes are leading rather than lagging indicators and provide the seeds for future success with other projects (Nogeste & Walker, 2005: 57)

From those definitions, outcomes have been mentioned as the benefits or changes for individuals or communities after participating in the program(s) (UWA, 1995) and it has long-term effects.

There have been many discussions in the literature as to how to measure the outcomes of complex decision-making processes. (Agranoff & McGuire, 2004; Kickert et al., 1997; Mandell, 2001; Meier & O’Toole, 2007). The main conclusion is that measuring the outcomes is a difficult task. (Edelenbos et al., 2011). Measuring outcomes is also problematic because decision-making processes in governance networks are lengthy,

and the goals of actors – for many reasons, including environmental changes – can change over time. (Koppenjan and Klijn, 2004; Edelenbos et al., 2010). According to Klijn, et al. (2010: 201), measuring outcomes is difficult for several reasons:

- Using forecasted goals are difficult because these are usually formulated indistinctly especially in cases of complex decision making processes
- Actors involved in the process have their own goals, and that their goals should be taken as the measurement makes them difficult to decide.
- Actors' goals may change if the project is implemented over a long period. If it is a positive change, it will be considered as learning. If it is a negative change, it will be considered as a goal displacement, (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004).
- Using respondent judgment as the proxy for measuring objective outcomes, especially in surveys, is difficult.

There is now a large amount of empirical literature on the relationship between a variety of governance indicators and development outcomes. The majority of these studies show that improved governance leads to better development outcomes (Rajkumar and Swaroop, 2008). Outcomes assessment is the primary evaluative portion of the strategic management of a program or institution. An outcome is the result of a particular activity or program (Hollenbeck et al, 1999). Strategic management is a process designed to achieve the results (or outcomes) defined in mission, goals and objectives statements. (Daum et al, 2001)

Assessment of the outcome, in combination with process criteria and concern for external effects, is used in order to determine the success or failure of policy processes. (see Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). And the outcome of the project refers to the result of the project as success (or failure) and its impacts to the neighborhood.

The issue of whether there is a link between outcomes and community participation in development projects has been raised. There are strong arguments that support the cause-effect relationship between participation and project performance/outcomes. (See Briscoe and Ferranti 1988; Korten and Siy 1988; Isham et. al 1995; Mansuri and Rao 2004, 2011). It is argued by many practitioners and scholars that participation by the intended beneficiaries improves a projects performance/outcomes. An examination of the literature on community participation suggests it leads to development projects

that are more responsive to the needs of the people, more responsive government and better delivery of public goods and services, better maintained community assets, and a more informed and involved citizenry. (Mansuri and Rao, 2003). An obvious aspect highlighted in these benefits is the role of participation as a means of providing and accessing information. When a community participates, it both provides information about its preferences, and gains information that may influence its optimal choice (Khwaja, 2004). Both types of information lead to increased welfare for the community and better development projects. Isham et al. (1995: 196) recognized that “increasing participation directly causes better project outcomes”. However, Khwaja (2004) also states that community participation is not a cure-all measure for development projects. He also provided evidence that community participation in decisions that require community investment should improve outcomes, but worsen them for community participation with decisions that require greater investment by the external agency. It shows the importance of external foundation impacts on the community participation that has influenced project outcomes.

In addition to that, Sara and Katz (1997), find that in developing countries, projects constructed without community supervision or management tended to be poorly constructed by private contractors which is similar to Khwaja’s (2001) findings that community fare worse on technical decisions

According to Koppenjan and Klijn (2004), the outcomes do not only result at the end of the process, but also during the process. Based on the works of many scholars (Klijn et al., 2008), the outcomes in this study have been chosen with a variety of items that measure both content and process outcomes. According to Klijn et al. (2010), content outcomes refer to what has been achieved in the process and process outcomes focus on the quality of the process itself.

Content outcomes are characterized by their (a) innovative character, that is, the innovativeness of the project’s results (Nooteboom, 2002); (b) recognizable contribution, that is, the impact of involvement of the stakeholders on decision making (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004), (c) problem-solving capacity, that is, the extent to which the solutions address the problem (Innes & Booher, 2003; Schön & Rein, 1994), and (d) results robustness over the future (Teisman, et al., 2009).

Process outcomes include (a) support management, that is, the satisfaction over actors involvement in the project (Meier & O'Toole, 2001) and the satisfaction of stakeholders with the results (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004); (b) conflict resolution, that is, prohibition and/or solution of conflicts (Süsskind & Cruikshank, 1987) and the extent to which the process stagnates or suffers deadlocks (Van Eeten, 1999); and (c) productive use of differences in perspectives, that is, the reconciliation of differences in frames and perspectives (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004).

In the study four indicators will be used to measure the outcomes. These indicators were based on the indicators that were used in the research done by Edelenbos, et al., (2009, 2011), which have been divided into two groups:

a. Content Outcomes

1. Degree of innovation

Innovation has a long tradition of research and has been studied in many different fields. The term 'innovation' "is notoriously ambiguous and lacks either a single definition or measure" (Adams et al., 2006: 22).

Within the literature it conceptualizes innovation in a variety of ways, as a process, and outcome or both (Damanpour and Gopalakrishnan, 1998; Damanpour et al., 1989; Knight, 1967; Rogers, 1995; Thompson, 1965; Wolfe, 1994). However, most of the definitions of innovation share the idea that innovation implies the adoption of a new idea or behavior (Jiménez-Jiménez and Sanz-Valle, 2011). Quintane, et al. (2011) mentions 'innovation' as an outcome in his work that innovation is considered in terms of new ideas (Gupta et al., 2007; Schulze and Hoegl, 2008; West and Farr, 1990), combinations (Obstfeld, 2005), solutions (Dosi, 1988; Myers and Marquis, 1969) or processes, products and procedures (Greve and Taylor, 2000; Myers and Marquis, 1969; West and Farr, 1990) .

Literature also distinguishes different types of innovation. The classification most extended and accepted is the one Damanpour (1991) proposes. He distinguishes between technical and administrative innovations. Whereas technical innovations include a new process and new products or services, administrative innovations refer to new procedures, organizational forms and policies (Evan, 1966; Normann, 1971;

Utterback and Abernathy, 1975; Hage, 1980; Dewar and Dutton, 1986; Tushman and Nadler, 1986).

There are many definitions about innovation as an outcome. The innovative outcome (i.e. innovation) is something new (Greve and Taylor, 2000; Gupta et al., 2007; Obstfeld, 2005; West and Farr, 1990). Marcus (1988, p. 1) gave a definition of innovations as; “ideas, formulas, or programs that the individuals involved perceive as new”. However, an innovation can be new to a specific context but not to the rest of the world. In that case, Van de Ven (1986, p. 2) proposes that “as long as the idea is perceived as new to the people involved, it is an ‘innovation’, even though it may appear to others to be an imitation or something that exists elsewhere”.

2. Effectiveness solutions

Effectiveness solution is the problem-solving quality of the result, the extent to which respondents through the solutions have really addressed the problems in that area (Innes and Booher, 2003). Problem solving is “any goal-directed sequence of cognitive operations” (Anderson, 1980: 257). The concept of effectiveness follows the Etzioni’s (1964) widely accepted definition of effectiveness as the degree to which an organization realizes its goals. There are also many researchers whose works mention the concept of a goal such as Cyert and March (1965); Gross (1968); Gross (1969); Perrow (1961); Rhenman (1967); Warner (1967); Warriner (1965); and Zald, (1963). In these works, the effectiveness is defined in terms of the degree of goal-achievement. The goal approach to the study of effectiveness has been criticized by those who use the “system resource approach” (Price, 1972). Price (1972) expressed that this approach defines effectiveness in terms of the ability to exploit in the acquisition of scarce and valued resources. The greater the ability of the organization to exploit, the greater its effectiveness. (Yuchtman and Seashore, 1967: 898). The effectiveness in this dissertation is mentioned as the accuracy and completeness with which actors achieve certain goals and objectives (Frøkjær et al, 2000). It shows the level of goals and objectives of the project that have been fulfilled.

The effectiveness solution can be measured in terms of meeting the schedule (McCoy, 1986; Morris & Hough, 1987; Pinto & Slevin, 1988; Turner, 1993). The time criterion could be measured in terms of schedule over/underrun as a percentage of the initial plan (Might & Fisher, 1985). The effectiveness solution mentioned has a relationship

with the quality of the solution in which the quality can be measured in terms of conformance to functional and technical specifications (Baker et al, 1988; Morris & Hough, 1987; Turner, 1993) or the project must produce what it said it would do (PMI,1996). The effectiveness solution presented in a quality term includes anticipating all of the project requirements, having sufficient resources to meet the project needs in a timely manner, and using these resources efficiently to accomplish the right task at the right time and in the right manner (Tuman, 1986).

In order to fulfill the goals and objectives to reach the effectiveness solution, the needs and expectations of the stakeholders must be reached. So the stakeholder satisfaction is a crucial part (Baccarini, 1999). The satisfaction is based on how well the expectations of the stakeholders have been achieved (Anderson and Narus, 1990). Actor satisfaction was simply measured by looking at how many of the actors were satisfied at the end of the process (Edelenbos and Klijn, 2006).

b. Process Outcomes

1. *Support*

The management interactions include intensity interactions and a variety of interactions. Intensity of interactions, i.e. the frequency of interactions between actors (Meier and O'Toole 2001). Meier and O'Toole (2001) indicated that performance or outcome improves where actors engage in more network interaction. McGrath (1984) argues that the interaction process of the actors leads to changes which are presented in outcomes. Variety of interactions i.e. is the extent to which the actors have interacted with a diverse range of other actors (Young ,2000). Just as important as their focus on a common problem, actors maintain a relationship of mutual dependency (O'Toole, 1997). The interdependencies among actors is illustrated by the fact that a dialogue dominates the community agenda for years on end (van Eeten, 1999). According to Koppenjan and Klijn (2004), the relations of involved organizations can be affected in the process of the project and that relations can shift between the extremes of cooperation and hostility under the influence of interaction and idea exchange. This variable can be measured based on the satisfaction over actors' involvement in the project (Meier & O'Toole, 2001; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004).

2. *Progress of actions*

Progress of actions include the deadlocks prevention and conflict control. The deadlock prevention is the extent to which major stagnations have been avoided or resolved (van Eeten, 1999); the stagnations or deadlocks are caused by (1) the uncertainties, (2) imperfect (and often inaccurate) information and (3) the absence of an acceptable solution model (Narlikar, 2010). Diverging and conflicting are the result of uncertainty (van Bueren et al, 2003). According to van Bueren et al. (2003), the stagnation and deadlocks may have been caused by the divergence and conflict, and it may also lead to surprising and unexpected outcomes. Conflict control, i.e. is the way in which conflicts have been prevented and/or solved (Süsskind and Cruikshank, 1987); Conflict often exists in the participation process due to the different interests among stakeholders. Given that a certain amount of conflict is expected, an understanding of how such a conflict is resolved is important (Borys and Jemison, 1989). The impact of conflict resolution on a relationship can be productive or destructive (Assael, 1969; Deutsch, 1969). Thus, the manner in which partners resolve conflict has implications for the outcomes (Mohr and Speckman, 1994). Mohr and Spekman (1994) also mentioned that when parties engage in joint problem solving, a mutually satisfactory solution may be reached, thereby enhancing to produce beneficial outcomes. Lewicki and colleagues (1992) stated that “Conflict is manifested in many ways, which have positive and negative consequences” (Lewicki, et al., 1992: 242). This assumption appears to refer only to ultimate outcomes, a common view in the early literature that assumed that conflict was negative (Song et al., 2006). However, many researchers now conceive a conflict as multidimensional (i.e. both negative and positive) (Tjosvold and Chia 1989). Van de Vliert and colleagues (1999) stated that “conflict can be handled in either a constructive or destructive way” (Van de Vliert, et al., 1999: 475). Positive conflict consequences include, among other things, enhanced creativity, better innovation, improved personal understanding, and higher quality decisions (De Dreu 1997). Negative conflict consequences include such dysfunctional outcomes as sabotage, reduced productivity, and deterioration of relationships (Souder 1987). But according to Parry and Song (1993); Song, et al. (2006); Thieme, et al. (2003), conflict handling can lead to an innovation outcome.

2.5 The relationship between community participation and outcomes influenced by local government capacity

As mentioned above, community participation needs the support from local government to work effectively in the neighborhood development projects. Some scholars (Finsterbusch and Van Wincklin, 1989) conclude that the environment provided by government may play an important supportive role for community participation, especially the institutional environment. Reviewing the community participation projects, Cleaver (1999) and Kleemeier (2000) mentioned that the need for a responsive government apparatus may increase when community participation projects are implemented. So, according to Mansuri and Rao (2004), the key to making participation work is to create a form of downward accountability from levels of government to community and simultaneously to maintain close links between the levels of government and the community – a kind of upward commitment.

At the broadest level of participation in range and depth, the community needs the agencies and government to provide expertise and resources to enable the activities to be pursued. In this situation, they are all in a network. *Network* refers to a pattern of two or more units, in which not all the major components are encompassed within a single hierarchical array (O'Toole, 1997). A network of governmental agencies is often located in bureaucracies that are, in turn, connected with other organizations outside the lines of formal authority (Meier and O'Toole, 2003). Meier and O'Toole (2003) also argued that these complex arrangements are supported by interagency ties and intergovernmental links. Many other arrangements have emerged through negotiated, self-organizing initiatives of participants (Hjern and Porter, 1981). Therefore, government departments and local government need the skills and resources to make participation happen and work in practice (Rifkin, 1986). Some argue that local government, as the level of government closest to the people, has an important role to play in facilitating opportunities for the community to take action on local urban and infrastructure issues. Community groups will require support from local governments to be able to participate effectively (Cuthill and Fien, 2005; Edelenbos, 2005).

Participation refers to the extent to which partners engage jointly in planning and goal setting. (Mohr and Spekman, 1994). Mohr and Spekman (1994) argue that when one partner's actions influence the ability of the other to effectively compete, the need for

participation in specifying roles, responsibilities and expectations increases. Anderson, et al. (1987) and Dwyer and Oh (1988) suggest that input to decisions and goal formulation are important aspects of participation that can help to produce a good outcome. Driscoll (1978) also found that participation in decision-making is associated with satisfaction.

Seeking common ground and creating collaborative solutions between local government and local community results in better outcomes for the community (Belden et al., 2001; Cuthill and Fien, 2005). Arguably, the changes from a top-down approach to a collectively negotiated process (Cuthill, 2004; Carson and Gelber, 2001) help build trust and engenders commitment (Morse, 2010; Gaventa and Valderrama, 1999).

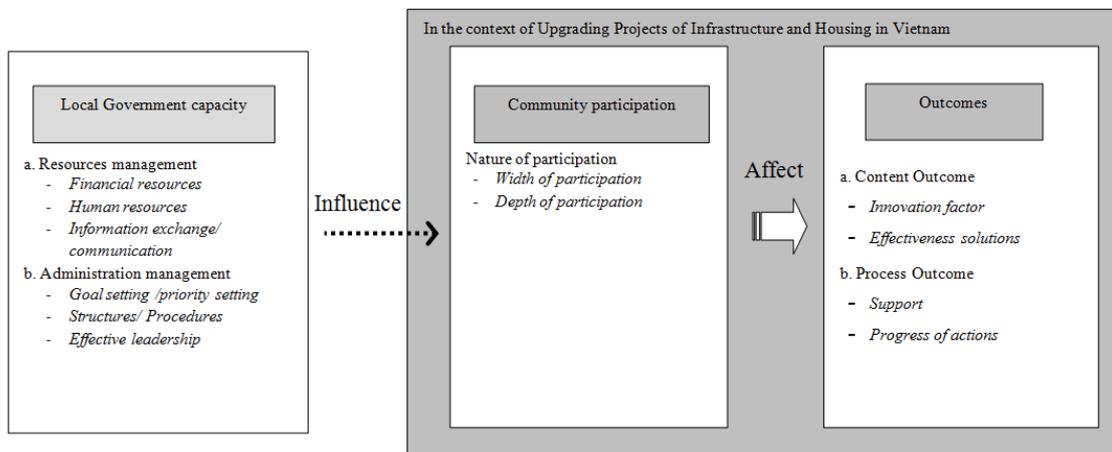


Figure 3 : Relationship between community participation and outcomes in Vietnam under the influence of local government capacity

The World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Sourcebook (Dongier et al., 2001) views community participation as one of the methods for enhancing sustainability, improving efficiency and effectiveness, making development more inclusive, empowering poor people, strengthening governance, and complementing market and public sector activities. It is believed that the potential gains from community participation in projects are large. It is expected that it helps to make the allocation of development funds more responsive, it improves the delivery of public goods and services, and strengthens the capabilities of the people within the community to undertake self-initiated development activities (Mansuri and Rao, 2004). Several studies (Finsterbusch and Van Wincklin, 1989; Wade, 1987) review

that projects with participatory elements increased the overall effectiveness of the projects. Other studies (Khwaja, 2001; Katz, et al., 1997; Isham and Kähkönen, 1999) find a strong association between participation and sustainability. It shows that community participation has impacts on the outcomes of the project. It indicates that the quality of the services provided by community participation projects is better than non-participating projects and beneficiaries are satisfied with the project outcomes. Those studies find that, community participation can create good outcomes of the projects and that though community participation projects have the potential to be better and more sustainable than top-down projects, they also appear to suffer from neglect by the government once they are completed. Unless the community receive the support from government for input and training, their ability to sustain such projects may be limited (Mansuri and Rao, 2004). Finsterbusch and Van Wincklin (1989) in a report on 52 USAID projects with participatory elements suggest that institutional reform is required before participatory projects are introduced. There is a question of whether the institutional reform has a positive impact on the overall process of community participation in projects and the outcomes. According to Mansuri and Rao (2004), this question is not easy to answer because institutional reform probably makes all types of development initiatives more effective.

Based on the theoretical reflections illustrated above on community participation and outcomes, the dissertation aims at exploring how the former influences the latter with the support from local government capacity. In particular, local government capacity will be measured by focusing on the two dimensions of resources and administration management, whereas community participation will be assessed in terms of its width and depth and outcomes will be measured in two groups namely outcome content and outcome process. After a short methodological note, this framework will then be applied to the four cases under investigation.

The independent variable of community participation will be measured with the width and depth of participation. The width of participation shows the accessibility of community to the project and also the opportunities for participation in the project. The depth of participation gives us the picture of the level of community influence on project decisions from the policy, program formulation to the implementation. These two dimensions together will determine the strength of participation in the project.

This variable is supported by the precondition variable of local government capacity. It will be assessed with two key dimensions of resource management and administration management. It covers aspects from financial, human resources and information communication to policy, priority setting, procedures and effective leadership. The government organization has to be in place to support community participation initiatives. Cleaver (1999) and Mosse (1997) mention that the projects with community participation need supports from government and external agents, especially for maintenance, as communities could have been initially successful in creating projects, but they may lack the resources and connections to sustain their efforts.

This capacity in local government lays the foundation for community participation. It influences the nature of community participation and also has an impact on the success of community participation on projects.

It is argued that “...community participation improves project outcomes in nontechnical decisions” (Khwaja, 2004). It has been suggested that for participation to lead to the expected sustainable outcomes, people need to be involved at higher levels of decision making and not just in manual work (Schouten & Moriarty, 2003). The outcomes of the project will be assessed in two dimensions, that of content outcome and process outcome. This will show the effectiveness and the satisfaction over the result of the project.

2.6 Conclusion

Changing from top-down to bottom-up development requires a long time horizon. As it is argued by many scholars, the community participation process has to be gradual. According to Bracht and Tsouros (1990), community participation is the voluntary activities which are undertaken by organized individuals who share interests and goals in the program and bring about a planned change or improvement in community life and services. The community participation has two dimensions which are the width and the depth of participation. The community participation needs the commitment by the local government in the changes of institutional environment, which has to be become more participatory, responsive and transparent. In this thesis, it is focused on the government capacity to create foundations for the involvement of community and public actors in projects. As highlighted in the discussed literature, the local

government capacity refers to the capability of the administrative system to perform the administration and management of financial, human and information resources through policy and organizational structure to serve people and supply public goods, solve problems and meet the local community expectations. Synthesizing the scholars' concept of (local) government capacity, we define it with two key dimensions that have been focused upon by most of the key authors: resources management and administration management (cf. Burgess, 1975; Gargan, 1981; Foster-Fishman, et al., 2001). Studies have shown that the participatory development initiatives improve project quality and performance or it affects the outcomes of the projects. According to Koppenjan and Klijn (2004), the outcomes do not only result at the end of the process, but also during the process. Based on the works of many scholars (Klijn, et al., 2008), the outcomes in this study have been chosen with a variety of items that measure both content and process outcomes. There are strong arguments to support the cause-effect relationship between participation and project performance/outcomes (See Briscoe and Ferranti 1988; Korten and Siy 1988; Isham et. al 1995; Mansuri and Rao 2004, 2011). It is argued by many practitioners and scholars that participation of the intended beneficiaries improves project performance/ outcomes. This conceptual framework will be discussed further in scale and criteria for assessment in the next chapter.

Chapter 3. Research methodology and approach

3.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of four sections and outlines the methods used in this research. Following this brief introductory section, an overview of the qualitative research in the case study is provided in section 3.2, which shows the approach adopted for this research. Section 3.3 presents a brief description of the data collection approach used within this qualitative research and then describes the measurement scale for 3 variables: community participation, local government capacity related to community participation and outcomes of the project. The measurement is defined in the indicators of each variable. This approach and strategy will be used to assess and study all four city cases. Finally, Section 3.4 provides a summary of this chapter.

3.2 Qualitative research

Merriam argues that the world or reality is not at fixed and measurable phenomenon and that interpretation of social reality is in flux changes overtime. Therefore, qualitative research is applied to understand what those interpretations are at a particular point in time and in a particular context (Merriam, 2002). According to Flick, qualitative research is of specific relevance to the study of social relations (Flick, 2009). In most documents relating to qualitative research, authors often try to determine what qualitative research means. It is important because it is impossible to carry out qualitative research on practices without defining it. Strauss and Corbin (1990) define qualitative research as any type of research that produces findings that are not achieved by statistical procedures or other means of quantification (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). Denzin and Lincoln (2000), in the second edition of their book, give the following definition:

“Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices... turn the world into a series of representations including field-notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting

to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000: 3)

Patton (1985) also gives an explanation in his text that qualitative research is an effort to understand a situation in its uniqueness as part of a particular context and interactions.. Merriam (2009) names four characteristics that belong to qualitative research. These four characteristics are the key to understanding the nature of qualitative research. First, the focus of qualitative research is on the process, to understand the meaning people have constructed about their world and their experiences. Second, the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis. Third, the process of qualitative research is inductive as the researcher gathers data to build his/her concepts, hypotheses or theories rather than simply testing the existing ones. Finally, the product of qualitative research is richly descriptive. Words and pictures rather than numbers are used.

Patton (1990) mentions that the desire to evaluate outcomes is one major reason why case studies may be conducted. According to Yin (2003), case studies are used extensively in social science research as well as practice-oriented fields such as urban planning, public administration, management science and social work. The detailed qualitative reports often produced in case studies not only help to explore or describe the data in a real-life environment, but also help to explain the complexities of real-life situations which may not be captured through experimental or survey research (Zainal, 2007). Herriott and Firestone (1983) argue that in comparison with the single case study, the evidence from multiple case studies is often considered more comprehensive and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust. They also mention that, in the multiple cases study, the disadvantages of the single case study are reduced when the chosen case is unusual or a rare case, a critical case or a revelatory case.

Adapted from Yin’s (2003: 50) idea, the case study method in this research is designed as following:

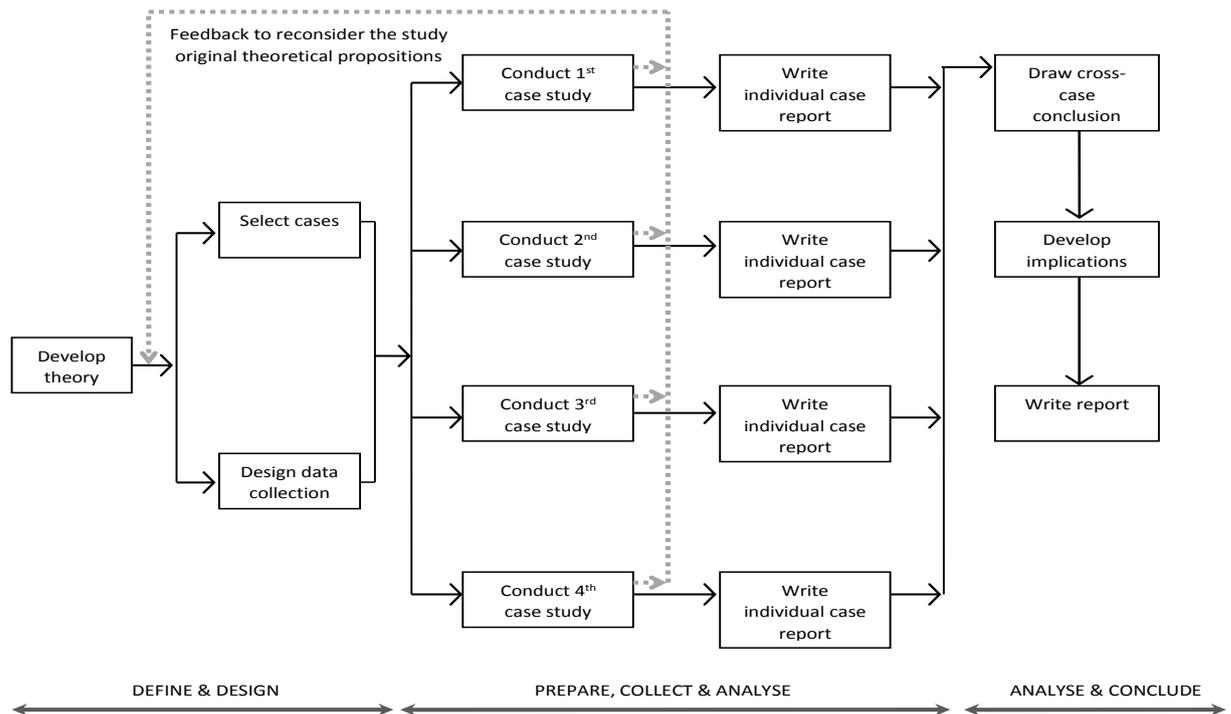


Figure 4: Model of case study method

Given that the aim of this research is to explore the role of community participation in UPIH, to determine which elements have an effect on the outcome of the project and to identify from those elements what will contribute to the good outcome of UPIH, qualitative research was chosen as the most suitable method for conducting this research. This research was carried out using a multiple cases study. The case study approach is suitable for the research because it “investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context” (Yin, 2003: 13). According to Yin (2003), the case study method is selected when the researcher deliberately wants to cover contextual conditions, in believing that they are stable to the phenomenon of study. In this research, it is believed that currently in the context of PAR, the community participation in UPIH is influenced by local government capacity and it is one aspect that delivers good outcomes. By replicating the case through pattern-matching, a technique linking several pieces of information from the same case to some theoretical propositions (Campbell, 1975), multiple-case design is able to enhance and support the previous results. This helps raise the level of confidence in the robustness of the method.

Now that the selection of the case-study approach has been discussed, we can see the way that the case studies fit into the overall research design. The research design

contains two parts of analysis: one exploratory and the other comparative. The exploratory part of the research provides background information, its own context and insight into the community participation in UPIH in each city with the influences of local government capacity in PAR. This part supplements the comparative part. Cross-case pattern analysis, comparing these descriptions and explanations helps us to understand and answer the question to finding the appropriate approaches for community participation in UPIH within cities of Vietnam that will provide good outcomes in urban upgrading projects.

3.3 Data collection and analysis

Since the 1990s, Vietnam has been involved in a process of decentralization in which the centrally planned economy has moved to a more market oriented economy. The core of this process is the Public Administration Reform (PAR). Within this context, this dissertation directly addresses the issue of community participation in urban housing and infrastructure upgrading projects in four cities in Vietnam. These projects are worth investigating as they directly affect the local communities' living conditions. Furthermore, they help to shed light on the key relationship between community participation and local government capacity. The selection of the four case studies is based on the result of The Viet Nam Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI)². The choice of housing and infrastructure improvement projects is justified in light of their relevance to local communities and their potential for community involvement in the processes of planning, implementation and monitoring. These 4 selected cities (*Figure 5*) are coming from 4 provinces that were in the best performing groups³ on the dimension of community participation according to 2012 PAPI result.

The field-work was conducted from September 2013 to February 2015 in four cities in Vietnam, namely Viet Tri, Nam Dinh, Vinh, and Can Tho, where discussions were held with officials at various levels namely the province, district and commune; with the management boards of the projects; and with officials of provincial departments. In

² The PAPI is a joint collaboration between the Centre for Community Support Development Studies (CECODES) under the Viet Nam Union of Science and Technology Associations (VUSTA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Viet Nam since 2009. The philosophy behind PAPI's innovative policy monitoring approach is that citizens are seen as "end-users of public administrative services" capable of assessing governance and public administration in their localities. The PAPI results are grounded in the everyday experiences of 13,642 citizens, who were selected randomly in order to provide a representative sample of the different demographic groups across the country

³ In each dimension, provinces are broken into 4 groups: best performing (75th percentile), high average (from 50th to 75th), low average (from 25th to 50th) and poor performing group (25th percentile)

addition, community and mass organization representatives involved with or affected by the investment projects under consideration in the housing and infrastructure sectors were also interviewed.

In each city, between 2 weeks and 20 days was spent, meeting with officials and people. The average number of interviewed people including representatives from the community and local staff in each city was more than 30 people per city (See the Annex 2). In each residential group, there was a group of 8 to 10 community members invited to be interviewed. The interviewed people were selected randomly based on the list of households in the neighborhood provided by the head of neighborhood community with diversified opinion and contributions to the project. We went to the frequent neighborhood community meetings after asking permission from local People's Committee and consulting with the head of the neighborhood community. The selected people were asked to participate in an interview after the meeting. Most of the interviewees were very open about issues related to the project.

In each city, local government officials at province, district and ward levels were interviewed in order to hear their views on policy and the administrative background and their relationships to community participation in the related projects. It was difficult to arrange official meetings and interviews with local government officials. There is a regulation that the information from government can only be provided by the spokesperson of the organization. It was a time consuming procedure. However, the in-direct approach was used through network relationships with local government staff. The interviews were mainly carried out in the form of informal discussions. Besides, it is not easy to access the documents in the government and related departments as it needs the approval from the head of the organization. The staff were reluctant to provide information without approval. Using network relationships, we got the vocal approval from the head and the staff were able to provide the needed documents after receiving a personal phone call with approval from their boss. Most of the policy documents were obtained through this channel. Project management boards provided relevant information on the overall working mechanisms of the projects implemented and on the functioning of the community participation mechanisms and processes. Residents in the affected neighborhoods provided their point of view on the implementation of the projects and the benefits derived from them, as well as their role in terms of participation.

The interviews were complemented by document analysis, covering both relevant Vietnamese government documents and reports as well as the papers of researchers and academics on these themes.

It should be noted that as the research was based on a multiple case study approach, the findings are contextual and cannot be easily generalized to other local authorities in Vietnam. However, given that this is a novel research theme within the Vietnamese context, it is expected that the investigation will help to shed light on the causal relationships between local government capacity and community participation in the five selected case studies and to provide insights that could enhance the understanding of how the relationships work in practice.

To analyze the data, an analytical framework was used with 3 main variables: (a) community participation, (b) local government capacity related to community participation and (c) the outcomes of the project.

a. Measurement of community participation

Community participation was operationalized by using two indicators: (i) width of participation, and (ii) depth of participation. Respondents' answers were categorized through a five-point rating scale. The width of participation indicator, the nature, and the extent of participants' involvement were considered. Mechanisms to determine who was allowed to participate were also taken into account. The lowest level is that there is no involvement of neighborhood community and the highest is community members directly involved and participated in the project.

In the depth of participation indicator, the level of involvement of the affected community in the project and the extent that the neighborhood community can make a decision has been considered, in line with Edelenbos' participation ladder (Edelenbos, 2000).

Table 3: Levels of community participation

Degree	Very low (very poor) (- -)	Low (poor) (-)	Medium (average) (0)	High (good) (+)	Very high (very good) (+ +)
<i>Width of participation</i>	No community involvement. Project goals and activities are imposed on the community.	-A limited number of community representatives, selected by the local authority, are allowed to participate.	A variety of community leaders and representatives of mass organizations are allowed to participate.	A wider range of community leaders, representatives of mass organizations ⁴ and ordinary citizens are allowed to participate.	Participation is open to all interested community actors.
<i>Depth of participation</i>	Inform	Consult	Advise	Co-produce	Co-decide

The table above provides the definitions used for each of the sub-indicators mentioned in relation to the five-level rating scale. The width of community participation in the project was measured according to the characteristics of the participation. The poorest level of width of participation which is equivalent to double minus (- -) is the situation of no community involvement in the project and project goals and activities are imposed on the community. The widest level of participation which receives a double plus (+ +) is the situation where participation is open to all interested community actors in the project.

The depth of participation in the project is measured following Edelenbos' scale. In which, the lowest level which is equivalent to a double minus (- -) is the situation where community was only informed about the project with its information. The highest level of participation which receives a double plus (+ +) is the co-decide situation where community and stakeholders have the power to develop and make decisions. In this situation, the politicians and administration accept the outcomes.

b. Measurement of local government capacity

Local government capacity is characterized by two key dimensions of resources management and administration management (Burgess, 1975; Gargan, 1981; Foster-Fishman, et al., 2001). According to Ingraham and Donahue (2000), the local government capacity refers to the management administrative substructures and the management of financial, human resources, capital and information.

Based on that, in this research, local government capacity was operationalized by using two indicators: (i) administration management and (ii) resources management.

⁴ Mass organization in Vietnam is Socio-political organization under the umbrella of Vietnam Fatherland Front. The Front is an amalgamation of many organizations, including Vietnamese General Confederation of Labour, Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, Vietnam Farmer's Union, Vietnam Women's Union, Veteran Association of Vietnam. They maintain large memberships (Women's Union - 12 million; Farmers' Union - 8 million; General Confederation of Labor - 4.2 million; Youth Union - 5.1 million; Veteran Association - 1.92 million) operating through extensive bureaucratic structures at central, provincial, district and local levels and continue to play a dominant role in civic life in Vietnam. (Taylor. W, Civil Society in Vietnam, The Asia Foundation, 2012 : 6)

As with community participation, respondents' answers were categorized through a five-point rating scale. Administration management was further broken down into the following sub-indicators: availability and degree of implementation of policy/guidelines for community participation, level of integration of community participation in projects, internal structures and procedures for managing participatory processes, and effective leadership. Similarly, resources management was analyzed with its key components: availability of financial resources to support community participation, availability of human resources, communication and learning orientation. The table below provides the definitions used for each of the sub-indicators just mentioned in relation to the five-point rating scale.

Table 4: Levels of local government capacity

Scale	Very low (very poor) (- -)	Low (poor) (-)	Medium (average) (0)	High (good) (+)	Very high (very good) (+ +)
Administration management					
<i>Availability and degree of implementation of policy/guidelines for goals and priorities setting by community</i>	No policy/guidelines for community participation are available.	Policy/guidelines for community participation are in place due to external pressures but not implemented yet.	Policy/guidelines for community participation have been adopted by the local government and implemented partially.	Policy/guidelines for community participation in most of issues are adopted by the local government but not fully implemented yet.	Policy/guidelines for community participation are adopted by the local government for all issues and fully implemented.
<i>Internal structures and procedures for managing participatory processes.</i>	No structures and procedures are in place.	Some structures and procedures are in place but are not followed.	Some structures and procedures are in place and are followed to a limited extent.	Adequate structures and procedures are in place and are followed to a reasonable extent.	Adequate structures and procedures are in place and are fully followed.
<i>Effective leadership</i>	No leadership in support of community participation	Low and ineffective leadership in support of community participation.	Moderate and not always effective level of leadership in support of community participation.	Clear and effective leadership in support of community participation.	Consistently high level of effective leadership in support of community participation.
Resources management					
<i>Availability of financial resources to support community participation</i>	No financial resources available to support community participation.	Some financial resources available to support community participation.	Sufficient level of financial resources to support community participation.	More than adequate and stable levels of financial resources to support community participation.	Considerable and increasing levels of financial resources to support community participation.
<i>Availability of human resources</i>	Insufficient and inadequately trained human resources to support community participation.	Some human resources with limited training to support community participation.	Sufficient level of human resources, some of which with adequate training, to support community participation.	Adequate level of trained human resources to support community participation.	High level of human resources, all well trained, to support community participation.
<i>Communication and learning orientation</i>	No communication channels with the community are established.	Limited communication channels with the community are established that do not lead to any learning	Sufficient communication channels with the community are established that lead to some limited one-way learning.	Adequate communication channels with the community are established that lead to ongoing one-way learning.	Frequent, open and reliable communications channels with the community are established that lead to ongoing two-way learning.

The table above provides the five-level rating scale with definitions used for each of the sub-indicators. As mentioned by several scholars (Cuthill and Fien, 2005; Edelenbos, 2005) the community need support from local governments to be able to participate effectively. The administration management is measured in relation with

community participation and with four sub-indicators. The first one is the availability and degree of implementation of policy/guidelines for community participation. In this sub-indicator, the lowest level which is equivalent to a double minus (- -) is the situation where no policy/guidelines for community participation are available. The highest level which has a double plus (+ +) is the situation where Policy/guidelines for community participation have been adopted by the local government and fully implemented. The second sub-indicator is the level of integration of community participation in projects. In this measurement, the lowest level which is equivalent to double minus (- -) is the situation of No priority for community participation in projects and the highest level with a double plus (+ +) is the situation in which community participation is highly integrated in the project in all steps at every administrative level. The third measurement in this category is the measurement of internal structures and procedures for managing participatory processes in which the lowest level is the situation of No structures and procedures for supporting community participation and the highest level is the situation of the existence of adequate structures and procedures to support community participation and they are fully followed in the implementation of the project. The last sub-indicator in the administrative management category is the level of effective leadership. The lowest level which is equivalent to a double minus (- -) is the situation of No leadership in support of community participation and the highest level with a double plus (+ +) is the situation in which community participation is highly effectively and consistently supported by administrative leaders in all steps at every administrative level.

The second category is the measurement of resource management in relation to community participation with three sub-indicators. The first one is the availability of financial resources to support community participation. It is assumed that available financial resource for a project with community participation means that the financial resources supporting community participation is also available. In this sub-indicator, the lowest level which is equivalent to a double minus (- -) is the situation where No financial resources are available to support community participation. The highest level which has a double plus (+ +) is the situation where there is a considerable and increasing level of financial resources to support community participation. The second sub-indicator is the availability of human resources in which the lowest level is the situation that has insufficient and inadequately trained human resources to support

community participation and the highest level is the situation that has a high level of human resources, who are all well trained to support community participation. The last measurement is the level of communication and learning orientation within the administrative levels to support the community participation. The lowest level is the situation of No communications channels with the community and the highest level is the situation that has frequent, open and reliable communications channels with the community that lead to ongoing two-way learning.

c. Outcomes

Outcomes have been mentioned as the positive side of the changes for an individual or communities after the program or project has been implemented. Based on the works of many scholars (Klijn, et al. 2006, 2008), the outcomes variable in this study has been chosen and was operationalized by using two indicators: (i) content outcome and (ii) process outcome. In this area, respondents’ answers were categorized through a five-point rating scale. Content outcome was further broken down into the following sub-indicators: Degree of innovation of the solution and effectiveness of the solution for the project. Similarly, process outcome was analyzed along its key components: Support measured through the level of satisfaction of actors’ involvement and the progress of actions. The table below provides the definitions used for each of the sub-indicators just mentioned in relation to the five-point rating scale.

Table 5: Levels of Outcomes

Scale	Very low (very poor) (--)	Low (poor) (-)	Medium (average) (0)	High (good) (+)	Very high (very good) (++)
Content Outcome					
<i>Degree of new ideas, new processes, policies and new organizational forms of implementing the project</i>	No changes in ideas, policies, processes and organizational forms of implementing the project	Limited changes in ideas and policies but no changes in processes and organizational forms of implementing the project	New ideas but limited changes in policies, adequate changes in processes and organizational forms of implementing the project	New ideas and adequate changes in policies. Completely innovative processes and organizational forms of implementing the project	Completely new and innovative ideas, processes, policies, organizational forms of implementing the project
<i>Effectiveness of the solution(s)</i>	Solutions do not really address the problem in the area	Solutions address some parts of the problem, but project goal(s) and objectives have not been fulfilled	Solutions really address the problem, and major project goal(s) and objectives have been fulfilled	Solutions really address the problem, and most project goal(s) and objectives have been fulfilled	Solutions really address the problem, and all the project goal(s) and objectives have been fulfilled. This solution is durable.
Process Outcome					
<i>Level of support from actors through satisfaction</i>	No satisfaction among stakeholders leading to no support	Limited satisfaction and support from stakeholders	Sufficient satisfaction and support from stakeholders in the process of implementation	Adequate satisfaction and support from stakeholders through entire process of implementation	Full satisfaction and support from stakeholders in entire process of implementation

Scale	Very low (very poor) (- -)	Low (poor) (-)	Medium (average) (0)	High (good) (+)	Very high (very good) (+ +)
<i>Degree of stagnations and conflict prevention within the project implementation</i>	Most deadlocks have not been avoided and conflicts have not been prevented	Many deadlocks have been avoided and some conflicts have been prevented	Most of deadlocks have been avoided and major conflicts have been prevented	Major deadlocks have been avoided and significant conflicts have been prevented and solved	Deadlocks have been avoided and conflicts have been prevented and solved

In this table, the first category is the measurement content outcome. The first sub-indicator in this category is the degree of innovation of the solution in which the lowest level is the situation of No changes in ideas, policies, processes and organizational forms of implementing the project and the highest level is the situation in which the solution has completely new and innovative ideas, together with innovative processes, policies and organizational forms of implementing the project. The second sub-indicator is the quality of the solution. The measurement comes from the lowest scale where the solution has not really addressed the problem to the highest level in which the solutions really address the problem, goal(s) and objectives of the project which have been fulfilled. The effectiveness of the solution is measured based on the total score that is assessed by both community and local government. It will show how they perceive the effectiveness of the solution in different points of view. The assessment of both actors will be calculated in the result of effectiveness.

The second category is the measurement of process outcome with two sub-indicators. The first one is the support measured through the level of satisfaction regarding the stakeholders' involvement in the project. The lowest level is No satisfaction among stakeholders and the highest level is full satisfaction and support from stakeholders in the entire process of implementation. The other sub-indicator is the degree of stagnations and conflict prevention within the project implementation. In this sub-indicator, the lowest level which is equivalent to a double minus (- -) is the situation where most deadlocks have not been avoided and conflicts have not been prevented in the process of the project implementation. The highest level which receives a double plus (+ +) is the situation in which almost all of the deadlocks have been avoided and conflicts have been prevented and solved.

3.4 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented a comprehensive description of the research methodology and approach guiding this research. It has also justified the selection of the research paradigm to achieve the aims and objectives of this research. A qualitative multiple

case study design was chosen as the principle method for this research. Given that the aim of this research is to explore the role of community participation in UPIH to determine the elements that has the effects on the outcomes of the project and to identify from those elements which will contribute to a good outcome of UPIH, qualitative research is the most suitable method for conducting this research. The description of the data collection process has been outlined. A detailed discussion of the assessment criteria for three main variables has also been presented. The community participation measurement has two indicators: (i) width of participation, and (ii) depth of participation was operationalized in the five-level rating scale. Similarly, the local government capacity measurement with 6 sub-indicators in two key dimensions of resources management and administration management is operationalized using a five-level rating scale. The outcomes measurement is also broken down in the five-level rating scale with four sub-indicators in two categories of content outcomes and process outcomes. The following chapters will now present the findings and results of this research based on these measurement scales.

Chapter 4. Background of the case study areas

4.1 Introduction

Vietnam is a communist country but since 1986 it has gradually changed from a centrally planned economy to a market economy. In the ‘Doi Moi’ process, the Vietnamese Government has been making administrative reforms at all levels, transferring some tasks and functions from the central government to lower levels and especially beginning the decentralization process. Public Administration Reform (PAR) is officially perceived as one of the core elements of ‘Doi moi’ (Painter 2005). Following the PAR, the issuance of an Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy in 2007 is one of the key indicators showing the orientation of changing policies in Vietnam. It laid the legal foundations to attract people to participate in the planning, implementing and monitoring processes. It guarantees the grassroots people’s rights to being informed, to be able to give an opinion, make decisions to some extent and monitor the plans and projects implemented in communities. It is one of the steps to improve the people’s livelihoods and to prevent bureaucracy and corruption (Ha, 2010).

This study approaches some of these issues by focusing on community participation in urban housing and infrastructure upgrading projects in four cities in Vietnam as the projects have directly affected to communities living conditions and it has increasingly been paid much attention to by government and neighborhood people especially with respect to the relationship with local government capacity settings under PAR. The selection of the city for this research was initially based on the results of The Viet Nam Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI). These four selected cities (*Figure 5*) are from four provinces that performed best out of the groups⁵ on the dimension of community participation according to the 2012 PAPI results.

⁵ In each dimension, provinces are broken into 4 groups: best performing (75th percentile), high average (from 50th to 75th), low average (from 25th to 50th) and poor performing group (25th percentile)

In Vietnam, urban centers have been graded following Decree No42/2009/ND-CP dated May 7th, 2009 issued by the Vietnamese Government. A city in Vietnam is formed under a decision of the Prime Minister and must be at least a grade-III urban center. There are total of 67 cities⁶ in Vietnam in which there were in 2014 11 grade-I cities, namely Viet tri , Hai

Figure 5. Four grade-I cities of Vietnam in the research



Phong, Nam Dinh, Vinh, Hue, Da Nang , Quy Nhon, Buon Ma Thuot , Da Lat, Nha Trang and Can Tho. There are various urban development upgrading projects with a multitude of scales especially in housing and infrastructure improvement in these cities, the issue of mobilizing community participation is a very important issue that has only recently been addressed in these projects. In this research, the small upgrading housing and infrastructure projects have been selected as they all involve changes in the neighborhoods and it draw much attention of the community in the process of planning, implementation and monitoring.

In the four cities, there is one centrally run city namely Can Tho (administratively equal to a province), and three provincially run cities namely Nam Dinh, Vinh and

⁶ Vietnam has 67 cities founded under the Decisions of the Prime Minister in all grades from grade-III to special grade in 63 provinces. There are 2 special-grade cities, 11 grade-I cities, the rest are medium and small cities (source: Statistics from Vietnamese Government website, 2014)

Viet Tri city (administratively equal to districts). These Grade-I cities are important cities for the whole country but they are not special and unique as special-grade cities in Vietnam namely Hanoi capital and Hochiminh city which are the key economic centers. The four cities are spread throughout the whole country, the research hopes to give a clear picture of community participation in urban improvement projects, especially in housing and infrastructure upgrading in cities of Vietnam.

4.2 Administrative structure and levels of local government in Vietnam

The State structure of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam includes the following levels: Central level and three local administrative levels of provincial governments of the 63 Provinces (tỉnh) or centrally run cities (thành phố trực thuộc trung ương), and below that level the district (quận – for urban area or huyện – for rural area) government (698) and communal (phường – for urban area or xã – for rural area) government (11121) (According to the 2012 statistics data of General Statistics Office of Vietnam). In Vietnam, the central structure level includes the National Assembly of Vietnam, the State President, the Government, the People’s Supreme Court and the Supreme People’s Procuracy.

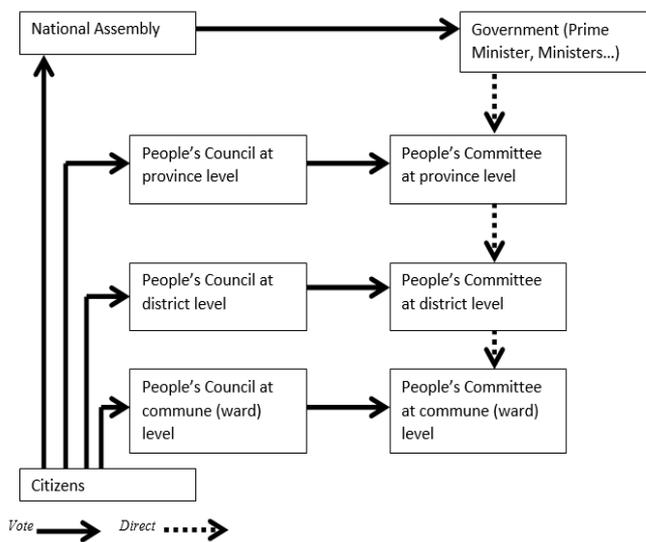


Figure 6. Hierarchy system of local government in Vietnam

According to the 2013 Constitution of Vietnam, there are three levels of administration. Provinces and municipalities are centrally controlled by the national government. Certain cities and provinces are under direct control of the central government. The provinces are divided into districts, provincial cities and towns; centrally run cities are divided into towns,

urban and rural districts. In turn, the districts are divided into communes and townlets. In the words of Article 110 of the Vietnamese Constitution, the "provincial city and

the town are divided into wards and communes; the urban district is divided into wards."

The term of city in Vietnam is always confusing as it can also refer to different administration levels. It is either at provincial level or district level. The table below gives an overall view of the administrative units and levels of local governments in Vietnam, according to the 2013 Vietnamese Constitution.

Table 6: Levels of administrative units in Vietnam

Administrative Level	Vietnam										
Provincial	58 Provinces (tỉnh)						5 Centrally-run-cities (thành phố trực thuộc trung ương)				
District	rural districts (huyện)		Towns (thị xã)		provincial cities (thành phố thuộc tỉnh)		urban districts (quận)	rural districts (huyện)		Towns (thị xã)	
Communal	Communes (xã)	Townships (thị trấn)	Wards (phường)	Communes (xã)	Wards (phường)	Communes (xã)	Wards (phường)	Wards (phường)	Communes (xã)	Wards (phường)	Communes (xã)

The People's Councils have been organized at all administrative levels and they are directly elected by the people with 5-year terms. The People's Council is the local body of State power. The People's Committee which is elected by the People's Council is the executive body of the respective People's Council and is the local state administrative body. According to the Constitution, it is the responsibility of the People's Committee to implement the Constitution and the laws at the local level, to organize the implementation of the resolutions of the People's Council and to exercise duties assigned by the superior state bodies.

The Government and People's Committees at all levels form the administrative system in Vietnam. The People's Committee at all levels has fiscal and administrative responsibilities. They have to maintain law, order and security within their authority; and implement the socio-economic development plans which are reviewed and approved of by the People's Council within their delegated authority. They also have to execute the budget and in some cases, they have to forward budget requests to higher levels for development plans. These provisions are regulated in national legislation such as the 2013 Constitution and the 2002 Budget Law which defines the various administrative functions.

In terms of administrative autonomy for local officials and departments, they have to report to both the local People's Committee and Council, as well as to the line department or line ministries regarding the sector in which they work at higher levels (Fforde, 2003:12). Generally, each Council is accountable to the next higher level in

the three level structure of sub national government, and the province is upwardly accountable to the central government in what is called a system of “double subordination” (Kerkvliet: 2004:7).

According to the hierarchy in urban development planning, the People’s Committee at the province level has the responsibility to prepare the general plan of urban and rural development for the province and submit it to the People’s Council for adoption before sending it to the Central Government for approval.

The People’s Committee at the province level has the responsibility to approve the land use plan of the People’s committee at the district level. The people’s Committee of the city which is under the jurisdiction of the central Government or City under the Central Government has the responsibility to prepare the master plan of urban

construction and development and submit it to the People’s Council of the city for adoption before sending it to the Government for approval.

The Committee directly manages the urban land and uses urban land for infrastructure development. It also manages the urban housing, urban housing businesses and uses the state owned houses for urban housing development. The People’s

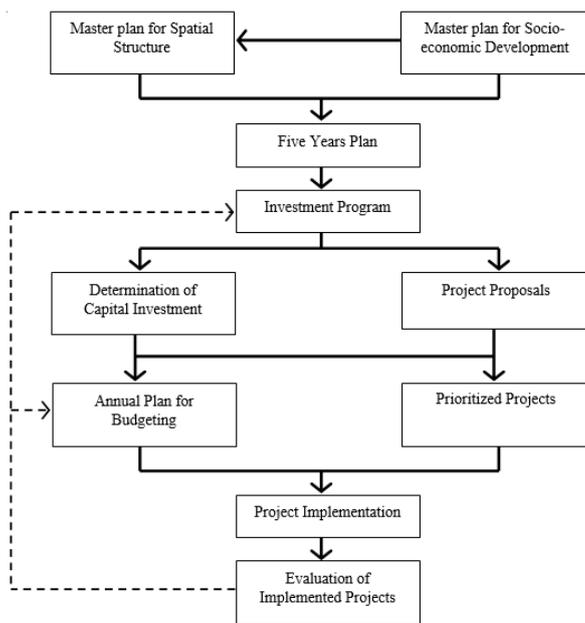


Figure 7. Current Procedures for Investment development Projects

(Source: Quang 2003)

Committee at district level has the responsibility to prepare, submit for approval or approve (according to the authorized competence) the plans of the town, rural residential point in district. It also has the responsibility to manage the implementation of approved planning.

4.3 Investment procedures for housing and infrastructure projects in Vietnam

Housing and infrastructure projects in Vietnam have to be implemented based on the approved detailed planning. According to the regulations in laws, the master plan for socio-economic development is prepared by the People's Committee, it is reported to the Fatherland Front⁷ to get the comments and additional ideas for revisions before submitting to the People's Council for approval. Based on the approved master plan for socio-economic development, the professional institutions prepare the master plan for spatial structure. The master plan for spatial structure is approved by the chairman of People's Committee. From those plans, the People's Committee will prepare a detailed plan for five years as well as an annual investment program. These plans and programs are reported to the People's Council and Fatherland Front every six months. The People's Committee at district and higher levels have the responsibility to prepare, approve and adjust the master plan, zoning plan and detailed planning within their administrative controlled area.

In the investment process of development projects, approvals of all major public and private development/investment projects are still conducted as if they were components of a public works program (According to 2005 Law on Investment). There is a limited participation of non-state (foreign and domestic private) sectors in the preparation of socio-economic, sector and physical plans (Quang, 2003).

In *Figure 7*, it is seen that the investment procedure fully or partly using the state budget is basically a top-down approach, where investment projects are formulated from the central investment planning rather than from the strategic analysis and local demand. The role of private sector is omitted while non-state investment has not been considered in the investment program (which is prepared by the authorities).

⁷ Vietnam Fatherland Front is a socio-political organization and is an amalgamation of many organizations, including the Vietnamese General Confederation of Labour, Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, Vietnam Farmer's Union, Vietnam Women's Union and the Veteran Association of Vietnam. It represents the various social classes strata, ethnic groups and religions of the Vietnamese people. It is a political platform for the people's administration expressing the people's will and aspirations. It also has the task to supervise the activities of the state bodies, elected deputies and the state officers and functionaries; to collect people's opinions and their recommendations to reflect and propose to the state; to participate in the building and enforcement of the people's administration. (Law of the Vietnam Fatherland Front, 1999)

4.4 Public Administration Reform and community participation in Vietnam

a. Decentralization process

Decentralization occupies an important space in the debates over public-sector reform in ‘Doi moi’ of Vietnam (Fritzen, 2006). Many scholars such as Painter (2003), Fritzen (2006), Dao (1997), Pham (2008) saw the importance of decentralization to Vietnam’s development outcomes in the last 20 years as it has been influenced more and more over the period of economic reform. Many international donors and agencies have helped Vietnam with its decentralization process like UNDP, World Bank and SIDA together with poverty alleviation programs as the sustainability of investment rely on the effectiveness of local governance (UNDP 1993, Fritzen 2006).

In order to understand the content of “decentralization” in Vietnam, it is best to look into the content of the Vietnamese phrase for decentralization or ‘*phân cấp, phân quyền*’ in Vietnamese policy statements. ‘*Phân cấp*’ means allocating among the administrative levels. It is basically deconcentration or administrative decentralization. It refers to the dispersal of agents of higher levels of government into lower level areas. (Parker, 1995). ‘*Phân quyền*’ means allocating powers which is associated with devolution or democratic decentralization. It is the transfer of resources and power (and often, tasks) to lower level authorities which are largely or wholly independent of higher levels of government and which are democratic in some way and to some degree (Manor, 1999). The term ‘*phân quyền*’ has not been used in official documents of the Communist Party of Vietnam, legal documents of the Vietnam Government and the term ‘*phân cấp*’ has been used widely (Pham, 2011).

According to the 1992 Constitution, Laws on the Organization of The State Apparatus and especially following the National Master Program of Administrative Reform in two periods of 2001 – 2010 and 2011 – 2020, many legal documents, ordinances and decrees have been issued and institutionalized the point of ‘*phân cấp*’ by assigning tasks and rights according to the administrative level or partly allocating powers. In that situation, ‘*phân cấp*’ implies as ‘*phân quyền*’ or vertically administrative decentralization (Pham, 2011). In order to strengthen the state effectiveness as well as to meet the people’s aspiration of having a clean and transparent government, the fiscal and administrative decentralization are supported following the Government

policies. Fritzen (2006) has found four issues that indirectly reinforce a centralizing tendency. It is because of the fact that

- i. Vietnam is a unitary state and “sharing of power and the emergence of autonomous actors leading in the extreme to a potential loss of unity in areas such as national defense, internal security and foreign affairs” (Nguyen ,2000:15);
- ii. The executive power is disproportional as the Party is called to focus on overall ‘steering functions’ rather than actively intervening in administrative matters (Vasavakul, 2002);
- iii. Civil society and the Private sector are dominated by the State (Webster, 1999) and
- iv. There is challenge of multisectoral (or horizontal) coordination at lower and central levels of government (Pham, 2011)

However, the National Master Program of Administrative Reform is trying to solve the two problems in Vietnamese decentralization: (1) the resistance of powerful bureaucratic stakeholders to transferring control to the grassroots and (2) the widening capacity gaps between local governments. (Fritzen 2006). It can be elaborated more in the next section, the PAR helps to solve the two phenomena of ‘begging and giving’ and of lower levels being “passively dependent” on upper levels to provide resources, tools and actions to solve local problems.

b. Public Administration Reforms

Public Administration Reform (PAR) was initially implemented in Vietnam after the 6th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) in 1986 in a learning-by-doing context where experience and knowledge of modern State management was limited. Following the ‘*Đổi mới*’ process mentioned in the 6th Congress, the guiding principles for the PAR had been established including the directions, contents and measures for the implementation.

The Government had identified and analyzed the causes for socio-economic problems over the past time and drawn attention to the basis causes within bureaucratic governmental operation. The Government had then put forward the reform on the organizational structure by restructuring the States administrative machinery by

reducing the intermediary layers in the structure. It can be seen in the application of ‘One-Stop shop’ and taking advantages of Information Technology (IT) in administrative offices at all levels. There are 86.6% province-level body, 98.5% district-level body, 96.2% commune-level body deployed this scheme⁸. The number of ministries and ministry-level bodies has been reduced from 76 (1986) to 38 (2002) and to 30 (2007). Among the 5,500 administrative procedures that were reviewed, 453 procedures were dismissed, 3,749 procedures were revised or supplemented to create advantages for people and businesses, and 288 procedures were replaced, making 81% of the total procedures⁹. However, in general the organizational structure and staffing levels of the State administrative machinery still remain cumbersome and problematic. It is because of the overlapping in managerial function of the same field. For example, the field of land use planning is under the control of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, the Ministry of Construction, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development together with the local government; the field of Food Quality Assurance, is under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Industry and Trade. The same situation also happens at lower levels within many provinces.

The reform continued after the 7th Congress of the CPV in 1991 with a strategy for socio-economic stabilization and development. Accordingly, an additional 4 key points in the orientation of PAR were indicated in the Resolution No 8 of the 7th Central Committee of CPV (1995), namely:

- Redefining authority and responsibility of each level of the public administration
- Further studying and elaborating the decentralization policy and relationship of central and provincial government
- Renovating the civil service regulations (including the amendment to regulations on recruitment examination, training, capacity building, reducing the average age, penalties for and dismissal of officials, measures and coordination to fight against corruption, waste, and authoritarianism in the public administration and economic organizations);

⁸ Ministry of Home Affairs, Report on Public Administration Reform period 2001 - 2010

⁹ Ministry of Home Affairs, Report on Public Administration Reform period 2001 - 2010

- Establishing the Administrative Court and socialization of a number of public services.

With the aim to build a strong, clean, democratic and modernized administration, the National Government continued to issue policies and measures for the PAR process. These include policies to adjust functions and improve the performance of all government bodies; continuously to reform the State-owned enterprises; to separate the public administrative institutions from the public service delivery bodies and continuously reform the administrative procedures; to fight against bureaucracy and corruption and to strengthen order and discipline in order to create clean and adequate-skill administrative staff and civil servants.

In the Master Program on Public Administration Reform for the period 2001 – 2010 of the Vietnamese Government, four key reform areas were set namely institutional reform, organizational structures, civil service reform and public finance. It also included the manner in which the government should ‘renovate’ itself:

- Implement the grassroots democracy regulation, publicizing the Government policies, regulations; mechanism whereby leading officials at the various levels will be required to periodically and directly meet, talk with and solve the problems proposed by people and businesses (Government of Vietnam, 2001)
- The state will develop policies and mechanisms to enable social organizations, mass organizations and the people themselves to deliver directly services which serve production and living requirements with the support, monitoring of the administrative levels (Government of Vietnam, 2001)

Continuing the 1st phase, in the Master Program on Public Administration Reform for the period 2011 – 2020 of the Vietnamese Government, one of the main focus tasks is “...to focus on the ensuring and promoting people’s rights, collecting people’s opinion before making important decisions, policies and focus on the people’s right of supervising the government administrative organizations’ activities”. To summarize, it is suggested that the National government is strongly supportive of PAR and grassroots democratization. However, efforts to have participatory outcomes have been limited although it gains achievements, as discussed in the next section.

c. Community participation process in Vietnam: Achievements, Obstacles and challenges

In Vietnam, along with the economic change from centralized and subsidized economy to market oriented economy, the Soviet-style inherited bureaucratic management system has been changed as the transformation of the state from one that managed a command economy to one that seeks to regulate a multi-sectoral economy. Public Administration Reform is officially perceived as one of the core elements of ‘Doi moi’ (Painter, 2005). As mentioned in the previous section, one of the issues of PAR is the improvement of the grassroots democracy. It is strengthening with the publicizing (or informing) of the government decisions, policies and especially through ‘socialization’ activities. The term ‘socialization’ is used but not the term ‘privatization’ because the word ‘privatization’ was quite deliberately not appropriated to Vietnamese discourse. (Painter, 2005). ‘Socialization’ was conceived as ‘the transfer of government work to non-government agencies’ (Vasavakul, 2002). As against the traditional mechanism of ‘begging and giving’ and state subsidy, the ‘people’s resources’¹⁰ needed to be mobilized for public service delivery, along with ‘associations, non-government organizations and private sector organizations’ (Government Steering Committee, 2000).

Following the PAR, the issuance of Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy in 2007 is one of the key indicators showing the orientation of changing policies in Vietnam. It lays the legal foundation to attract people to participate in the planning, implementing and monitoring processes. It guarantees the grassroots people’s right to be informed, to be able to give an opinion, make decisions to some extent and monitor the plans and projects implemented within the communes. It is one of the steps to improve people’s livelihood and to prevent bureaucracy and corruption (Ha, 2010).

Many actions of community participation in projects in Vietnam can be done through the involvement of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). As in the participation process, citizens can rarely compete with the professional in terms of knowledge about a proposal. This relative lack of preparedness promotes the image that the citizen is not qualified to make a meaningful contribution to policy making (Kweit and Kweit, 1990). Therefore, they need the support from CSOs as well as Mass Organizations to

¹⁰ People’s resources are human resources, financial resources, people’s land use rights and working day contribution.

participate effectively. In the situation of Vietnam, Civic Organizations can be used as a general term for a heterogeneous ensemble of formal and semi-formal, in the broadest sense non-state, volunteer, non-profit-oriented societal organizations (Wischermann and Nguyen, 2003: 186, 187). In Vietnam, the CSOs activity is an integral part of societies everywhere, and the CSO is the arena where citizens come together to engage in issues affecting their lives and the development of their communities. (Taylor, et al., 2012).

The Mass Organizations maintain large memberships (Women’s Union - 12 million; Farmers’ association – 8 million; General Federation of Labour Union – 4.2 million; Youth Union – 5.1 million; Veterans’ Association – 1.92 million) operating through extensive bureaucratic structures at central, provincial, district and local levels and continue to play a dominant role in civic life in Vietnam. Many organizations claiming NGO status are quasi-governmental, including research institutes and professional associations. They receive core financial support from the state, at times functioning as part of the bureaucracy while at other times carrying out independent policy research and advocacy. In the early years, CSOs were often very clearly quasi-governmental or headed by retired government officials who wanted to contribute to the country’s development and had the knowledge and the network to establish their own organizations. CSOs often stress their participatory, people-centered approaches (Taylor, et al., 2012).

Table 7 : The typology of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Vietnam:

Category	Types of organizations included in category	Relation to the state	Vietnamese definition
Mass Organizations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Women’s Union 2. Farmers’ Association 3. Youth Union 4. War Veterans Association 5. General Federation of Labour Union 	Fatherland Front	Socio-Political Organizations
Professional Associations and Umbrella Organizations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Umbrella organizations like Red Cross, VUSTA, VUAL, Cooperative Alliance, etc. 	1. Fatherland Front	Socio-Professional Associations
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Professional Associations like ACVN, VUPDA, Architects Association 	2. Registered with an umbrella organization, Center or provincial organization	Social and professional associations; some belong to the NGOs

Category	Types of organizations included in category	Relation to the state	Vietnamese definition
Vietnam NGOs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Charity 2. Research NGOs 3. Consultancy NGOs 4. Educational NGOs 5. Health NGOs 	VUSTA, Line Ministries, Provincial or District People's Committees	Social Organizations, NGOs
Community-based Organizations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Service and development or livelihoods-oriented 2. Faith-based organizations 3. Neighborhood groups 4. Family clans 5. Recreation groups 	Indirect affiliation to other organizations or Civil Code Many are not registered	Rural collaborative groups Faith-based organizations Neighborhood groups Family clans

Source: Nørlund (2007: 11)

There are many actions or programs of community participation that mentioned by many researchers and scholars in the fields of solid waste management, infrastructure development and management, housing development. Many transport sector projects sponsored by the World Bank in the rural areas of Vietnam focus on the issue of community participation. “The approach of community participation is repeated in the selection of alignments, construction standards, contractors, supervision methods and maintenance systems. However there is limited consultation with, or participation of, the local community in the decision making process. There is a need to understand better how the current decision making system works and identify areas where increased participation would benefits users and managers ...” (Mekong, 2005). The participatory approach that provided infrastructure and income for poor communes through employment in its construction has helped millions of people to escape poverty. Several projects with the participatory planning and management approach for development activities by communities sponsored by international organizations were subsequently expanded as a Government-funded national program.

In the field of solid waste management, “... although community participation has been identified as one of the key factors, which contributes to the success of system management, the level of community participation in waste management has remained focused on the primary collection of solid waste” (Duong, 2010). In addition to these community-based approaches, the Vietnam Environmental Monitor 2004 report has identified a number of self-help models on Solid Waste Management ranging from generation sources to disposal sites on a small scale, as well as separation of waste at

the source for further processing, being used in a number of regions throughout Vietnam (World Bank, et al., 2004).

Recent decrees and resolutions aiming at involving people in planning and policy processes are clear signals that there is a recognition that decentralization from above needs to meet with people's perceptions and energies from below. (Wit, 2007). This is not to deny that there are also developments taking place at the grassroots level, and there are indications that people and communities are becoming more active in policy and planning processes even while, this too, is not happening at a fast pace. According to the 2007 Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy, "...The people discuss and decide directly policies and levels of contributions for building public infrastructure, welfare works within the commune level scope, village level scope and cluster level scope that are contributed by the people partially or totally and other affairs within internal community in accordance to legal regulations" (2007 Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy: Article 10). But with the other issues influencing people's life, community can only provide opinions and comments. It is regulated that; "... people can give opinions and comments on preparing socio – economic development plan; drafting concrete planning and plans of land use and scheme on adjustments of management and use of the commune land fund;.. Drafting plans to deploy programs and projects at in communes; policies, compensation schemes, resettlement schemes, infrastructure construction schemes, reallocation schemes, resident planning schemes" (2007 Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy: Article 19). It is only regulated that the chairman of the Commune People Committee is responsible for studying opinions and informing the people about the accepted opinions of voters or household representative voters. However, results of consulted opinions or feedback opinions of the community have a very low legal status. There is no regulation about the publicizing of the results of community consultations. In the case that the local government decides contents differently from the majority of public opinions, the Ordinance requires that the local government state their reasons clearly and are responsible for its decision, but exactly what their responsibilities are is not regulated.

In fact, there are still constraints in the community participation approach which are consistently being reported. There are many Laws that mention the requirement of having community consultations before making decisions. But there is no definition about the concept of community in the 2009 Urban Planning Law and 2005

Environment Protection Law and there are differences in the concept of community in the 2003 Law on Land and the 2005 Civil Code. In the 2003 Law on Land, the community concept follows the geographical term, but in the 2005 Civil Code, the community is included clan community and religious community. The unclear concept of community has impacts on the selection of participants and therefore it affects the width of participation. The participation in projects is sometimes formalistic as it lacks regulations for the effective participation of the community and mechanism for giving feedback to the community.

One of the critical problems is that the system of a ‘top-down’ approach has been applied in administration and decision making for long time. Arguing on the issues of decentralization and local political accountability in Vietnam, Frizen (2006:17) argues that “While the local government leadership may voice support for participatory planning, it is likely to resist reductions in whatever (limited) control it enjoys over resource allocation and decision-making. This is particularly true when proposed reforms involve an untested process of decentralized planning that could leave the leadership vulnerable to criticism by upper levels for inefficient planning or ineffective implementation of higher-level mandates. The issue of decentralized planning for local leadership is typically phrased in terms of how to ensure rationalize resource allocation within the developmental plans of higher and their own levels”. The concept of community participation mobilization (*huy động sự tham gia của cộng đồng*) which was mentioned in many official documents is fitting people into a development plan or activities which have already been decided upon by higher officials (Wit, 2007). Examples can be seen in many government funded projects in forest management and urban housing preservation. The depth and the width of participation is, due to this, not very high in most of the projects as it is regulated in the legal documents that the decision power of the people is only on policies and levels of contributions. The community can only be informed about the plan and is only able to give opinions.

Most of the community based projects that have been implemented in Vietnam have not been initiated by the communities themselves. Many of these projects have been developed and run with the assistance of external support from sources such as government ministries or international donors (Richardson, 2003). This is particularly the case with regard to the provision of financial subsidies. Unfortunately, in many cases, when the supporting budget is no longer available, the projects have ceased

functioning (Thuy, 2005). However, without external support, many of these projects would fail to capture the attention and participation of communities and thus, undermine the potential benefits associated with the project outcomes. However, almost all of these projects have been carried out based on the ideas of the project implementers or local authorities, and have not been developed based on the ideas and input of local communities. This means that the projects often fail to reflect the community needs and expectations (Duong, 2010).

The effects of a 'top-down' approach have created passive and dependent communities. People in many projects are not used to 'participate' unless it is against their interest. There is confusion about what is possible and what is expected from them. The grassroots people may not even know what these are, particularly since their immediate access to information is from this immediate upper level. Thus, they are likely to accept, rather than question, whatever comes their way. (Fritzen, 2000). It shows that the ground for community to participate or involve in the project is limited.

Another problem of the participation process in Vietnam is the lack of information. Stakeholders, especially the administrators, are reluctant to share the information. Fritzen argues in his work that local leaders may stand to benefit personally from non-transparent allocation. For some local elites, there may be a considerable gray area for supplementing their income by keeping resource allocations and other decision criteria relatively opaque (Fritzen, 2000). Corruption leads to hiding information or delivering incorrect information. Therefore, one of the tasks of PAR is to fight against corruption using transparent processes and clear policy.

The other critical problem is related to the capacity of the levels of administration, especially the lowest level where the community participation has to be organized and implemented. And one reason why the provincial and district government are reluctant to empower the communes is due to the perceived lack of capacity, which is the well known 'chicken or the egg' issue of decentralization (UNDP, et al., 2000: 25). In this context, changes of local government attitude towards the participation approach have built the foundation for projects with community participation. The background of four cities that have a project with community participation in this research will be presented in the next sections.

4.5 The first study area: Viet Tri city

Viet Tri city is a medium city in the North of Vietnam and the most important city of the Phu Tho province. It is growing very fast, with the expansion and development area of 111.8 Km². In June 2012, Viet Tri was classified as a grade-I city. The city has a population of 192,502 inhabitants in 13 wards and 10 communes. (Statistics Office of Phu Tho province, 2013)

Its economic indicators are:

- Construction-Industry: 63.2%;
- Trade-Service: 33.6%
- Agriculture-Forestry-Aquaculture: 3.2%
- Average economic growth: 7.39%

Viet Tri is the first industrial city of the North region of Vietnam. The main industries in Viet Tri are chemicals, paper and textiles.

Compared with other grade-I cities, Viet Tri is still a small and less developed city. The infrastructure in many areas of the city needs to be developed. It is the focused issue in the directions of People's Committee of Viet Tri city policy "Promoting democracy and community unity strength, exploiting the potential advantages, actively mobilizing all resources to focus on implementing two breakthroughs: Quickly develop critical infrastructure and promote tourism" (Viet Tri People's Committee, 2012).

Recently, the community participation and community saving fund have been implemented spontaneously in Viet Tri city (Giang. Tu, Chairwoman of Women's Union of Viet Tri city, 2014). In 2000, Viet Tri city received the support from the VIE/97/008 project which was sponsored by UNDP and Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) with the budget of 191 million VND (\approx US\$ 10,000). This fund was loaned to 4 groups in Viet Tri city namely; Tien Cat, Duu Lau, Tho Son and Bach Hac for economic development and infrastructure improvement projects. Until 2005, the recovery of the fund has faced difficulty in some groups as the loan was given directly to the community without the managerial cooperation of the city and ward (CDF Viet Tri, 2011). In 2005, the Women's Union of Viet Tri city carried out a survey in 8 selected wards and communes with 65 neighborhoods. This survey focused on the

issue of community development and especially on community needs. The results of the survey showed:

- There is a high demand for capital investment for infrastructure improvement, housing improvement and economic development.
- There are already saving groups but they are isolated, without a network and do not add to community strength.
- Groups do not want to expand their network as they are scared of the risk of losing money.
- There are many experienced people in different fields who are volunteering to share their knowledge if it is required in the community.

Based on the survey results, the City People's Committee has issued the direction to guide the activities of the Community Development Fund of Viet Tri city. The Women's Union of the City was appointed to steer the activities of the Fund.

The forming of the "Community Saving's Fund" (CDF) with the goal of supporting the community and low-income groups, improving infrastructure, living conditions and environmental hygiene; creating the habit of saving in community; improving the capacity of group management, financial management and strengthening the relationship between community, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and local government is considered as one of the innovative ideas in Viet Tri city.

4.6 The second study area: Vinh city

Vinh city is one of the most important cities in the Northern Central Region of Vietnam. The city has a population of 306,000 inhabitants. With the total area of 104.96 Km², Vinh City has been certified as grade-I city of Nghe An province. Vinh city has 16 wards and 9 communes. Its economic indicators are:

- Industry and construction: 41.09%
- Service, commerce, and tourism: 57.52%
- Agriculture and fishery: 1.61%
- Average economic growth: 7.6 %
- Average income per capita: US\$1814/ year.

(Source: Statistics Office of Nghe An Province, 2012)

Although Vinh city is considered to be a grade-I city in Vietnam, the housing in Vinh (especially the collective houses which were built in the 1970s) and the tertiary infrastructure need a lot of investment (People's Committee of Vinh city, 2013). In 2013, the total budget revenue of Vinh city was estimated at 822 billion VND (about 40 million USD), accounting for 86.8% of the plan. The spending budget was estimated at 674 billion VND (about 32 million USD), accounting for 92.4% of the plan. (People's Committee of Vinh city, 2013)

With support from the Provincial government and NGOs, especially from international agencies, Vinh city has carried out many projects. There have been several successful projects with community participation in housing and infrastructure upgrading.

The first city-wide meeting of "Participatory planning and community-based housing construction" was organized in Vinh city in February 2009 with the support from the local government of Vinh city, Association of Cities of Vietnam (ACVN), The Asian Coalition for Community Action (ACCA) Program and Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR). There are 142 collective housing areas in Vinh city with a total of 2,842 households, which were built before the 1990s and mostly are one story degrading houses. The People's Committee of Vinh city prepared a plan of housing upgrading and development to improve living conditions for its residents and the city urban landscape. However, the city has encountered shortages including financial shortages and land resources for resettlement.

ACVN, ACCA and ACHR together support communities in Vinh to strengthen city-wide community savings and the CDF network is linked with the housing upgrading process. In June 2009, the first savings group for housing was established in Vinh and in September 2009, the People's Committee of Nghe An province approved the first community-made plan for the Huu Nghi collective housing area. The community in Huu Nghi collective housing area of block 6A, Cua Nam Ward, Vinh city was the first community in Vinh to build their houses using community participation. After completion in 2010, they compared the community driven housing in Huu Nghi area to the other upgrading houses in other areas of Vinh; the comparisons gave the following results:

- There was no eviction.

- There was minimum to no compensation costs paid by the government
- Houses were designed and constructed on a collective basis
- The building costs were cheaper than estimated
- The building time was shorter than estimated

The community in Huu Nghi area agreed that; “Together, they build up not only a house but a community”.

4.7 The third study area: Nam Dinh city

In the North of Vietnam, Nam Dinh city is one of the big cities in the Red River Delta area. It is the most important city of the Nam Dinh province. The city has a population of 352,108 inhabitants. With the total size of 46.32 Km², Nam Dinh City was certified in 2011 as a grade-I city. Administratively, it has 20 wards and 5 communes. Its economic indicators are:

- Industry and construction: 55.14%
- Service, commerce, and tourism: 43.23%
- Agriculture and fishery: 1.3%
- Average economic growth: 11%
- Average income per capita: US\$1500 a year.

(Source: Statistics Office of Nam Dinh, 2012)

Nam Dinh city is one of the first cities in Vietnam that received support from international organizations to carry out activities with community participation in the late 1990s and early 2000s. These projects were related to community participation in Nam Dinh were CDS preparation for Nam Dinh city prepared in 2004-2006 sponsored by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) through 1997- 2007 Nam Dinh Urban Development Project (NDUDP) and the pilot project of Cadastral management in Nam Dinh city within Urban Management Project which was sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in 2002. “Various stakeholders participated in the CDS consultation process including representatives from local community, religions and students,” said Trần Mạnh Tiến, the former Manager of NDUDP. “CDS is truly an advanced tool which can promote

community participation, mobilize collective knowledge and political will.” Recently, in the city, the local government has encouraged the participation of community in many projects.

The Nam Dinh CDS strategy was built on existing policies, socio-economic plans, and spatial master plans at city and provincial levels. The CDS was used by Nam Dinh city government to identify and develop capacity for the city. This process of using CDS in Nam Dinh city was consistent with the increasing authorization for decentralization in PAR.

The Nam Dinh strategies for 2010 were developed through stakeholder interviews, deliberated by the Task Force, and input of senior officials through interviews and committees. The strategies were prioritized using specific criteria based on urgency, authority of the city, feasibility, contribution to poverty reduction, and the resources available. Strategies that supported increased decentralization were also favored. All strategies were limited to the city’s ability and resources to achieve the goals.

Nam Dinh city is one of the four provinces/cities receiving the World Bank’s fund for Vietnam’s Urban Upgrading Project. The Project’s purpose is to reduce the poverty in urban areas through the improvement of living and environmental conditions for urban poor people and the application of community participatory planning method in the urban upgrading to meet the demands of people. The Urban Upgrading Project in Nam Dinh was planned to be completed by the end of 2014. The Project consists of 6 components:

- Upgrading the tertiary infrastructure (in low-income residential areas)
- Upgrading the related primary and secondary infrastructure (in connection with the tertiary infrastructure to promote the investment efficiency)
- Building technical infrastructure in resettlement sites
- Management of real estate (*it was not fully implemented* – according to Nam Dinh construction and investment management board, 2013)
- Capital revolving fund for improvement houses
- Building capacity for the Project Management Unit (PMU), departments and communities

The Project was divided into 2 phases: Phase 1 – pilot project in 37ha Van Mieu ward with 2,797 households in the population of about 12,200 people, implemented in the period between 2004 - 2009. Phase 2 was implemented in a total of 261ha in 19 wards with about 17,600 households during the period of 2010 – 2014.

When completed, these projects have significantly contributed to solve the problems of the neighborhoods such as flooding, downgraded roads and environmental pollution. In the implementation process, the residents in the neighborhoods had strengthened capacity, increased awareness through participating in discussions, making plans, implementing and monitoring. Besides, with these projects, the spirit of solidarity among residents was raised and they also gained experiences in solving common issues within the community.

Financing for the improvement projects: 90% came from Official Development Assistance (ODA) budget; 7% come from the province budget and 3% from the community (Nam Dinh construction and investment management board, 2013).

4.8 The fourth study area: Can Tho city

Can Tho is the biggest city in the Mekong river delta and has a strategic position in the region. Therefore, it is under the administrative control of the central government. Can Tho has five urban districts (Ninh Kieu, Cai Rang, Binh Thuy, O Mon, and Thot Not) and four rural districts (Phong Dien, Co Do, Vinh Thanh, and Thoi Lai). The city has a population of 1,200,300 inhabitants in an area of 1,409 Km² (General Statistics Office, 2013).

Its economic indicators are:

- Industry and construction: 44.45%
- Service, commerce, and tourism: 44.72%
- Agriculture and fishery: 10.83%
- Average economic growth: 11.67%
- Average income per capita: US\$ 2346 a year. (in 2012)

(Source: Statistics Office of Can Tho, 2013)

Can Tho city has received several means of support from international organizations to carry out activities with community participation. Between April 2006 and May 2007,

the CDS of Can Tho city project was funded by Cities Alliance and administered by the World Bank. Similar to Nam Dinh city, Can Tho also received support from World Bank to carry out the Urban Upgrading Project and many activities required the involvement of neighborhood community.

The project was divided into 2 phases: Phase 1 from 2004 to 2007 focused on the wards of An Cu and An Hoi. The 2nd Phase from 2008 to 2014 saw the expansion of the project to the whole district of Ninh Kieu, and a part of Binh Thuy district.

The urban upgrading project is in the National Strategic Program of urban upgrading to the year 2020 with the objectives of poverty alleviation in urban areas by improving living conditions and the environment with community participation.

Besides the above objectives, the urban upgrading project also contributes to the improvement of the general environment and hygienic conditions of the whole city of Can Tho, as well as improving the living conditions and living quality of the urban poor. The project helps to extend the scale and approaching capability of the basic infrastructure services like sewage, water supply, transportation, environment and hygiene in the low income residential areas; to sustainably manage urban infrastructure, housing and urban land following the National Program of Urban Upgrading.

Financing for the project, together with the borrowed funding from the World Bank (WB) accounts for 45% of the total budget, there is a financial contribution of about 5% of the total budget for the construction of tertiary infrastructure systems that will be mobilized from the community. The rest of the budget comes from the government budget.

4.9 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented a comprehensive description of the background for the case studies in this research. Under the implementation of Public Administration Reform following the ‘*Đổi mới*’ process, the government at all levels was restructured and the grassroots democracy was at some levels implemented. Many actions of community participation in projects in Vietnam have been done through the involvement and support of Civil Society Organizations and Mass Organizations. However, the fact that the system of a ‘top-down’ approach had been applying in administration and decision

making processes for generations meant that the people acted as a passive and dependent community. Thus most of the community based projects that have been implemented in Vietnam have not been initiated by the community themselves. The reluctance of stakeholders to share the project information with the community also creates problems for participation. In this context, changes in the local government attitude towards the participation approach have built the foundation for projects with community participation. An overview of the background of the four cases in this research was outlined and the four cities and the project will be discussed further in the next chapters.

Chapter 5. Case study of Viet tri city

5.1 Introduction

At the beginning of this thesis, Chapter 1 provided an overview as to the reasons why community participation in housing and infrastructure projects in Vietnam initially drew the attention and interest to the researcher. In this chapter, a range of descriptive content about community participation in housing upgrading in Viet Tri city is presented. The chapter is comprised of four major sections. The first section begins by focusing on the housing upgrading project in Viet Tri city with community participation, especially on how community participation was implemented, the width and the depth of participation in this project. The second and third sections provide an analysis and discussion of the findings that were elicited from the support of the local government regarding community participation and the outcomes of the projects respectively. The fourth section includes a discussion on the relationship between the outcomes of project and community participation with support from local government capacity. The content presented in this chapter will partially answer the research sub-question 2 (What are the characteristics of community participation in UPIH in Viet Tri city?), and provide a response to Research sub-question 3 (What is the local government capacity in Viet Tri city and how is it related to the community participation in UPIH?) and Research sub-question 4 (What is the outcome of the UPIH in Viet Tri city with community participation?). The fourth section will present the pattern of community participation in Viet Tri city that will be further discussed by comparing it with other patterns in 3 other cities to answer the Research sub-question 4 (What are the best ways to engage and support community participation in UPIH that have a potential to improve and produce a good outcome of the project?)

5.2 Community participation in housing upgrading project

For several years the community participation in community savings fund were initiated by the community and implemented in Viet Tri city (Giang. Tu, Chairwoman of Women's Union of Viet Tri city, 2014). According to Giang (2014), the community saving fund was not initiated by the government in many neighborhoods. It was organized as a self-help program among women within the community. Similar to the community savings fund, the community participation in neighborhood development was not organized by the government before the issuance of the 2007 Ordinance on

Grassroots Democracy. Since 2000, the city government has a policy to use the Women's Union as the organization to facilitate the actions of community savings. The project of the community savings fund was chosen as it has been implementing in Viet Tri for more than 10 years and its outcomes have affected the neighborhood community living conditions. The community savings fund has provided credit for the neighborhood community to participate in widening and resurfacing the inner-neighborhood road with concrete and it has built the drainage system. The community savings fund for housing improvement has been implemented for more than 5 years. It helps to solve the problems of improving deteriorated houses which were built since the 1960s but were unable to be renovated due to the lack of state budget (*Figure 8*). It has also helped the community neighborhood to prepare a detailed plan by the community under the technical support of the local government. It is then approved and implemented successfully with a limited budget from the local government.

In 2000, Viet Tri city received the support from the VIE/97/008 project which was sponsored by the UNDP and the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR) with a



Figure 8: Deteriorated housing before the improvement project was implemented (picture taken by Women's Union staff in 2000)

Source : ACVN

budget of 191 million VND (\approx US\$ 10,000).

This fund was loaned to 4 groups in Viet Tri city namely Tien Cat, Duu Lau, Tho Son and Bach Hac for economic development and infrastructure

improvement. Until

2005, the recovery of the fund has faced difficulty in some

groups as the loan was given directly to the community without the

managerial cooperation

of the city and ward (Report of Community Development Fund of Viet Tri city, 2011).

In 2005, the Women's Union of Viet Tri city carried out a survey in 8 selected wards and communes with 65 neighborhoods. This survey focused on the issue of community development and especially on community needs. The result of the survey showed:

- There is a high demand on capital investment for infrastructure improvement, housing improvement and economic development.
- There are already savings groups but they are isolated, they do not have complex networking and do not create community strength.
- Groups do not want to expand to a network due to the fear of the risk of losing money.
- There are many experienced people with knowledge and skills covering a large variety of fields that are prepared to volunteer and share their knowledge if the community requires.

Based on the survey results, the City People's Committee has the direction to guide the activities of the Community Development Fund of Viet Tri city. The Women's Union of the City was appointed to steer the activities of the Fund.

The forming of the "Community Saving Fund" (CDF) with the goal of supporting the community, low-income groups, improving infrastructure, living conditions and environmental hygiene; creating the habit of saving within the community; improving the capacity of group management, financial management and strengthening the relationship between community, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and local government is considered as one of the innovative ideas in Viet Tri city.

Community participation within the projects of Viet Tri city has the following characteristics:

- Width of participation

Unlike other 'un-official self-organized' community savings funds, the Community Development Fund (CDF) in Viet Tri and 4 other cities is used for community driven approach in urban development planning and management (ACVN, 2012). In Viet Tri, there have been 248 different-size groups of community saving with 4,519 members. (Community Development Fund of Viet Tri city, 2013). The size of the group depends

on the number of people who are willing to participate in the group or the decision of participating in the groups depends on the benefit they gained from the participation process. There are many households in which all members have community savings books. This saving fund has mobilized more than VND 6,363,000,000 (\approx US\$ 300,000) and the groups have regulated this capital source itself helping members to build their own houses, improve the infrastructure and improve households income. In *Table 8*, it can be seen that the number of members involve in the CDF has been increasing gradually every year. It shows the expansion of the width of participation within the community relating to the CDF program.

Table 8. Development of CDF in the period of 2007 – 2012

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number of saving groups	70	155	244	254	265	248
Number of members	1108	2207	3830	4096	4608	4519
Saving budget	400 mil. VND	1,444 mil. VND	2,719 mil. VND	3,100 mil. VND	6,132 mil. VND	6,363 mil. VND

(Source: CDF Viet Tri, 2013)

In 2009, the Asian Coalition for Community Action (ACCA) gave a non-refundable grant of US\$40,000 for the improvement of housing with community participation to Viet Tri. It was given to the CDF to carry out the improvement of drainage, roads, communal housing as well as improvement of individual houses within the community.

In the housing project, the People’s Committee of Viet Tri city organized many dialog meetings among the stakeholders including city government, city departments, wards of government and the community to work together in finding solutions for housing improvement in Van Phu and Nong Trang. The volunteer community architects worked with households who wished to upgrade their houses and to design houses in a row. The community in No4 neighborhood of Nong Trang ward self-organized meetings with other members of the community to reach agreements on locating land plots. This is an example of one way of making a detailed plan (Giang. Tu,



Figure 9: Community members prepare the spatial detail plan for their neighborhood

Source: ACVN

Chairwomen of Women's Union of Viet Tri city, 2014). These plans, in which the land plot has a minimum size of 50 m², were approved by the city government. There was a total of 30,000 USD budget granted from SELAVIP were located for the housing improvement credit. 120 households in Nong Trang and 44

households in Van Phu were discussed the land use plan as well as land plot location were agreed upon. They negotiated themselves that 50% of household would stay and improve their-own house, the rest would be rehoused to a resettlement area located by the city. In the first phase, 54 households were provided with credit for housing improvement. (CDF Viet Tri, 2013)

Community members in Viet Tri and like other cities in Vietnam have very close relationships within their neighborhoods. In Vietnam, the Women's Union is a mass organization, a "socio-political organization"; its functions include protecting women's legitimate rights and striving for gender equality. Its tasks include supporting women in strengthening capacity, improving educational knowledge as well as taking care of women's physical and spiritual problems. It is organized at all levels, from central, provincial, district to commune level. It is easy for a woman to ask the Women's Union either in her living neighborhood or her working place for help in many activities. The community savings fund in Viet Tri started with the self-help community savings program in the local Women's Union to help households to earn enough money for living, it provides micro-credit for women to cultivate vegetables or run a small business. The community savings fund in Viet Tri helps households to improve their living conditions and focuses on infrastructure and

housing improvement. In every household, a woman on behalf of the entire family signs the contract to borrow money from the CDF. But actually, every member of the family is involved in the process. They participate in meetings and discussions with other community members regarding the regulation and management of CDF locally. They contribute in earning money for paying back the loan. They participate in preparing a detailed plan of the neighborhood with technical support from city departments.

At the beginning of the project, general information was delivered to every family through the channel of the Women's Union and neighborhood community meetings using the staff members of the Women's Union, community leaders and volunteers. The people in the community were encouraged to participate in the initial steps. It focused on the volunteer participation of all classes of people and the self-control of each member who participates as all of the people discuss and form the regulations for savings activities and managerial methods. They work and discuss together to form an agreement regarding the interest rates, lending criteria and saving methods to solve their-own problems.



Figure 10: Community members prepare the spatial detail plan for the neighborhood on 3D model

Source: ACVN

meetings, most of the family representatives participate. There are 254 households in neighborhood No4 with total of 1,142 people. The neighborhood No4 is defined by an

It is considered as their own project, following the decision from city leaders and city CDF that leaves the decision power on financial issues and the detail plan to the community, the neighborhood community members are self-organized in groups of 10 to 15 households who discuss the issues together. In the group

administrative system. There are 8 neighborhoods which have their own specific numerical order. There are 11 residential groups in which 8 groups have relocated households. The required minimum size for each land-plot that is eligible for issuing registered certificate is 50 m² but the existing plot for each family (household) is only 24 m². Therefore, it needed adjustment and some families have to be relocated. In order to reach the required minimum size for each land-plot that is eligible for issuing a registered certificate, the existing land-plots have to be adjusted and resized and therefore some households have to be relocated to another place. After negotiations among community members, 186 households were given the land-use-right certificate and 68 households were relocated to another area provided by the city. The first stage of the project started in 2011, 40 households were eligible to apply for the credit provided by the CDF according to discussions and voted on by the community. In the process of preparation, all households' representatives actively participate in the discussions and making a new spatial detailed plan for their neighborhood. The affected neighborhoods also hold many meetings with each other to negotiate on the issues of relocation and land plot arrangements. 'They organize the meetings almost every evening' (Giang. Tu, Chairwoman of Women's Union of Viet Tri city, 2014).



Figure 11: Community members prepare the spatial detail plan for the neighborhood on 3D model with technical support from ACVN's architect
Source: ACVN

This activity is technically supported by architects from ACVN and technicians from city departments.

In order to run the CDF, the Women's Union and the Community in Viet Tri form the management boards of the CDF at all levels, from city level to neighborhood level.

These management boards are supported by the community volunteers to create and

expand the network of community savings groups within the neighborhoods. All community savings groups have their own operational regulations prepared and decided upon by its members. Savings groups operate under the guidance of the Management Board of the Region Community Savings Fund and it has a transparent and publicized account book system. The community organized themselves the boards of communication, construction, implementation and monitoring in each neighborhood. When preparing upgrading proposals, following the direction of the People's Committee of the city, the community and the Women's Union invite officials from city and wards level, officials in government professional offices such as cadastral, construction, natural resources and environment offices to participate in the meetings to solve the problems and conflicts. Discussions are based on the negotiated basis with criteria suggested by the People's Committee of the city. Members of the Community Development Fund management board participate in the meetings but the decisions are made by the community.

When a community agreement is made, the selected proposal is approved by the city to be implemented. The implementation is done under the supervision of CDF management boards and stakeholders especially the community.

As can be seen from the projects, all households in the neighborhood were actively participating in the projects. People in neighborhoods actively participate in the process because they realize that the project improves their environment and that the project is a community asset.

National and international NGOs have provided technical assistance to support the projects. The national CSO and ACVN helped to organize training courses for community volunteers, neighborhood representatives and leaders. They helped the community with site surveys and investigation for spatial planning as well as in preparing and designing the spatial detail plans. The international NGO of ACCA helped to present the experiences and lessons learnt to the city leaders, civil social organizations, department staff and community representatives so that they were able to decide and choose a suitable approach for participation in Viet Tri.

Officials from city departments were present in meetings with the community to answer the questions related to policy, to help them in dealing with stagnations relating to legal regulations and to provide any technical assistance that was required. The

officials came from the city government, cadastral offices, the department of construction and the department of natural resources and environment.

Based on the measurement of the width of participation operationalized in chapter 3, it can be seen that the participation in housing improvement in Viet Tri involved all actors including the affected community members, the national CSO's like ACVN, the international NGOs like ACCA, the civil social organization like the Women's Union, officials coming from city government, cadastral offices, department of construction and the department of natural resources and environment. Therefore, it will get the double plus (+ +) for the width of participation.

- Depth of participation

“Neighborhoods Community participate in the project hold many meetings with each other to negotiate on the issue of relocation and land plot arrangements, negotiate on the financial issue such as term of loan, interest rate, eligibility of having loan from the Fund. Those issues are negotiated and decided by the community” (Giang. Tu, Chairwoman of Women's Union of Viet Tri city, 2014).

To support the project, learning experiences from other national and international community-driven-projects, city leaders and the city CDF management board agreed on some frameworks for community participation such as guideline on interest rates



Figure 12: Community members design their house
Source: ACVN

for loans, a framework for the detailed plan of the neighborhood following legal documents. City leaders and the city CDF management board agreed that the community members will play the central role in making decisions relating to this project and the city

related departments will guide and support them in all activities. The city officials and the City Women's Union leaders revealed that, learning from international and national lessons, the decision power given to the community motivates the community members to be involved in the project and creates satisfaction for the community with the results of the project.

The interest rates that were decided by the community were even higher than the interest rates of the Vietnam Bank for Social Policies (0.85%/month compared to 0.65%/month). This Bank is the non-profit State-own bank and provides microfinance to the poor and policy beneficiaries. The community decided that 60% of the interest will be kept in the community for management activities. The length of the loan is 5 years (60 months) for improving housing, people do not have to pay the interest for the first 6 months and there are selected households who are allowed to borrow first and then they have the responsibility to pay back the loan as well as the responsibility for the other households' chance of borrowing. The community designed on their own, a policy for reducing contribution for poor households. All procedures are transparent and discussed and decided on by the community, including all financial issues (Giang Tu, Chairwomen of Women's Union of Viet Tri city, 2014).



*Figure 13: Community members design their house in simple 3D model with support from volunteer architects.
Source: ACVN*

Viet Tri city government had experiences in Neighborhood No5 of Van Phu, where the urban spatial detail plan was prepared and designed by Hung Vuong University but could not be implemented due to the lack of budget. It caused a lot of difficulties for the community action of

improving their houses because unless the detailed plan was implemented, the land could not be issued with the land-use-right certificate and therefore the households could not apply to get the construction permission for improving activities. In neighborhood No 4 of Nong Trang, after visiting some neighborhoods in Vinh and Thailand to witness the community participation in urban planning, the city leaders, with the consultation of ACVN, decided to let the community prepare and decide their own neighborhood spatial detail plan. The plan is required to follow the legal regulations and standards on urban planning and construction. To prepare for that, city leaders required the urban planning and related departments' officials to build a framework of legislation on urban planning issues so that the community can act and make decisions within that framework.

Comparing the urban spatial detail planning progress prepared by the community with others prepared by government hired professional institutions, community members expressed that in neighborhood No 4 of Nong Trang where people were given the decision power to discuss, to make their own options, to choose and decide, all affected people enthusiastically participated from the beginning of the project. In contrast to the situation in other projects with a completed detailed plan, where people can only be consulted without any feedback mechanism from urban planning authorized institutions. It shows that the depth of participation has influenced the width of participation in the affected community.

In the Viet Tri project, the community is able to discuss and select a proposal. The approval power still remains in the hands of the government authorities. But there is a clear policy in the CDF as to the decision of financial issues and spatial plans made by the community that has 100% of consensus among community members is the final decision and it is supported by the leader of the CDF (also the vice chairman of city People's Committee). There is only one obstacle, this final decision made by community must follow the legal regulations on relevant issues of finance and urban planning. This obstacle is solved with the participation of the technical department staff members within the preparation phase of the project in community meetings who act as advisors and supporters. It can be considered as the 'power transfer' method to the community. The community can decide almost all of the aspects of the project, especially the most important ones which are financial issues. The community receives the full support of the government and the community plays the main role in the

process. The monitoring process carried out by the community guarantees the quality of the improvement project. In Edelenbos's participation ladder scale, this is considered to be 'co-decide'. Therefore, it gets the double plus (+ +) for the depth of participation.

The community participation in this project can be summarized in the following table with ranking level.

Table 9: Levels of community participation in Viet Tri city

City	Community participation	
	Width of the participation	Depth of participation
Viet Tri	+ +	+ +

This ranking level of community participation will be further discussed in relationship to the local government capacity in the next section to understand which local government capacity has resulted in the community participation.

5.3 Local government capacity in relation to community participation in housing upgrading project

In this project, one of the main characteristics of CDF is to create linkages and coordination between different organizations and different sources of funding by setting up and managing the project with community participation including support of city government. (City Alliance, 2012). In this section, local government capacity in relation to community participation will be discussed in the areas of both administration management and resources management.

a. Administration management

- Availability and degree of implementation of policy/guidelines for community participation

On May 18th 2001, Decision No. 185/2001/QD-UB was issued by the People's Committee of Viet Tri city on forming the City Management Board of CDF. Following that decision, on December 10th 2002, the People's Committee of Viet Tri city issued the Decision No. 1679/2002/QD-UB regarding the implementation regulation of the City Management Board of CDF. It shows that the city government paid attention to the community participation from the very beginning of the project.

These decisions from city government were based on the 2007 Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy which regulates community participation at a grassroots level. Although the Ordinance is a sub-law document, it is the highest sub-law document in the Vietnamese legal document system ranking and it could be the basis for a future law or policy related to participation of community in activities that are closely related with their lives.

In 2005, the People’s Committee of the city appointed the Women’s Union of Viet Tri city as the lead organization to connect community with the city government as well as the leading actor in the management board of the CDF. The city government also has a clear policy supporting improvement projects which creates the foundation for professional departments within City Government to participate in community meetings to answer questions and complaints. City Government decided that officials in government professional offices such as cadastral, construction, natural resources and environment offices have the responsibility to participate in the meetings to solve the problems related to their offices.

The priority of the participation process in Viet Tri is to encourage the involvement of the people in ‘their-own development process’ (CDF Viet Tri, 2013). It helps to create self-help groups within the community, to create links among them and links among communities within the city. In the interviews with officials from the City People’s Committee and the City Women’s Union, they mentioned that the legal framework for community participation in the fields of credit and spatial detail planning that was

applied in the Viet Tri Project created the foundation for all community activities within the project. Ms. Nguyet from the Women’s Union, who is in charge of supervising the CDF activities, said that; “this framework helps to increase the transparency in the

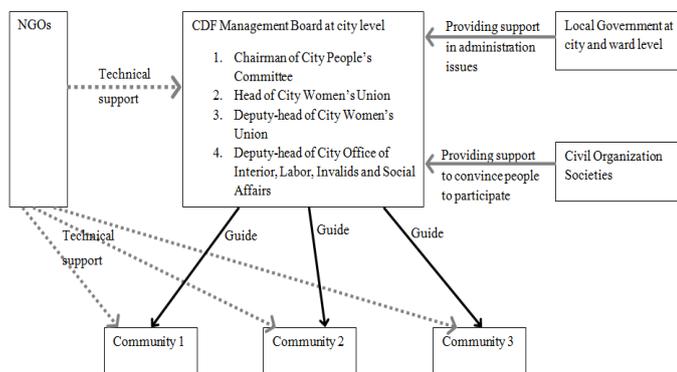


Figure 14. Management structure of CDF in Viet Tri city (Source: CDF Viet Tri, 2013)

project, especially regarding the issues the people are most interested in namely the financial and land issues”.

In the field of credit, based on the discussions and agreements with community members, Mr. Pham Viet Hung, former vice-chairman for Viet Tri People’s Committee revealed that the Regulation on management and using the housing credit fund with community participation was issued by the People’s Committee of Viet Tri city in 2009. These guidelines, frameworks and regulations have enabled the community participation activities in Viet Tri.

It can be seen that the guidelines, frameworks and policies for community participation in Viet Tri has been initiated by the city government with contributions from the community before it is adopted and fully implemented throughout the project processes. Based on the scale of the availability and degree of implementation of the guidelines for the goal of community participation, it should be ranked as a plus (+).

- Internal structures and procedures for managing participatory processes

In the first period of the project, according to officials in Viet Tri city, unlike the earlier tradition of mobilizing community participation in urban upgrading projects in Vietnam in which the neighborhood community is convinced to participate in the activities that are assigned by the local government, the CDF project in Viet Tri has created the linkage among local CSOs such as the Women’s Union, the Veteran Union, the Farmers Union and the Red Cross Association that helps community members to improve their living conditions. This linkage helps to manage and create a revolving fund contributed to, managed by and decided by the neighborhood community with technical support from the local government and NGOs. This support is given in accordance with specific requirements of each neighborhood community group.

In the administration system of Vietnam, many of the CSOs’ heads participate in the local government council and most of them are members of the ruling communist party. Their involvement in the project helps to create the ‘un-official’ procedures to manage the participatory processes.

This project has created a structure within the administration system to manage the participation process as in *Figure 14*. This internal structure creates procedures of

managing participatory processes in each community within the neighborhood. In this approach, the neighborhood community is defined according to its administrative geographical neighborhood. Although this structure of management is different from other administrative systems regulated by law, it is fully followed by the people and local government officials. In this structure, the management board plays a role as a guidance office for community decisions in the project. This structure and procedure work well within the rigid administrative system of Vietnam thanks to the members of the management board, they are also the leaders of the local government.

However, the CDF and the local government officials who have relations with the CDF activities and housing upgrading project in Viet Tri report that, the structure and management procedures with community participation are followed only within the project. Its power and effects are not strong enough to change the whole internal structure and procedures of the local government to adopt to the community participation activities. According to the Constitution, people vote for their representatives in local councils and the National Assembly. There is only a Law regarding the Organization of the People's Councils and People's Committees that guarantee the procedure and structure of participation of people's representatives in all socio-economic activities. Concerning community participation, the highest legal document regulating the procedure of participation is the 2007 Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy which is classified as a sub-law document within the Vietnamese legal documentary system. Therefore, the structures and procedures for managing community participation are in place but it is followed to a limited extent. In order to change the whole structure, it requires time and more powerful legal regulations. Following the scale on internal structure and procedures in chapter 3, it should be ranked as having a neutral position or an average scale (0).

- Effective leadership

The full support from the government in administration creates a solid foundation for community participation in the project. (Nguyet, Officer in charge of community participation of Women's Union of Viet Tri city, 2014). There are two types of leaders within this project. The first type are the local government leaders who are involved in the project in the role of participating as a member of the management board of the CDF. The other type is the 'leader' of the community participating in the project. In

this project, the later type of leader is sometimes different from the official community leader who has been appointed by the local government.

Concerning the first type of leadership, the forming of the “CDF in Viet Tri city received full support from the city leaders” (Officials in Viet Tri local government departments, 2014). The Head of the Management Board of the CDF at city level is also the Chairman (or Vice Chairman) of the People’s Committee of Viet Tri city. Although the CDF Management board has no power of making decisions in administrative issues, by involving the CDF Management Board, the chairman of the City People’s Committee can direct the city departments to cooperate and support community activities as well as solve any stagnation in local policy and administrative procedures. Being the Head of the Management Board of the CDF, the leader of the city People’s Committee learnt lessons from the CDF in Vinh city and from projects in Thailand, he was able to set a new direction, and create something new that was applicable to the Viet Tri city situation. While setting the new direction, the leaders in Viet Tri city used their management skills to guide people to fulfill the project goals, in a smooth and efficient way. The deputy head of the CDF Management Board is also the leader of the Women’s Union of the city. The Women’s Union is a very important CSO in community participation approaches especially the savings scheme within the CDF program. “In Vietnam, the woman in the household plays an important role in the community saving and revolving support programs.” (Ms. Vinh, ACVN leader, 2014). Due to this, there is a high level of support and community participation. However, in the next phase of the project, a Vice-chairman of the City People’s Committee had been appointed as the Head of the Management Board of CDF. Although the project still had clear and effective leadership in support of community participation, this change slightly reduced the power to direct the city departments to cooperate and support community activities.

In the second type of leader, under the guidance of the CDF management board and the technical support from the NGOs under the scheme of “learning by doing”, the leaders of the community activities are “normal people within the community who have free time (they are not very busy) and have a harmonious family” (Thuy. L, Viet Tri Women’s Union, 2014). It is now considered that these ‘community leaders’ work more effectively than the ‘traditional’ community leaders who are normally appointed by the local government. When a ‘normal person’ is accepted to be a community

leader, they show dedication to work for community. When the ‘normal’ community leaders talk to the neighborhood, people feel at ease to discuss options and solutions. It helps to bring a high level of community participation. Based on the scale of effective leadership in supporting community participation, it should be ranked as a plus (+).

Besides the administration management, there is another aspect from the local government capacity that has an effect on the community participation. It is the resource management issue.

b. Resources management

- Availability of financial resources to support community participation

Starting with the grant from ACCA, it is similar to another housing upgrading project in Vinh city. However, the grant amount was limited and there was no subsidy from the state budget for upgrading activities. According to the report form CDF Viet Tri (2015), the total budget of the CDF for housing upgrading projects in neighborhood No 4 of Nong Trang ward was USD 30,000. Provided to the community as grant support, it can only support 10 households (or families) out of 324 households in the neighborhood. The city leaders and the CDF Management Board proposed the idea of a loan scheme instead of grant support and that idea is vigorously supported. Since 2005 there has been a well-organized structure in management of the CDF and they

have learnt from other projects how to recover the budget.

The idea of a loan scheme does not only serve a limited number of people in the community but creates a network whereby everyone in the community will benefit from that fund. People in the

Ngày vay: 23/10/2012... Thời hạn vay: 6.0. Tháng...
Số tiền vay: 14.000.000... Lãi suất: 5.5%

Ngày tháng năm	Vốn vay			Người thu ký tên
	Trả gốc	Trả lãi	Tồn	
10/11/2012		54.000		(Hàng xóm) Hoàng
10/12/2012		85.000		Hoàng
10/1/2013		85.000		Hoàng
10/2/2013		85.000		Hoàng
10/3/2013		85.000		Hoàng
10/4/2013		85.000		Hoàng
10/5/2013	186.000	44.000	984.000	Thị Hương 5/1000 Văn Tuấn 2010
10/6/2013	186.000	74.000	968.000	Hoàng

Figure 15: Credit book in the CDF project in Viet Tri for housing improvement.

community selected the list and decided who will be given the priority to receive a loan. The priority list consisted of 40 households in neighborhood No 4 of Nong Trang based on the selection criteria prepared and decided by the community. The amount of loan for each household (family) was \approx US\$ 500. The community members who received advantages earlier have a responsibility to the rest of people in the community to pay back the loan to the CDF so that the rest of community can have access to that fund. People in the community savings groups decide upon the interest rates and the way to spend the funds collected by the interest in each level of management board. In many groups, they decided that 60% of interest funds collected should be kept in the community to serve the community activities such as sports activities, cultural activities or awarding for excellent pupils within the neighborhoods. The management board transfers the power of making decisions related to financial issues to the community. The city framework decided to allow the community to discuss credit and financial issues. The city officials noted that it follows the Ordinance of Grassroots Democracy. Moreover, the power transfer of making decisions related to financial issues to the community brought the real ownership of the project to the community. The CDF management board only participated in the meetings and provided city guidelines and criteria on related issues. The decisions were made by the community.

According to the report from the CDF Viet Tri (2015) and interviews with the CDF and the Women's Union officials, it showed that the total number of households receiving a loan from CDF project to upgrade their houses had increased to 62. It means that 22 more households were able to join the housing improvement loan project. It was reported that the number of households that could get funding in this housing improvement loan project in neighborhood No 4 of Nong Trang will be increased in the future as 100% of the households in the network pay back the principal loan and interest. "One of the reasons of making the financial resources of this project sustainable is the transparency in financial issues" Women's Union officials and people in neighborhood No4 commented. In this project, all financial transactions have been carried out using banks and bank accounts. It showed the financial transparency especially in Vietnam where the transaction in cash is preferred. This was the agreement made by the community and the CDF which follows the city framework. This is really a new method of financial management that has not been

applied in any similar project, especially in a country like Vietnam where financial activities in cash are more preferred. According to the Regulation of Providing Credit for housing improvement in Viet Tri, households pay back the loan principal and interest monthly. After collecting the money from the households, the CDF management board in the neighborhood deposit the money in the ward CDF account. After 3 months, the CDF management board at ward level transfers the collected deposits to the city CDF account. The city CDF based on the deposit within the account and the loan proposals from the ward decide on the financial provision for the next group in the list. It gives the people more trust in the financial management system and guarantees the sustainability of the fund. It can be seen that the financial resources to support the community participation in the project has been secured and increasing. Therefore, it can be ranked as a double plus (+ +).

- Availability of human resources

The People's Committee of Viet Tri city have received only support from ACVN and other NGOs and CSOs such as SELAVIP and ACCA to organize seminars to train staff and to exchange experiences. There are no official training courses for Viet Tri staff in the field of community participation. City leaders and staff have gained knowledge in this field through projects with "learning-by-doing" activities.

From exchanging experiences with experts, The People's Committee of Viet Tri city had the idea of creating a system of a Management Board of the CDF from city level to the neighborhood groups. In the Management Board of the CDF of the neighborhood, the head of neighborhood group is the head of the Management board, the deputy head of the Management Board is the head of the Women's Union branch within the neighborhood. The Management board received the assistance from 26 Community support volunteers to help to expand the CDF network in the city territory. The Head of the Management Board of the CDF at city level is the leader of the People's Committee of city. According to the Regulation of Providing Credit for housing improvement in Viet Tri, the Management Board of the CDF at city level comprises of a leader of the People's Committee, a Chair-woman of the city Women's Union, a vice chair-woman of the city Women's Union, a Chief Officer of the City People's Committee Office or a leader of the City Office of Interior, Labour and social affairs. At ward level, a Management Board of the CDF includes a leader of ward

People's Committee, a leader of ward of the Women's Union and two community-selected representatives. Therefore, it received the great support from the city government as well as the ward's people's committees.

According to the 2005 assessment of the city People's Committee, the capability of human resources in Viet Tri city did not meet the demand of the community participation activities. However, the survey organized by the city Women's Union reveals that there have been many advocates in the community who have knowledge and experience and they are willing to exchange or share experiences with the community. The survey confirms that the human resource in the community is huge but there is no network to organize and use resources effectively. The organization of the CDF helps to take advantages of these resources. Nevertheless, the level of officially trained staff in the People's Committee to support community participation is not high enough due to the lack of training courses for staff in Viet Tri city as well as the limitation of the budget for training staff in this field. It is proposed that there should be more support from the national network of the CDF to strengthen the staff capacity in Viet Tri but it is still limited and therefore it affects the human resources in Viet Tri.

Based on the scale of availability of human resources in local government capacity, it can be seen that there is adequate trained staff to support community participation and therefore, it should be ranked as a plus (+).

- Communication and learning orientation

Information exchange and communication processes in the project are transparent. The framework proposed by city leaders enables the community to discuss and cooperate with the local government. Following the policy and guideline in the framework, the communication channel is mostly a face-to-face discussion. According to the people in the neighborhood, in the preparation phase of the project, community members organized meetings in groups almost every evening. Local government officials alternatively joined in the meetings based on the issue discussed and the stagnations that the community was facing. Based on the lessons learned in other similar projects in Vinh city and Thailand as well as from exchange experiences in seminars, the idea of communication for this CDF project has a transparent and clear channel through the CDF management board with the presence of the community selected representatives

from neighborhoods to ward and up to the city level. In preparing for the project, in 2006 the CDF Management Board at city level organized a seminar “Strengthening the network and preparing plan for the CDF” with 135 participants from other provinces and cities, representatives from all levels, sectors and departments of Viet Tri city and especially 65 delegates and representatives from the 65 surveyed-neighborhoods in Viet Tri. They worked altogether, discussed and assessed the existing activities of the CDF and proposed solutions to work more effectively and expand the networks. One of the proposed solutions was to increase the quality of the CDF activities, there should be a clear management mechanism, a management board at all levels especially the grassroots level. The other solution was focused on the financial issues and it was agreed by the city leaders after the seminar that it would be decided by the community within the fundamental framework prepared by the city government.

As a result of this decision, the criteria for borrowing were also prepared by the community. They decide themselves as to the amount each household may loan. In the projects that need a community contribution, they build the contribution reduction policy for the neighborhood community, in which the poor households do not have to pay the contribution and the low-income households only need to pay three fourths or two thirds of the contribution.

The community organizes the board of construction and monitoring by itself. They hire the consultants and contractors to carry out the project. It is estimated that the cost of the work was reduced by 30% compared to the normal state-budget projects.

The frequent communication between the community and the local government prevented any conflicts in the preparation and implementation processes. The effects of the outcomes of the project will be discussed in the next sections. The communication channel is the dual-channel of transferring information. There is a feedback mechanism in the system through the CDF management board and the Women’s Union. Therefore, it should be ranked as a double plus (+ +).

The local government capacity provided support to the community participation. The table below is a summary of the local government capacity in ranking levels:

Table 10: Levels of local government capacity in Viet Tri city

City	Local government capacity					
	Resources management			Administration management		
	Financial resource	Human resource	Information exchange	Goal/priority setting	Structure/procedures	Effective leadership
Viet Tri	++	+	++	+	0	+

The support from local government on community participation affects the results of the outcomes of the project and it will be discussed in the next section.

5.4 Outcomes of the housing upgrading project

a. Content outcomes

- Innovation factor

The issue of community participation in urban upgrading projects is not new in Vietnam. As mentioned in the previous chapter, there are many legal documents and laws which regulate the communities' right to be informed and to be participate in a project, especially when it is related to land issues. However, the concept of community participation mentioned in many Vietnam official documents is fitting people in the plan or activities which have already been decided upon by the government officials or government led organizations (Wit 2007).

There are several similarities of the project in Vinh city and in Viet Tri, where the community members participate in the housing upgrading projects and “jointly dismantle the house to reuse the building materials, jointly hire the construction developers and jointly order the building materials to achieve a lower price”. However, the neighborhood community in Viet Tri has the power to decide the mechanism for saving money, they are able to set their own interest rates to pay back the Community Savings Fund and have a responsibility to maintain the Fund for other households. As mentioned in the previous section, the leader of Viet Tri city, with advice from the Women's Union and ACVN, partook in this innovation. Community members are given the responsibility to participate and make decisions that affect their living conditions. Their ideas and proposals were also respected and followed. It presents the fact that if the city leaders did not have vision and management skills, the new direction could not have been reached effectively and smoothly.

The projects have improved the living conditions of the neighborhood as Viet Tri is not a well developed city and it needs a lot of investment in infrastructure improvement. This project involved all of the people in the neighborhood and gave the people a feeling that the project belongs to them.

The project created a responsibility among people in the community. People in the community also have an obligation to the others within the project as one of the people in area No4 of Nong Trang neighborhood said; “People in the neighborhood have improved the neighborhood living condition together, but in turn it helps creating a close relationship within the neighborhood” (Interview with people in in the area No4 of Van Phu neighborhood, 2014).

With lesson learned from the Vinh city in a similar upgrading housing project in the neighborhood which was also funded by the ACCA, the community leaders and CDF officials held negotiations with the people in the neighborhood and realized that the model of having a; “shared building foundation, and a shared wall between the houses” was not suitable for the context of private ownership of land use rights for each single plot of land. In the context of Viet Tri, community members agreed that the houses would be built with a separate foundation and walls between the houses. In interviews with many people within the research area, they commented that the reason for this decision is that it would be easier for them when a single house needs improvement or if it is sold.

The SELAVIP grant was relatively small (30,000 USD) compared to the number of households (40 households selected from 324 households in neighborhood). Interviews held in 2014 with people in the neighborhood No3 and No4 of Nong Trang ward revealed that the cost in Viet Tri for constructing a new simple one story brick house within a plot of 50 square meters of land is VND 60 million (\approx 2,700 USD) and the cost for a new two story house was VND 200 million (\approx 9,000 USD). In the meeting between the CDF, the community and the city government, they discussed that if the grant is divided and given to each household, they will receive a relatively small amount of money (\approx 300 USD) and it was not enough money for the needed housing improvements. It was proposed that the households involved in the project would be given the power to discuss and make decisions on the following issues. These decisions were then approved of by the city government.

- They were able to prepare for themselves a detailed plan for the neighborhood, following the requirements of the legal regulations with support from city departments relating to planning. Due to the regulation of the minimum amount of area for a single plot of land that was able to be given a land registration, 50% of the households were relocated to other areas of the city. The city government supported the project with the preparation of land for the relocated people. But the people within the community had the obligation to discuss and amongst themselves to decide who will stay and who will be relocated.
- The grant or fund was given to the people within the community on the condition that they were eligible to borrow from the fund to improve their houses with interest which was decided upon by the people within the community. The CDF and city government consulted national and international experts for the regulations relating to the borrowing time and paying back progress. The payment was calculated per month for 60 months. In the first phase of the project, 120 households were eligible to borrow money. Each household was provided with VND 10 million (\approx 500 USD) as a loan from the fund in 2011.

The CDF idea was considered by the local government officers to be an innovative idea as it helps to deal with one of the very difficult issues in Viet Tri, the problem of planning and housing improvement. It brought people in community together and created a consensus among them although it consumed a lot of time in many meetings to reach the agreements.

STT	HỌ TÊN	TRANG THỨC	GỐC VAY	TRẢ LÃI HÀNG THÁNG	TRẢ LÃI QUÁT HÀNG THÁNG	TỔNG SỐ GỐC VAY LÃI	TỔNG GỐC VAY	KỶ NHẬN	CHỈ DẪN
1	ĐOÀO THỊ MINH	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
2	NGUYỄN THỊ TƯỜNG	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
3	ĐANG HOÀI DỨC	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
4	TRƯƠNG THỊ HẠO	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
5	KU THIÊN	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
6	HOÀNG THỊ MINH TÂN	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
7	NGUYỄN THỊ HOA	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
8	NGUYỄN THỊ MINH	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
9	LÊ QUANG ĐO	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
10	ĐƯƠNG THỊ NGUYỆT	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
11	LÊ THỊ OANH	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
12	NGUYỄN THỊ PHƯƠNG	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
13	ĐAM THỊ HANH	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
14	NGUYỄN THỊ PHƯƠNG HOA	S8	514.000	186.000	32.000	218.000	328.000		
TỔNG CỘNG			7.196.000	2.604.000	448.000	3.052.000	4.592.000		

Figure 16: Calculation of interest and the amount of paying back money for each household prepared by community

It shows that the innovation factor appeared with changes in the policy from the city government along with the effective leadership of local government leaders, allowing community members to discuss and make decisions within the legal framework of the city. The new idea on financial issues was accepted and applied within the project. However, its impact is limited to only that specific project in financial and planning issues. Therefore, it should be scaled as good or ranked as a plus (+).

- Effectiveness solution

According to the report from city CDF and the Women's Union of Viet Tri city, 100% of the households involved in the project paid the agreed upon monthly amount that was borrowed (plus interest) to the fund since 2011. With the money that was paid-back, the CDF was able to give a loan to



Figure 17: The houses in neighborhood within project (right) and outside project (left)

either 1 or 2 more households every month. This project shows sustainability as the network of the CDF continues to expand and more savings groups join the fund.

The project is sustainable and it promotes community participation and the CDF is the catalysis of its success. (Dung. D., Vice Chairman of the People's Committee of Viet Tri city). There was a drawback in the solution mentioned by the CDF and local government officials in the early stage of the project; it was difficult to encourage people to spend a large amount of money to improve their house especially in a poor city like Viet Tri. However, a reason that the people were very happy to join the project was due to the transparent process of the project and the support policy from the city government.

The effective solution showed in the approval of the community prepared detail plan and that plan was implemented with a highly consensus among the community

members. Based on that plan, the plot of land for each house in the neighborhood was officially registered and the households involved in the project were eligible to receive a land use right certificate and house ownership certificate. It ensured that people invested their own money in their own property. “We are happy that we can have our own approved detailed plan implemented and we are given the land use right certificate. The project makes our neighborhood better, if you compare it with the Neighborhood No5 of Van Phu where a detailed plan prepared by Hung Vuong University had been approved but it could not be implemented due to the lack of a budget. Their houses are deteriorated and they are not being upgraded” (interview with people in in the area No4 of Nong Trang neighborhood, 2014).

The solutions applied in Viet Tri housing improvement project within the CDF were effective and durable. With respect to the financial issue, the most important factor that guarantees the durability of a project, it can be seen that using the credit mechanism, community members are responsible for their loans. The total number of households receiving a loan from the CDF project to upgrade their house increased from 40 to 62 households. 22 extra households where given the opportunity of the housing improvement loan project showing that the project continues to expand. The fact that 100% of the households in the network payed back the principal loan and the interest guarantees the effectiveness and sustainability of the project.

With regard to the planning issues, the spatial detailed plan prepared by the community with the advice from the ACVN and technical support from the city departments that was implemented shows the effectiveness of the project. Compared with the ‘inability to be implemented’ detailed plan prepared by Hung Vuong University in Neighborhood No5 of Van Phu, in which the community were only ‘consulted’, the approved and

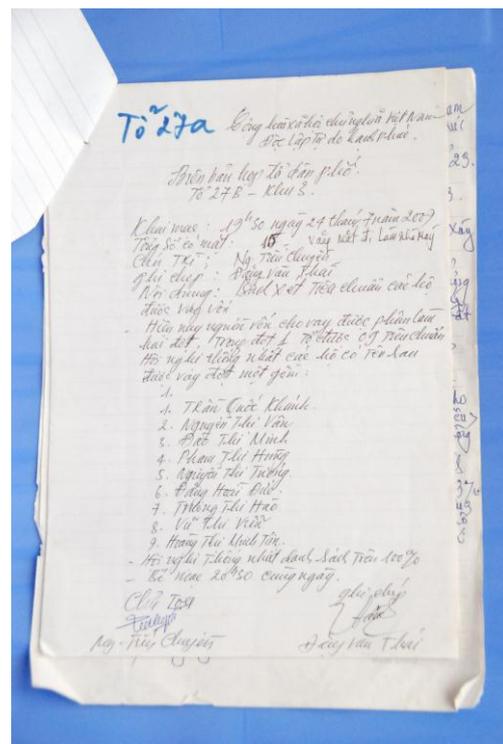


Figure 18: The community meeting minutes on the issue of selecting household who receive the loan from the project

implemented plan in Nong Trang helped the households to receive the land-use-right certificates, construction permits and they were able to improve their homes. This solution reduces the conflict between the households and the government in planning issues, especially with the relocated households in the community, because it was based on a consensus among the community members which was reached after many meetings, discussions and negotiations. This solution avoids forced relocation situations whereas in other planning projects, the forced relocation situation causes much trouble for both households and the local government. Unlike other planning projects, in the Viet Tri housing upgrading project within the CDF, people were pleased with the results and there are no queries after the discussions and negotiations have been completed. The transparent and effective channels of communication and the dedicated leadership, especially at community level, resulted in these outcomes and their effectiveness in planning issues. It can be ranked as a double plus (+ +) for the effectiveness of the solution according to the scale in chapter 3.

b. Process outcomes

- Level of support from actors through satisfaction

The main approach of this project is focusing on the voluntary participation of the neighborhood community through the savings activities through self-help savings groups. With technical support from NGOs such as ACCA, ACVN, the CDF project in Viet Tri used the mapping approach done by the community members. According to Ms. Vu Thi Vinh, Secretary General of ACVN, this mapping approach was applied differently from other initiated study approaches in other projects, in which the data from the community and beneficiaries was requested to be given to the professionals, NGOs and local government to prepare the proposals. In Viet Tri, the local community members and local government officials were taught skills through training courses, study tours and exchanges of knowledge.

In the mapping approach, with the support form NGOs, the neighborhood community created their-own background data for defining their problems, selecting priorities and creating their action plans. According to Ms. Nguyet from the Viet Tri Women's Union, the contents of background data included:

- Status of the community neighborhood

- Current condition of the infrastructure system
- Community potentials
- Vulnerable groups within the community
- Priority issues of the community

When participating in the community participation project carried out in Viet Tri, officials from Viet Tri People's Committee expressed that the main and important technical aspects of this activity is to give the community a feeling that they are cognizant and can control the development themselves. Thereby, they are confident in their ability to solve their problems rather than relying on outsiders who will, "come and go" according to the projects cycle. In this process, the participation of the community is not forced by any organization but due to the structure of the project there is a high level of integration and participation.

It started with support from NGOs and innovative ideas based on the lessons learnt from national and international projects, the CDF in Viet Tri created clear and transparent procedures for the project. The satisfaction on the process of implementing projects shows in the number of meetings there were in the neighborhood and the number of community members who were involved in those meetings. "They organize meetings almost every evening and almost all of the household representatives participate in the meetings as they know that they have been given power to improve their own neighborhood. They are satisfied with every meeting when there is a participation by city officials and they help us to solve the problems of issues regarding land, finance and housing regulations" (Giang Tu, Chairwoman of the Women's Union of Viet Tri city, 2014).

It shows that the level of support management based on satisfaction among actors from the community and NGOs to city government officials who participated in the project is very high. It can be ranked as a double plus (+ +)

- Progress of action on stagnation and conflict prevention

As described in the previous sections, city government officials participated in the meetings with the community members from a very early stage of the project. In the meetings they discuss and define problems. When facing stagnations, the CDF and the community leaders invited land and housing related officials from the cadastral office,

city government, construction department, natural resources and environmental department and ward government together to discuss and solve it. The stagnations are mainly with planning issues. For example, the regulation requires the minimum area of a plot of land to be qualified to be given the land-use right certificate is 50 square meters. However, the neighborhood was built in 1960s, it comprised of one story rows of houses and at that time, every house only had an area of 24 square meters. So the land use rights for each plot of land could not be issued. As a consequence, pursuant to the law on construction, it is not possible to permit a construction permit for housing improvement unless there is an issuance of a land-use right certificate. In this situation, there was an idea raised in the meetings that 50% of the households (50 families) would have to be relocated to another place. This stagnation goes beyond the capability of the community to be able to solve it. Thus, officials from the cadastral office, city government, construction department, natural resources and environmental



Figure 19: Community meeting with CDF and city officials
Source: ACVN

department helped the community in this situation by guaranteeing a place for relocation for 50% of the households. In Vietnam, officials from cadastral offices, city governments, construction departments, natural resources and environmental departments are in charge of land issues.

Officials from the cadastral office, city government and construction department are in charge of spatial detail planning and housing construction issues.

All of these problems and stagnations were discussed and solutions were sought from a very early stage of the project helped to prevent a conflict within the implementation process.

Easy and transparent channels of information provision from community to the city government through organizations such as the Women’s Union and the CDF helped to prevent conflict and solve the problems in the implementation of the project.

The biggest stagnation in urban housing upgrading projects is the lack of a budget for implementing the approved plan especially in a poor city like Viet Tri. The comprehensive solutions in this project in Viet Tri helped people to increase their willingness to spend their money on their own properties that was guaranteed by the government. The flexibility of policy direction from provincial and city levels helped to minimize the conflicts and help the project to be implemented effectively. Therefore it is ranked as a double plus (+ +) for its progress of action on stagnation and conflict prevention.

The outcomes of the housing upgrading project in Viet Tri within the CDF was considered successful in creating improved living conditions for the community and it continues to expand the number of households involved in and receiving benefits from this housing credit mechanism. The direction and ways of implementation community participation in the decision making processes have encouraged people to take part in the network and have created a responsibility towards other members of the community.

The outcomes of the project in ranked level are in the below table

Table 11: Levels of outcomes of project in Viet Tri city

City	Outcomes			
	Content Outcome		Process Outcome	
	Innovation factor	Effective solution	Support	Progress of actions
Viet Tri	+	++	++	++

This outcome resulted from the relationship with community participation with support from the local government capacity and it will be discussed further in the next section.

5.5 Relationship between community participation and outcomes of the housing upgrading project in Viet Tri city with support from the local government capacity

Housing upgrade projects are one of the most important projects for city development and it is always being paid attention to by the local government as it helps to improve the living conditions for its citizens. However, in the situation of Vietnam especially in small and poor cities like Viet Tri, there are many houses that belong to the government and they are on unregistered land. The reason is that the neighborhood has no approved detailed plan or has a plan without a budget for implementation. The land-use-right ownership may be unclear or there is uncertainty as to the property ownership which may prevent people from investing in house improvement.

Like the housing project in Vinh city which will be discussed in next chapter, the pattern of financing in this project was based on a loan scheme. From the grant budget provided by international organizations, the CDF management board and the city government provided a loan to households and encouraged them to establish and become involved in the savings program. The loan amount was not much compared to the amount of investment to improve the houses. According to the people in the neighborhood of Nong Trang, it accounted for 10 to 30 percent of the total cost. But it can be considered as the catalyst for the willingness to spend money on housing development. Besides, the guarantee from the local government that the communities self prepared detailed plan of the neighborhood would be approved and implemented and that the plan would be the basis for issuing land use right certificates and house ownership certificates made people feel very enthusiastic to participate in the project.

It is the high level of depth of participation in the project and the financial schemes that ensured that all the people in the community would receive the same benefits from project that influenced the projects effectiveness.

On the other hand, the clear and transparent system with frequent, open and reliable communication helped to avoid stagnations within the implementation process. Frequent meetings between the community members, CDF management board and local government officials reduced conflicts and prevented deadlocks in the project and it also helped to encourage more people to become involved in the project and support the project. A clear and transparent system also brought satisfaction to the actors involved in the project.

The summary of the levels of each sub-indicators of three (3) variables are in the below table

Table 12: Levels of 3 variables in Viet Tri city

City	Local government capacity						Community participation		Outcomes			
	Resources management			Administration management			Width of participation	Depth of participation	Content Outcome		Process Outcome	
	Financial resource	Human resource	Information exchange	Goal/priority setting	Structure/ Procedures	Effective leadership					Innovation factor	Effective solution
Viet Tri	++	+	++	+	0	+	++	++	+	++	++	++

The effective leadership influenced the goal and priority settings and policies for community participation. In Viet Tri city, the leader of the CDF at municipal level was also the Vice Chairman of the People’s Committee of Viet Tri city, his right direction and vision regarding community participation had impacts on city policy, priorities and goal settings for project implementation. The policy of fostering community participation in urban upgrading projects influenced the width of participation and encouraged the community members to join. The changes in policy may also have impacts on the depth of participation when it creates a framework for the community to perform. Therefore, it had impacts on both the width and the depth of participation.

(1) Which is shown in *Figure 20*

Effective leaders always have influence on communication channels. It is only dual, transparent communication channels that can help leaders work effectively. Effective leaders are always eager for clear, transparent and dual channels of communication that can help them in their work. In this project, the information exchange mechanism strongly influenced the width and the depth of participation. This clear and dual communication channel helped people to express their desires to the government. It helped them discuss and negotiate with the local government. Seeing that it was an efficient channel of communication, more people were then willing to participate in the project. Clear and transparent communication also helped to transfer the ideas and proposals of the community as well as giving feedback and support from the local government. It helped to support the depth of participation of the community. It had impacts on both the width and depth of participation. (2) Which is shown in *Figure 20*

Following the analysis in the previous sections, the clear and secured financial resources guaranteed that the community members were involved in the project in

Nong Trang. The high level of the availability of financial resources was rooted from the policy of participation in the credit funds of the CDF and from the effective leaders in the city of Viet Tri and the CDF. It guaranteed that the decision made by the community was able to be implemented. The regulations on the housing Credit fund in Viet Tri also regulated that the expenses for community activities would be derived from the interest collected in the credit program. 50% to 60% of the interest was kept at the neighborhood level for community activities. Because of the fact that the financial resource came from the community to maintain and expand the network, it encouraged people to join the network as they saw that they would gain many benefits when participating. The financial resources came from the community savings, community members were the owners of the financial resources and they had power to make decisions as to how to spend it therefore it influenced the width and the depth of participation. (3) Shown in *Figure 20*

The result shows that the community participation has influenced the outcome of the project especially the effectiveness of the project. The project in Viet Tri reached the highest level of depth of participation. City government leaders and administration officials left the development and decision making of policies to those involved, and the city civil service department provided an advisory role. City government leaders simply accepted and approved the decision of the community.

The community participation in Viet Tri housing improvement project within the CDF has resulted in good outcomes with some positive characteristics. With community participation in this project, the living conditions in the neighborhood were upgraded without a grant from the state fund. The detailed plan was prepared and implemented without 'forced-relocation' due to the consensus among the community after in depth discussions and negotiations. In every spatial detailed plan implemented in Vietnam, the forced relocation and forced site clearance situations always cause troubles and cause conflicts between the local government and affected families and sometimes it prevents the implementation of the spatial detailed plan. In this project, due to the high level of community participation in planning reduced and minimized the conflicts between the local government and the affected community members.

The community participation especially the high level in depth of participation on financial issues in this project guaranteed the durability of the projects outcome. It

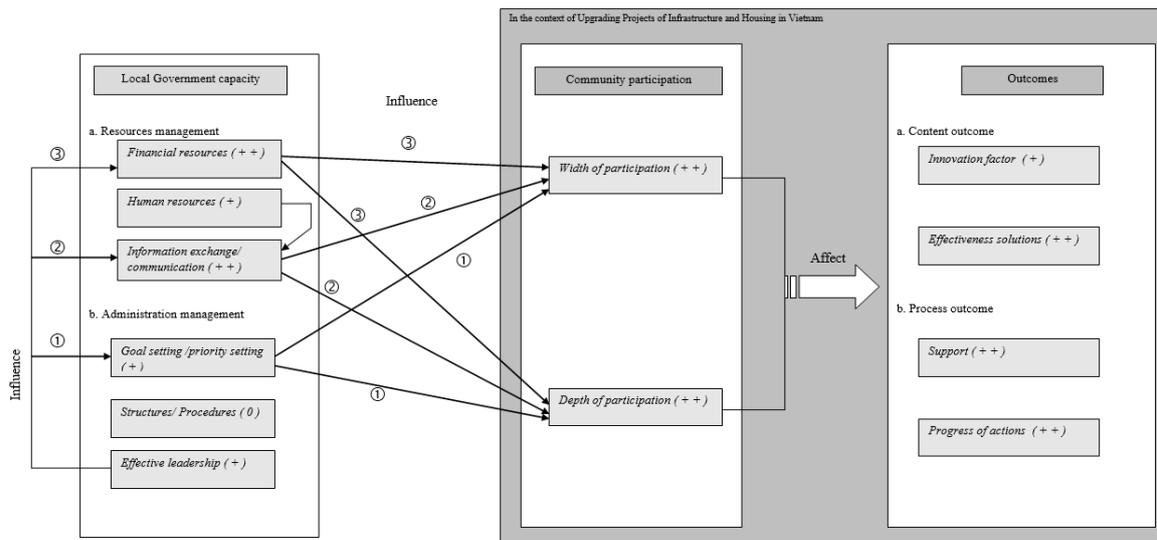
helped to expand the network and allowed more families to be involved and also gain benefits from the credit system. The real participation based on the transparency mechanism in information exchange between community and local government has brought satisfaction and support from community members, NGOs and CSOs to the project.

Although the ‘power transfer’ mechanism was limited in the project with the policy of allowing the community to make their own decisions within the legal framework prepared by the city government with advice from NGOs and CSOs, it can be considered a positive point in the outcomes of the project. It balances the benefits between community and local government. Moreover, it helps to create a co-production method of making decision in projects that have conflicts between the main actors.

The structure and procedures were difficult to change and the process consumes a lot of time. Although this is a positive sign regarding the priority settings for community participation projects and some government officials encourage policy for these projects, unfortunately the administration structure and procedures have only been changed to a limited extent. In Viet Tri, the support from NGOs such as ACCA, ACVN, and SELAVIP to the local government officials has helped to improve the capacity of human sources in the field of community participation. It has affected the innovation factor in the outcomes when it created a foundation for the community to participate in a different way that was suitable in the context of Vietnam and Viet Tri.

The relationship between these three variables can be summarized in the following figure

Figure 20: Relationships between local government capacity, community participation and outcome of the project in Viet Tri



It shows that the high level of width and depth of participation guarantees good outcomes of the project in Viet Tri in both content outcomes and process outcomes. The high level in depth and width of community participation needed crucial aspects from the local government capacity support. The most important local government capacity aspects were, financial resources, information exchange and communication and policy and goal settings. These important aspects were initiated by the effectiveness of the leadership of the city.

5.6 Conclusion

Given the progress of economic development since the “Doi moi” that was launched in 1986, Vietnam has undergone substantial changes in all facets of its economy, policy and society. For example, the increase in income levels as a result of economic development have consequently changed consumption patterns and products. In line with these changes, the housing standard levels have also been increasing. However, the housing and infrastructure system has not been developed simultaneously to address this increased demand. The reason is because of the lack of state budget for housing improvement. As such, the more the economy has developed, the more critical the problem of housing has become.

This chapter provided a urban housing upgrading project case study of Viet Tri. It presented the fact that a community can solve the problem of a lack of funding for housing improvement. The precondition for that was a clear policy for community

participation and a guarantee from the government on household ownership. The case of Viet Tri showed that community participation needs support from local government capacity. In the case of Viet Tri, the depth of participation affected the effectiveness of the outcome, and the information exchange system influenced the level of deadlock and conflict prevention in the process of implementing the project.

This case study in Viet Tri provided empirical evidence to answer the research questions mentioned earlier. Concerning the characteristics of community participation in housing upgrading projects in Viet Tri, it showed that all of the affected community was actively involved in the process together with the technical support from NGOs and CSOs such as the Viet Tri Women's Union, ACVN, SELAVIP as well as the support from city departments. In the participation process, the community was given the power to prepare, discuss, negotiate and make decisions in the field of credit and spatial planning. Those activities were carried out within the overall legal framework provided by the city government. In the process, local government officials cooperated with the community to prepare a draft of solutions.

The local government capacity in Viet Tri supported the community participation especially with a high level of financial resources and communication. These two important aspects were initiated based on the effectiveness of the leadership of city leaders with advice from national and international NGOs and CSOs such as the Women's Union and ACVN in making clear policies for participation. The outcomes of the project reflect the influences of the community participation in the project with support from the local government capacity. A high ranking of content outcomes and process outcomes resulted from a high level of participation in width and depth, which was guaranteed by secured financial resources and clear and transparent communication between the local government and the community. In the case of Viet Tri, both aspects of width and depth of participation are important for the outcomes. The depth of participation guarantees the effectiveness of the solutions of financial issues and a feasible and implementable spatial detail plan. Width of participation guarantees satisfaction and support for the implantation. There are also other important aspects helping to reach this outcome, these are supports from NGOs like the ACVN, the Women's Union and volunteer architects. There is one aspect coming from a close network of neighborhood households. A Vietnamese idiom says; "Better a neighbor near than a brother far off". The community in a neighborhood in Vietnam lives like a

family. It is a tradition in small cities that is rooted from rural culture. However, as analyzed in the community participation section, the depth of participation has influences the width of participation. It helps to increase the attention of the community to the project and involving more people in the process. Besides, the high level of depth of participation influenced the effectiveness of the solution. This model could also work successfully and could be suitable in the context of other small and poor cities like Viet Tri.

The next chapters will provide more cases and from that, the outcomes of the UPIH in other cities with community participation will be further discussed. The pattern of community participation in Viet Tri city will be compared with other patterns in 3 other cities to find the best ways to engage and support community participation in UPIH that have potential to improve and conclude in a good outcome of the project.

Chapter 6. Case study of Vinh city

6.1 Introduction

“Before the community-organized participation, people in the community did not come together to discuss about the planning of constructing infrastructure works at their own communes and wards and always waited and relied on the support and investment from the government as well as considering that infrastructure is a government issue, not a community asset.” (Mr. Nguyen, Alley 63 , Tran Hung Dao street Doi Cung ward, Vinh city, 2013)

In the previous chapter, the overview and description of the housing improvement project with community participation in Viet Tri were analyzed. In the case of Viet Tri city, it can be seen that the positive impacts of the outcomes of the housing upgrading project were influenced by the high level of width and depth of participation along with the support from local government capacity. In this chapter, the analytic content about community participation in housing upgrading in Vinh city is presented and discussed. This chapter also has four major sections. The first section is the descriptive and analysis part focusing on the housing upgrading project in Vinh city with community participation, especially on how the community participation was implemented and the width and the depth of participation in this project. The second provides an analysis and discussion of the findings that were concluded of the support from local government to community participation. The third section presents the analysis and discussion on the outcomes of the project. The fourth part is the analysis of the relationship between outcomes with community participation with the support from the local government. The contents follow and answer the research sub-questions: (1) What are the characteristics of community participation in UPIH in Vinh city? (2) What is the local government capacity in Vinh city and how is it related to the community participation in UPIH? ; (3) What is the outcome of UPIH in Vinh city with community participation? and (4) What are the best ways to engage and support community participation in UPIH that have potential to improve and produce a good outcome of the project?

6.2 Community participation in housing upgrading project

The community participation in projects has been implemented spontaneously in Vinh in the form of self-organized activities within communities and accepted by local government following the resolution adopted by the Sixth Vietnam Communist Party Congress in 1986 and has the official supporting policy from the local government in 2000. Since 2000, there are several documents from the People's Committee of Vinh city to give guidelines and orientation for the support of projects that have community contribution.

In Vinh city, there are 2 types of projects that have community participation. The first type is the project that received support from a local government budget. This type of community participation is a top-down approach where community is advised about the project and the participation is in the form of contributing part of the land or financial contribution following governmental initiated propaganda. In this form of participation, the government simply convinced and encouraged the community to participate in the designated activities within the programs that are decided by the government.

As can be seen in the city People's Committee Decisions No 02/2012/QD-UBND dated January 06th 2012 on the supporting mechanism for construction investment of basic works in 2012, the fixed percentage (from 20% to 50%) of contribution from the community was assigned for the road improvement (including ditches) with a width of less than 12m, tertiary water supply system improvement and side-walk pavement. With the clear mechanism of support from the government, the communities volunteered to come together to discuss about the planning, the level of contribution among community (Interview with Mr. Nguyen, Alley 63 , Tran Hung Dao street Doi Cung ward, Vinh city, 2013).

The other type is the project that received support from other donors in which the community participates and solves their own problems in their own neighborhood with the project which was initiated by themselves. This research will focus on this type of project. In these projects, the level of community participation is much higher than the 1st type. In these projects, the financial support will be given through mass organizations to the community. According to the Vice-Chairman of Vinh People's Committee, this type of project received the support from the local government and

gradually changed the city leaders' attitude on the issue of community participation in urban upgrading projects, especially in the field of housing improvement.

In the field of improving housing in Vinh city, according to 2013 Vinh People's Committee report, there are 142 collective housings in Vinh city, which were built before the 1990s and mostly are one story degrading houses that are in need of upgrading. The People's Committee of Vinh city prepared a housing upgrading and development program to improve living conditions for its residents and the city urban landscape. However, the city encountered many shortages including financial and land resources for resettlement.

Like Viet Tri city, the CDF in Vinh is used as the revolving fund for community water supply, organic vegetable growing projects, housing, infrastructure and disaster livelihood improvements. It started in 2006 with a budget of US\$13,000 mainly from ACHR and a small left over budget of discontinued UNDP project. The initial budget was small but it expanded gradually. The CDF started in 2006 with a budget of 5000 US\$, 8 savings groups with 117 people, by 2012 there were 434 savings groups with 37,396 people. In 2012, the budget was 17,842 US\$ and all of the savings are internally managed by groups. Before 2009 5 wards had saving groups. In 2010 there were 10, in 2011 there were 20 and in 2012 there were 25 wards and communes that have saving groups. There are two systems of managing the saving funds within CDF in Vinh. The city management board manages the international and government grant fund and provides credits for infrastructure and housing improvements. The community management boards manage their self-mobilized budget within the community. In Vinh city, there were 378 different size groups of community savings with 7,864 members. (CDF Vinh city, 2013). There are differences in loan projects provided by the CDF. Housing loans, which are made to communities (not for individuals), are given at 7.8% annual interest and should be repaid in 42 months. Whereas, small project loans for infrastructure improvement have a 9.6% annual interest and should be repaid in 25 months. Similar to Viet Tri city and other poor cities of Vietnam, the housing improvement projects have had much attention paid to them by both the local government and the community. The need for housing improvement credit increased when the 'subsidized economic period' ended in 1986 and many collective houses are dilapidating.

The collective houses in Vinh were built in the ‘subsidized economic period’, i.e. before the ‘Doi Moi’ in 1986, by different state-owned companies and were given to their employees. At that time, all activities were subsidized by the state. All businesses and institutions were state owned. The collective houses were built for employees in state-owned businesses with subsidies from the state budget. The land plots and the houses on it were state properties. The houses were designed with one or two rooms, in a row of houses of about 15 – 23 m² and were mostly constructed with cheap materials. Those houses were rented to small families.

Following the Decree No 61/CP dated 5th July 1994, the tenants were able to buy the state-owned houses that they had rented and live in them. The selling price which had to be paid to the State by the tenants included the existing price of the house and the land price when making the changes of land-use-right from the State to the tenants. According to the people in Vinh city, Viet Tri city as well as in many other cities in Vietnam, although the price that they had to paid was high compared to their income, they were willing to pay for that because they wanted a secured house situation and after receiving the ‘real-ownership’ certificate of their property, their house price would increase within the real estate market. According to the regulations in Decree



Figure 21: Old and dilapidated houses in Huu Nghi collective housing area

Source: ACVN

No 61/CP, if the size of the land is smaller than 60 m², the land use right fee is only 40% of the land price which is decided upon by the People’s Committee. It was also possible for owners of the houses to receive subsidies from the government if they were considered

“National Devotees”. Therefore, the price of the land after receiving the land use right (land-ownership) certificate was much higher than the amount they paid to the State.

In Vinh city, the 2007 proposal for “Upgrading the collective housing in Vinh city” was approved by the Nghe An province. According to the city proposal, 142 collective

housing areas would be reconstructed or removed and it affected 3,386 families (households) with 12,463 people. However, this program had started without specific implementation methods. In the beginning of 2009, Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI) - Thailand, ACVN and the CDF of Vinh city organized the seminar “Community jointly builds low-cost housing”. The representatives from Huu Nghi collective area participated in the seminar, learnt about experiences, then transferred it to the community and started the idea of preparing for the project in their own neighborhood.

- Width of participation

It is a housing upgrading project which was carried out by the residents in Huu Nghi collective area (*khu tập thể*) of Cua Nam wards, under the framework of the Asian Coalition for Community Action program (ACCA). The project was implemented with a US\$ 40,000 grant from an international donor, The Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR). ACHR is a network of grassroots community organizations, NGO's and professionals that focus on development processes of the urban poor in Asian cities.

The Huu Nghi collective housing in Block 6a of Cua Nam ward, built in the period of 1974 – 1978, was degrading seriously. In the Huu Nghi area, 29 households in total lived in one story houses of different sizes ranging from 22 to 90m².

This neighborhood was approved to be granted a loan from the ACHR through the CDF of Vinh city because it met the following criteria:

- The majority of the neighborhood community are low income people
- There are many problems in housing and infrastructure issues
- The community was willing to join the savings network and adherence relationships
- Local government payed much attention to this area and there were existing dedicated community leaders

After receiving the training and participating in the meetings and sharing experiences with inhabitants from other international cities under the support of ACCA, 29 families of the Huu Nghi community organized meetings themselves and had decided as a community to re-build their houses together. This approach to re-build their

houses by themselves was agreed upon by the whole community after meetings to avoid the status of “pending” for the housing improvement project in the neighborhood. All 29 households in the community agreed to act in this initiative to work together. They started with the savings from their own community and the support from the CDF of Vinh city. The loan from the CDF was given to the Huu Nghi community for 10 years. Similar to Viet Tri city, the CDF of Vinh city also managed the credit for housing in this project through the Women’s Union locally. The interest for the above loan was fixed by the CDF. The community also had another savings fund of their own to help other members within the community to build their house as well as to improve the infrastructure of the neighborhood.

The community in Huu Nghi collective housing in Block 6a of Cua Nam ward with advice from the ACVN organized many dialogue meetings among themselves, inviting the People’s Committee of Vinh city, city government, city departments, and wards government to work together in finding solutions for housing improvement. They organized meetings to negotiate about the re-arrangement of the land plot and how to manage and implement the construction.

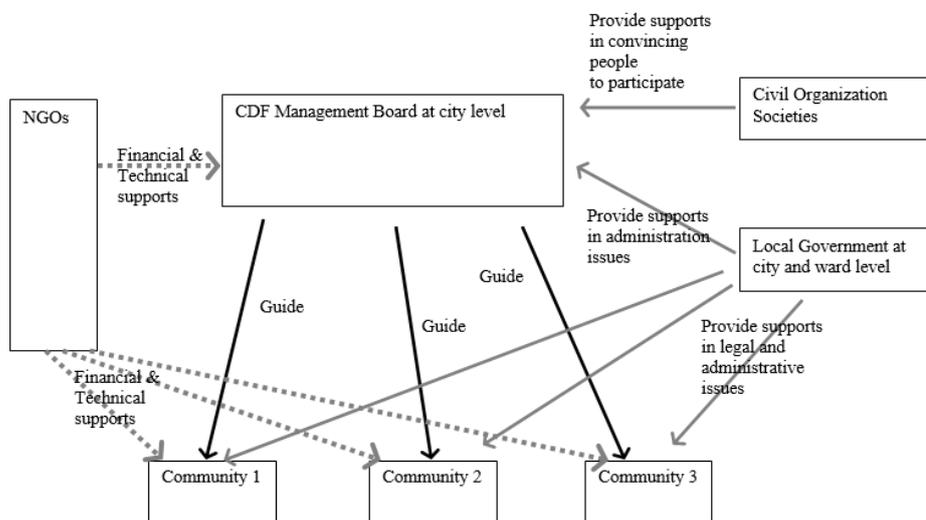


Figure 22: Organization of CDF and financing scheme in housing project in Vinh city

Working with voluntary architects, 29 households of the community negotiated with each other, making the re-arrangement of land plots and adjustment of land plot sizes.

“This is the time-consuming step as we have to negotiate within the community, some households have to contribute their land to others. But with

the participation of all members in the neighborhood and sharing the same objective, we have made a planning by community” (Interview with people in Huu Nghi collective housing).



*Figure 23: One of the meetings in the Huu Nghi neighborhood
Source: ACVN*

After receiving the approval from the city and province, each household has a land plot of equal area of 47 m². This is an important step for project implementation as the land plot area is smaller than regulation (it requires the minimum of land plot of 50m² for residential

purposes). The decision was made by Nghe An province with the convincing activities of the People’s Committee of Vinh city together with the Huu Nghi community. (Hong, Vice Chairman of People’s Committee of Vinh city). The community worked together to build houses by forming the community savings fund. They organized the meetings with the participation of representatives from every 29 households to discuss about the re-arrangement solutions, negotiated with neighbor households about the adjustment of land size, made the spatial detail plan together and assigned themselves the tasks of buying construction material, hiring constructors and monitoring the construction process. The total population of the community is 102 people in 29 households and they all show dedication to this project. The project started in March 2010 and was completed in October 2010. The initial estimated building cost were 2.2 mil VND/m² but the actual building cost is 1.248 mil. VND/m² (a reduction of 43%) which is much lower than the costs of 2.5 mil VND that the private developers would charge. The costs are lower as the community collaborated and agreed upon a design of sharing the walls and foundations, they also bought construction materials together at wholesale price. (Hung, Community Leader of Huu Nghi community). At the neighborhood meetings, the project received much support from NGOs such as

ACCA, CSO, ACVN and the Women’s Union in Vinh city as well as support from the local government.

As can be seen from the projects, all households in Huu Nghi neighborhood were actively participating in the projects. Every member that was part of the neighborhood actively participated in the process because they realized that by cooperation they jointly improve their own house and that the project is an asset to the community. “All activities in this project were carried out by ourselves. The information is transferred from the city government through the leader of the community. In the meetings, there are always representatives from all 29 households and we discuss frankly with each other as well as with the city departments staff members. Although it takes time, we finally can solve our problems thoroughly by ourselves” (Ms. Phuong, a member of Huu Nghi Community, 2013).

The involvement of stakeholders in the project can be summarized in the following table (*Table 13*). In this project, the community leader and members of 29 families in Huu Nghi area participated in almost all phases of the project. The NGOs and local government were very active at the very first step of introducing the idea and approaching the community. In the other steps of project, from the preparation phase to the implementation of the project, they played supporting roles for community participation.

Table 13. The involvement of stakeholders in the housing upgrading project in Vinh city from the beginning phase to the implementation

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Main actor</i>	<i>Supporting actor</i>
Seminar to introduce the approach of “Community driven in spatial planning and housing improvement” to representatives of 10 communities and 5 wards of Vinh city (Cửa Nam, Quán Bàu, Bến Thủy, Hưng Phúc and Lê Mao)	ACVN, city government	ACCA, representatives of 10 communities and 5 wards of Vinh city
Project initiation in Huu Nghi collective housing	Community leader and representatives of Huu Nghi area	ACVN, ACCA, city government, CDF of Vinh city and the Women’s Union
Field trip to learn experiences of good practices in Thailand	ACVN, ACCA, Community leader and representatives of Huu Nghi area	City government

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Main actor</i>	<i>Supporting actor</i>
Meetings to discuss the spatial detail plan and re-arrangement of plots of land	Community leader and family members of all of the 29 households in the neighborhood	City government, relevant department staff, ACVN, voluntary architects
Asking for approval of community made spatial detail plan from provincial government	City government and Community leader	Relevant department staff
Meetings to discuss and assign tasks on the project implementation process	Community leader family members of all 29 households in the neighborhood	City government and relevant department ACVN staff
Hiring constructors and buying construction materials	Community leader and family members of all 29 households in the neighborhood	Relevant department staff
Project implementation	Hired constructors with some laborers from the community	Community leader and family members from all of the 29 households in the neighborhood and relevant department staff
Monitoring	Community leader and family members of all of the 29 households in the neighborhood	relevant department staff

Based on the measurement of the width of participation operationalized in chapter 3, it can be seen that the participation in housing improvement in Vinh involved all actors including all of the community members of Huu Nghi area, the national CSO like ACVN, international NGOs like ACCA and ACHR, the civil social organization like the Women's Union, the officials coming from the city government, the cadastral office, the department of construction and the department of natural resources and environment. Therefore, it receives a double plus (+ +) for the width of participation.

- Depth of participation

Before the housing upgrading project was implemented in the Huu Nghi area, the mobilization of community participation in Vinh was just in the form of fitting people in the program. The propaganda activities, however, were not highly focused and lacked the cooperation of the government and the mass organizations. These

propaganda activities were sometimes imposed by higher levels of government so the results were not highly efficient. (Central Propaganda Department of Vietnam, 2014).

In the housing improvement project in Vinh, learning experiences were taken from other national and international community-driven-projects, the city leaders agreed on the framework that allowed community members to design their own houses by themselves with the



Figure 24: Community makes the re-arrangement of land plots
Source: ACVN

technical support from volunteer architects of the ACVN and the ACCA. The Vinh city government had previously experienced that although the 2007 proposal of “Upgrading the collective housing in Vinh city” was approved by Nghe An province, the program of housing improvement was then unable to be implemented due to the lack of budget as well as lack of consensus among the affected community members. The first program was a top-down approach initiated by the city government and then approved of by the provincial government but it was only able to be implemented slowly especially in the low-income neighborhoods like the Huu Nghi area. Although there have been no explicit studies of the effects that land disputes and conflicts had in the implementation of urban upgrading projects in Vietnam especially Vinh city, it is reasonable to assume that this is part of the reasons of community dissension of the project implementation.

As described in the previous chapter, the spatial urban planning process follows a top-down approach. The spatial plan design, especially the spatial detail plan, is prepared by architects and technical staff without the involvement of the developers and therefore, it has no consolidated financial background for implementation. In the spatial detail planning process, the affected community was consulted but there was no

feedback mechanism. As a consequence, 80% of the complaints which were related to land disputes and conflicts, were dealt with by the government, according to reports presented in the workshop on the findings and recommendations for the Land Governance Assessment Framework (LGAF) and a report on the publicizing information in land management which was organized by the WB and Vietnam General Department of Land Administration in Da Nang on August 14th 2014.

In this project, with the financial guaranty of the CDF of Vinh City through the ACCA grant as well as savings from Huu Nghi community members, the city leaders, with the consultation of the ACVN, decided to let the community prepare and decide for themselves regarding their own neighborhood spatial detail plan, to design their own houses themselves and to be their own developers. This decision was made as it was thought that it might be able to help solve the conflict among the community members about the evictions that had given the improvement program a status of ‘pending’ for more than two years. Following the approved top-down program on housing improvement for the Huu Nghi area, within the spatial plan prepared by the city, the land plots were designed to have a minimum size of 50 m² and therefore, at least 10 households would have to be evicted. The community prepared plan was also required to follow legal regulations and standards on urban planning and construction. Preparing for that, city leaders required that the urban planning relating departments’ officials were required to participate in the meetings and help the community so that the community was able to act and make decisions following legal regulations on planning and construction.

The most difficulty in the process that the community faced was the re-arrangement of land plots and the in-situ relocation of households in the neighborhood. As mentioned earlier, there were 29 land plots in the neighborhood of different sizes, ranging from 22m² to 90m², and the minimum requirement for a land plot to be registered for a construction permit was 50m². After self rearrangement and negotiation, the community proposed to have 29 land plots of all of an equal area of 47 m². This process received the technical support of the ACVN and local staff from the city of Vinh. This proposal was the result of the cooperation between all of the community members, volunteer architects from the ACVN and local technicians in related departments of the Vinh city government. The spatial detail plan that was constructed was totally different from other projects spatial detail plan’s where the people were

only consulted without any feedback mechanisms from the urban planning authorized institutions. However, it is unlike the situation of Viet Tri, where the city was permitted to arrange the re-location land for the relocated households, in Vinh city, there was no vacant land for this project and the land plot after re-arrangement did not meet the requirement regulated by the law.



Figure 25: Community makes the re-arrangement of land plots
Source: ACVN

In this project, the local government of Vinh City sent the request to a superior level of government in the Nghe An Province. The People's Committee of Nghe An Province used its power given by law that the province government can make its own decision in this specific case. This can be regarded as a

specific case because the community prepared and selected a detail plan with the technical support from city department staff and it does not meet the legal provincial issued requirement on the minimum size of a land plot. However, the community made plan reflected the desires of the whole community of Huu Nghi collective housing area where they all want to be settled. In this process of applying for the approval at the provincial level, although they fully received the support of the city government, Mr. Hung – the community leader, every two weeks visited both the Department of Construction of Nghe An province and the People's Committee of Nghe An Province to discuss and convince them to accept this community made plan.

Finally, one year 4 months and 28 days after the date that they received the request, the People's Committee of Nghe An Province issued the decision of approving the community prepared spatial detail plan and that allowed the issuance of construction permits to the 29 households in Huu Nghi neighborhood.

As mentioned above, in the preparation process, the community members worked together in planning and designing their houses. They decided to build their houses together. The houses were designed by all of the members of the community following the advice from voluntary architects with shared foundations and walls after much negotiations with each other to reduce the construction costs. These voluntary architects were members of the ACVN and the ACCA. The community members made the housing design drawings by themselves and then they were converted into technical drawings by architects. They decided to hire the contractors and developers together as well as to use community labor where possible. In the monitoring phase, all members of community worked together. It showed a high level of community participation in the implementation process of the project. This activity not only helped the community to support its members but it also helped to minimize the conflicts among members.

In the Huu Nghi project, the community discussed and produced a proposal with the support of the local government. Although the approval power still remained with the government authorities, there was a clear policy for making decisions as the approval decision for the improvement project was only able to be made if 100% of people in neighborhood agreed. It can be considered as a method of ‘power transfer’ to the community. The community was able to decide almost all aspects of the project and became the owners of the project. The community received the full support from the government and the community played the main role in the process. The monitoring process carried out by the community guaranteed the quality of the improvement project. This monitoring activity was carried out by a group of community members who were designated by the whole community in the preparation meetings. Besides the official monitoring group, it was possible for any member of the community to be involved in the monitoring process. The feedback from this monitoring process was given directly to the community leader and the group in charge of monitoring.

As can be seen from the project in Vinh, the community together with the local government, CSOs and NGOs searched for solutions to improve their houses. The city and provincial government were committed to the solutions proposed by the community. In Edelenbos’s participation ladder scale, it is considered as ‘co-produce’. Therefore, it receives a plus (+) for the depth of participation. The level is lower than the level of the Viet Tri project because the community in Viet Tri also had the power

to develop and make decisions on the financial credit policy. The politicians simply accepted and legally approved it.

The community participation in this project can be summarized in the following table with the ranking level.

Table 14: Levels of community participation in Vinh city

City	Community participation	
	Width of the participation	Depth of participation
Vinh	++	+

This ranking level of community participation will be discussed further in relationship with local government capacity in the next section to understand which local government capacity resulted in community participation

6.3 Local government capacity in relation to community participation in housing upgrading projects

Similar to the project in Viet Tri city, the CDF in Vinh city also coordinated different sources of funding for the project, but the main actor of the project was the community of the Huu Nghi neighborhood. In this section, local government capacity in relation to community participation will be discussed in two areas of administration management and resources management.

a. Administration management

- Availability and degree of implementation of policy/guidelines for community participation

Traced back from the Resolution adopted by the Sixth Vietnam Communist Party Congress in 1986, since the 1990s the slogan of ‘people know, people discuss, people implement, people monitor’ was mentioned in many documents. But there was no official directive policy for promoting community participation in Vinh city until 2000 (Hong, Vice Chairman of People’s Committee of Vinh city, 2013).

In order to promote the participation of the people in the improvement process, the Communist Party Commission of Vinh city issued Direction No 31/CT.ThU dated

April 10th 2000 regarding the issue of mobilizing internal resources¹¹ within the territory. Based on that, in 2000 the People's Committee of the city approved the proposals to build infrastructure using internal resources; mobilizing and paving pavements in 2002, and building the tertiary supply water system (from the main pipelines to the households) in 2004. In 2006, the People's Committee of the city issued mechanisms to encourage the wards and communes to mobilize internal community resources for city infrastructure, this took place in the period of 2006 – 2010 (People's Committee of Vinh city, 2012). In 2007, the program for “Upgrading the collective housing in Vinh city” was approved by the Nghe An province mentioned the community as one of the sectors which should be encouraged to participate and contribute in the process.

In 2012, The People's Committee of the city enabled decision No 02 /2012/QD-UBND dated 06th January 2012 to regulate some mechanisms to mobilize contributions for infrastructure improvement. During 2010 and 2011, the People's Committee of Vinh city also activated Decision No 04/2011/QD-UBND dated 11/01/2011 and Decision No 10/2010/QD-UBND dated 04/8/2010 which are regulations related to the supporting mechanisms for construction investments.

Vinh city government documents emphasized the goal of improving the housing conditions in Vinh city. It is referred to in the documents issued by not only the Chairman of Vinh People's Committee but also the Chairman of Nghe An Province People's Committee. They are Documents No 75/TB-UBND dated 11/3/2011; document No 6572/UBND-CN dated 21/9/2012; document No 7052/UBND.KT dated 18/11/2011 of Chairman of Nghe An Province People's Committee. Vinh city local government issued a clear policy to encourage people to participate in the improvement projects of infrastructure and housing. This was also the priority of the city to improve the living environment of the people. It received the full support from the leaders of the People's Committee of Vinh province. (Hong, Vice Chairman of People's Committee of Vinh city, interview in 2013).

It can be seen that the policy as well as many legal documents for community participation for urban upgrading projects in Vinh city were issued and implemented by both Vinh city and Nghe An province. Based on these documents, many projects

¹¹ Internal resources refers to human and capital resources within the community

were implemented. In the housing upgrading projects, there were 63 over 142 collective housing areas (the actual total number of collective housing areas was finally reported to the city government and revised it was only 135) were implemented. Due to the lack of governmental financial support, out of 63 implemented projects, only 3 projects received financial support which were low-income neighborhood housing improvement projects: A project in Huu Nghi neighborhood of Cua Nam ward, a project in one neighborhood of the Hung Binh ward and one project in the Ben Thuy ward. It was presented that the policy had limited guidelines for the financial mobilization of the implementation. The policies clearly state that community participation should be encouraged and should play an important role. However, the financial guidelines and frameworks for community participation for housing upgrading projects did not receive adequate attention. According to the Decision 109/2007/ QD-UBND on the housing upgrading program, there is only one sentence which regulates the source of finance; “Finance resource for program: from in-situ land-use fee, financial contribution for infrastructure improvement from household that are allocated land, and other lawful financial mobilization sources” (People’s Committee of Nghe An Province, 2007:11). Therefore, many housing upgrading projects could not be implemented especially in the low-income neighborhoods. Most of the housing improvement in Vinh city was been carried out in the one or two story’s row housing areas. Because of the lack of financial support policy for these upgrading projects, local government could only create advantageous conditions for land allocation and land use right issuance as well as investing in inner neighborhood basic infrastructure that supported housing improvement. It could be considered as an indirect support policy on financial issues. The policy only contains general guidelines on financial issues such as “.. the city government will create conditions for low-income families to rent or buy in instalments apartments in suitable condominiums” (People’s Committee of Nghe An Province, 2007:10). Currently, there have not been any specific guidelines on this issue. Based on the scale of the availability and degree of implementation of guidelines with the goal of community participation, it should be ranked with a medium scale (0) in which the policy and guidelines for community participation were adopted by the local government but it is not covered all related issues and it was implemented partially.

- Internal structures and procedures for managing the participatory processes.

Similar to Viet Tri city, the CDFs organization is from city level to community level. The CDF in Vinh city also creates linkages among CSOs to help the community to improve their living conditions. In each community, the linkages created by the CDF helps people to form a revolving fund. However, unlike the CDF in Viet Tri, the community revolving fund in each neighborhood has been controlled by the community itself. It can be considered as an independent credit fund managed by its own community.

CSOs heads are also the members of the city and ward council. With their personal relationships in the CSOs network and administrative network, they help to create the ‘un-official’ procedures for community participation. One of the leaders of the CDF is the leader of the city and ward government and created a linkage structure between the CDF project and the government administration system. Although it is not defined as part of the local government structure, the CDF structure has created procedures to manage participatory processes within the CDF to support projects in each community. It could also be helpful in other community participation projects.

The Steering Committee for the Community Housing Process in Vinh city has a structure which is not legally regulated but practically organized to help with community participation in housing projects. It is a partnership committee which includes city leaders, related technical departments, and CDF leaders from the Women’s Union. This committee works to support community housing upgrading projects and infrastructure upgrading projects in Vinh city. Following the requirements from the CDF leader and also the Vice-Chairman of the City People’s Committee, urban planning related departments’ officials have joined the community meetings and help the community. The involvement of the department staff members in these meetings made the design prepared by the community more feasible because the staff members were able to provide the community with the local regulations. These are ‘un-official’ procedures but they really help the community act and make decisions following legal regulations on planning and construction. This is the ‘un-official’ co-production process.

With respect to the structure for supporting community participation in Vinh city, the most important actors are the leaders of the community. Their connections create inner

structures within the project for supporting community participation. However, the CDF and local government officials who have relations with the CDF activities and housing upgrading projects in Vinh city realized that the structure and management procedures for community participation were followed only within the project. It has not yet influenced the overall structure and procedure of the local government system. The project had some impacts but its effects are not strong enough to change the whole internal structure and procedures of the local government to adopt community participation activities. Each community has a limited connection to other communities to be able to create a stronger structure for participation in urban upgrading projects. The structures and procedures for managing community participation are in place but there are only general policies for community participation, there are no specific guidelines on financial support for community participation or a clear mechanism to mobilize financial resources for it. Therefore, the structure and procedures within the administrative system to support community participation is able to be followed only to a limited extent. In order to change the whole structure, it requires time, more power and legal regulations. Following the scale on internal structure and procedures discussed in chapter 3, it should be ranked as having a neutral position or average scale (0).

- Effective leadership

There are two types of leaders within this project. The first type are the local government leaders who are involved in the project either by participating or as a member of the management board of the CDF. The other type is the community nominated 'leader' of the neighborhood community who participates in the project. NGOs such ACVN and ACCA recognize the later type of leader as someone who plays a very important role in a housing upgrading project.

Although the city and ward leaders actively support the CDF activities and especially the housing upgrading project in Huu Nghi area, the CDF management board has no power to make decisions regarding administration issues. In comparison with leaders in the CDF Viet Tri project, the CDF leaders in Vinh city also had some power to influence the decisions within the administrative system. The CDF Management board were unable to the city departments to cooperate and support the community activities as well as to solve the stagnations in the local policy and administrative procedures.

They were able only to ask for cooperation. The head of management board of the CDF at city level was also the Vice Standing Chairman of the People's Committee of Vinh city. Although the CDF Management board had no decision making power in the administrative issues, by being involved in the CDF Management Board, the Vice chairman of the City People's Committee was able to set a priority for the city departments to cooperate and support the community activities in the Huu Nghi project as well as to solve the stagnations in local policy and administrative procedures. Due to his support to the community of Huu Nghi they were able to solve the spatial planning and housing standards problems which are explained in the next sections. There was a mutual understanding regarding the importance of community participation in the Huu Nghi project, governmental leaders in the city and wards and the CDF management leaders work together with the community to solve the quiescence situation in the local policy and administrative procedures in housing upgrading. According to Diana Mitlin from the International Institute for Environment and Development (London, UK) during a Vietnam Assessment trip in April 2010, she noted that she almost never met a high-level municipal official who had a positive attitude towards the community upgrading projects like the Vice Chairman of Vinh People's Committee (Vice Mayor). Mr. Nguyen Van Chinh, the Vice Chairman expressed that "The people are my teachers" when talking about the housing upgrading project of Huu Nghi. He mentioned that the community of block 6A, Cua Nam Ward (Huu Nghi neighborhood) had set new standards for social housing in Vinh city and based on that, these new standards are now being used as the new method of upgrading dilapidated old collective housing within the city territory. The city government agreed to use it as a model to be replicated in more than 100 housing areas. It shows the great support from the city leaders, although they are not part of the CDF management board they work closely together with the technical staff from the city departments, community leaders, and community members to help them make the spatial plans and build the houses.

Regarding the second type of leader in the Vinh city housing project, the city leaders and NGOs admitted that they were the main factor in community activities. They are very active within the following activities:

- Convincing all the community members to form saving groups for housing improvement

- Connecting all community members within the neighborhood in the project
- Connecting the community with the local government, and transferring information from the community to the city government and giving them feedback
- Actively working with voluntary architects, CDF staff and NGOs experts to help community members design their spatial plan and their houses
- Submitting the request for approving a community made spatial plan to provincial government and convincing them to approve it

The group of community leaders in Huu Nghi area was not ‘officially’ selected. They were people who dedicated to be active in the housing improvement project of the neighborhood. Although the housing upgrading program was considered by the local government, the program could only be slowly implemented especially in low income neighborhoods like Huu Nghi due to financial problems. The issues of housing problems in poor neighborhoods has been identified by representatives of the CDF groups in Vinh city as urgent. After being nominated by the people to attend the city wide workshop organized by the CDF of Vinh, the ACCA and the ACVN, the leaders of the CDF groups in Huu Nghi visited every 29 households in the neighborhood to convince them to participate. It was not an easy task and it took time to convince the people. It took many community meetings, the Huu Nghi area is a low-income neighborhood and the people found it difficult to believe and be convinced that the self-help housing improvement project would work. In order to make people gain the confidence of building their own house using their own savings, the community leaders also participated in the training workshops organized by the CDF of Vinh, the ACCA and the ACVN. The training workshops that were organized also helped the Steering Committee for the Community Housing Process, they were able to gain information regarding how to solve problems of housing and land issues. This information was collected using community based surveys regarding land certificates, land allocation, land tenure, construction permits, and construction codes. A clear communication with local government, the CDF, provincial government and community members helped the leaders to work effectively within discussions, negotiations and facilitating community meetings. The community participation activities in Vinh city were supported by the local government leaders. Despite the fact

that there was consistently a high level of effective leadership in supporting community participation according to the Vice Chairman of the People's Committee stated above, local government leadership did not provide any supporting fund for community participation. Based on the scale of effective leadership in supporting community participation, it should be ranked as a plus (+).

Besides the administration management, there is another aspect of the local government capacity that has an effect on community participation. It is the resource management issue.

b. Resource management

- Availability of financial resources to support community participation



Figure 26: Community build the house with shared foundation and walls

Source: ACVN

With orientation documents from the Communist Party Commission of Vinh city as well as the Decisions issued by the People's Committee of Vinh city, the budget for improvement projects with community contributions and participation is guaranteed. The People's Committee welcomed support from NGOs and

donors from the private sector to implement the improve works. The City of Vinh cooperated with some private companies to implement the improvement of collective housing areas in the form of Public Private Partnership (PPP), but due to the recent financial crisis, these projects have been cancelled. The private sectors implement the project only if the project is profitable. (Tuan. Le, Natural Resources and Environment Office of People's Committee of Vinh city, interview in 2013)

Concerning the housing upgrading project in the Huu Nghi neighborhood, starting with a grant from the ACCA, it is similar to another housing upgrading project in Viet Tri city. However, the grant amount was limited and there was no subsidy from the state budget for upgrading activities. According to the report from the CDF Vinh city (2010), the total budget of the CDF for housing upgrading projects in Huu Nghi neighborhood, Cua Nam ward was USD 40,000. This loan was only given to the community and was not for individual households. The CDF of the neighborhood took the responsibility to pay it back to the city CDF.

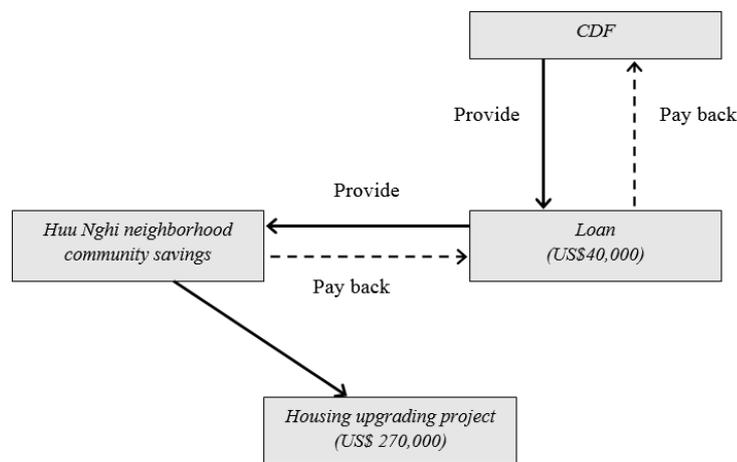


Figure 27: Financial scheme for the housing upgrading project in Vinh city

Unlike Viet Tri where there was a selected list of households that would receive a loan, due to the fact that there were many families in the network, in the Huu Nghi project, all 29 households in the neighborhood were given a chance to receive a loan. The maturity of the loan is 10 years. The share that has to be paid back monthly by each household included the principal amount plus interest. The minimum amount of share for each household to pay back monthly was VND 150,000 (\approx US\$ 7.5). However, the total amount of share for the whole neighborhood community that was paid monthly to the city CDF was about VND 20 million (\approx US\$ 1,000). It showed that the financial contribution of the community members to their own housing project was very impressive. Mr. Le Viet Hung, the Huu Nghi community leader in housing project, remarkably noted that: “our CDF at neighborhood level still have the deposit of VND 320 million (\approx US\$16,000) in their savings account after paying back the loan to the city CDF. The deposit will be used for further development of the neighborhood”.

Another remarkable characteristic of the Huu Nghi project were the lowered construction costs of the buildings. This was influenced by the depth of participation when community members agreed to discuss and negotiate to build the entire neighborhood together. They agreed to build their houses with shared walls and shared foundations. When they built their houses as a collective, they negotiated to hire constructors and developers together. They signed contracts to buy construction



Figure 28: Using community labor in construction works to save the cost.

Source: ACVN

materials at wholesale price for all of the 29 houses. There was a saving at every stage the construction. They even reused some construction materials from their old houses. It can be shown from the project that the actual cost of construction in the Huu Nghi neighborhood made savings of up to 46.7% of the market construction costs

which was calculated by determining the cost of an individual completed new house. It is VND 1.2 million/ m² of construction compared with VND 2.5 million/ m².

In this financial issue, it is clear that the community by creating a savings fund increased the level of community participation in this project. The following two policies show the role of the local government in financial issues:

- (1) Indirect financial support policy: Because of the lack of a financial budget for these upgrading projects, the local government could only create advantageous conditions for land allocation and land use rights issuance as well as investing in inner neighborhood basic infrastructure that supported housing improvements

(2) Direct financial support policy: Through the channel of the CDF, the community of Huu Nghi area was guaranteed to receive a loan for the improvement project

In the Vinh city project , the role of local government in financial issues regarding community participation was overwhelmed by the activeness of the community. Therefore it can be ranked as having a very high level of availability of financial resources to support the community participation (+ +).

- Availability of human resources

There is no clear data and information about the effect of PAR in recruiting employees to serve community participation projects. The amount of personnel within the departments is sufficient in number. But personnel quality within the departments and the city government has been improved as they higher quality staff was recruited as the city government gives priority to those people who have postgraduate degrees and provide support to employees to pursue a masters courses. (Tuan. Le, Natural Resources and Environment Office of People’s Committee of Vinh city, interview in 2013).

“There is currently no measurements in the system regarding how to improve skills to implement community participation programs in projects but in the master courses, especially the Master course in Urban Management provided by Hanoi Architectural University, there is a subject named “Community participation in Urban projects”. Many Vinh city’s officials participated in this Master program and therefore, they have been given knowledge on these issues”

Similar to project in Viet Tri, The People’s Committee of Vinh city only received support from the ACVN and other NGOs, CSOs such as SELAVIP and ACCA to organize seminars to train staff and to exchange experiences. The official training is organized in the form of city wide workshops in the preparatory phase of the housing upgrading project. It was organized to strengthen capacity for all stakeholders including city leaders, technical staff from relevant city departments, technical experts, architects, community leaders and support staff. Stakeholders gained knowledge in this field through projects with “learning-by-doing” activities.

In this project, the Steering Committee for the Community Housing Process plays a role as the supporting committee for community participation. It comprises of city leaders, technical staff in relevant city departments and CDF leaders from the city Women's Union. The ward authority has commitments and a responsibility to support projects in their locality.

NGOs such as volunteer architects from the ACVN and experts from Thailand are other sources of human resources who have helped in the community participation processes. They also take part in the processes of exchanging of knowledge and experiences with city leaders and community leaders.

Supporting the project, national and international NGOs provided technical assistance. The national CSO, ACVN helped Huu Nghi community to design their houses, re-arrange the land plots and make spatial detailed plans of the neighborhood. The international NGO of ACCA and ACHR helped to present experiences and lessons learnt to Vinh city leaders, civil social organizations and department staff to help them support activities in the Huu Nghi community.

It can be assessed that there is adequate trained staff to support community participation and based on the scale of availability of human resources in local government capacity, it should be ranked as a plus (+).

- Communication and learning orientation

The mass organizations at ward level, especially the Fatherland Front and the Women's Union are the effective means to connect to the community that have been used by the People's Committee of City and wards. The neighborhood group leaders are also active actors in the propaganda process. Using these channels, information and orientations from city and wards are transferred to the people and the feedback from community is received and transferred to the local governments.

In the housing upgrading project in Huu Nghi area, the information exchange and the communication processes in the project are transparent. The communication channel is mostly a face-to-face discussion in the community meetings. With the support of the Steering Committee for Community Housing Processes, local government officials alternatively join the meetings based on the issues being discussed and the problems

that the community is facing. The frequent contact and co-produce processes have solved the obstacles in the preparatory and implementation phases.

The main conflict when implementing this project is the situation of having several households who need to be relocated to other places if the provincial housing standards for the minimum size of a land plot is applied. The province standard regulates a minimum size of a land plot to be 50 m² but the land plot size after negotiation and rearrangement among community members was 47 m². It caused trouble for households that had to be relocated. Using the channel of dual communication in the meetings with the local government, community members convinced the city government to send a request to the provincial government to accept a smaller size of land plots. After a long wait, it was finally accepted by the provincial government. Its effects to the outcome of the project will be discussed in the next sections. The communication channel in the Vinh city project of housing upgrading has a dual channel of transferring information. There was a feedback mechanism in this system through community leaders, ward leaders and the CDF management board. Therefore, it should be ranked as a double plus (+ +).

The local government capacity provided support to the community participation. This table below is the summary of the local government capacity with ranking levels:

Table 15: Levels of local government capacity in Vinh city

City	Local government capacity					
	Resources management			Administration management		
	Financial resource	Human resource	Information exchange	Goal/priority setting	Structure/ Procedures	Effective leadership
Vinh	++	+	++	0	0	+

The support from local government on community participation resulted in the outcomes of the project and it will be discussed in the next section.

6.4 Outcomes of the housing upgrading project

a. Content Outcomes

- Innovation factor

The project of housing upgrading in Vinh city was inspired from Thailand's best practices in slum upgrading projects. Although the community participation in urban

upgrading projects is not entirely new, the housing upgrading project in Huu Nghi neighborhood was the first community participation project applied using a community driven approach which was funded by community savings. The main financial resource was provided by the CDF at neighborhood level, although it had its initial support from an external donor. When carrying out housing upgrading projects especially for low income neighborhoods it is a financial encumbrance for local governments in Vietnam. This approach effectively reduces this burden.

CDF leaders, city leaders and the Vinh city community changed the lessons learnt in Thailand into a more bottom-up approach. Unlike Thailand, the project in Vinh was not funded by the government. In Vinh city within the Huu Nghi neighborhood, the people in the community participated in the housing upgrading project and “jointly dismantled their houses to reuse the building materials, jointly hired the construction developers and jointly ordered the building materials for a lower price than if a firm was hired to do it”. As mentioned in the previous section, the leaders of the CDF in Vinh city, city leaders with advice from Thailand experts and the ACVN experts introduced this innovation. It brought responsibility to the community members to participate and make decisions that affected their own living conditions. It also shows that their ideas and proposals were respected and followed. It presents the fact that unless the city leaders have a vision and management skills, the new direction could not have been reached effectively and smoothly.

With this approach, the role of the community was changed from beneficiaries and receivers into owners and active actors. Community leaders and members were not passive as they had been in the past. They actively participated in discussions, negotiations, as well as in convincing talks with high levels of government. The new content is a provincially approved community made spatial detailed plan. It is considered as innovative outcomes because the content of the detailed plan was completely prepared by the community with the support of the planning department staff. It is also the new community built houses using a budget from their own savings.

This approach also changed the role of government from giver or provider into supporter and facilitator. The city government and community leaders together play a coordinating role within the project. The community made spatial plan was the result of co-production between the community, staff of relevant departments and voluntary

architects. Although it needed, the legal approval at provincial level, the city government strongly supported it and they were committed to this solution.

The spatial detail plan and the housing design were prepared by the community with technical support from relevant governmental departments and volunteer architects. The approval by the provincial government to the new community re-arranged detail plans as well as the changes of land plot size showed that the local governments contemporary conceptions on planning, housing standards and conditions for housing upgrading have been changed. It also should be pointed out that the urban planning regulations and housing standards were not too rigid. According to the statement of the Vice Chairman of the People's Committee of Vinh city (Vice Mayor), this approach will also be applied in other collective neighborhood areas. It shows an innovation factor that incorporates changes in the policy from the city government along with an effective leadership of local government leaders, allowing community members to negotiate with the local government who had to co-produce a final product. However, this approach can only be applied if it received 100% consensus among the community members. This is the first time in Vietnam, a housing upgrading project was successfully implemented in a low income neighborhood using a budget from their own savings. The innovative factor in this project is that the community made spatial detail plan was legally approved and implemented and community members were able to upgrade their houses with their own design. However, the new policy for this idea and process has not been issued in Vinh city. Therefore, it should be scaled as good or ranked as a plus (+).

- Effectiveness solution

This is the first project in collective housing in Vietnam in which the community from a low income neighborhood had ever prepared their own spatial detail plan, designed their dream houses by themselves and built it with their own savings. This approach enabled them to buy their house at almost half the market price and within a period of only 6 months without any eviction. Moreover, this is a potential applicable approach that could be used throughout Vietnam within low income communities to acquire inexpensive good quality housing. It has not only improved their living conditions but it has also contributed to upgrading the city. This project also created a more proactive and energetic community. The community reinforced the relationships among its

members, they formed a better reciprocal understanding and it generally helped within the neighborhood community.

This project created conditions for community members to act and strengthen their capacity by involving them in all activities from the preparation phase until the monitoring phase. It also helped to make the neighborhood members become more responsible for their own living neighborhood. This is considered to be the sustainable aspect of this project. In order to achieve effectiveness in this solution, the important role of the local municipal government cannot be denied. Their role in supporting community participation as well as changing the land policy issued by the province government also helped to ensure the success of the project. The housing standards were also changed making them more adjustable to suit the specific situation of a low income neighborhood but still meet the minimum requirements for safety and secured quality of life. The very rigid regulation requirements in planning standards were also changed and became more flexible.

As mentioned earlier, the financial issues for housing improvement projects in low income neighborhood has always been the burden of the municipal government. In the Huu Nghi project, notwithstanding any financial support from the local government, the community members overcame the funding problems by using their own savings and working together in many activities: planning and designing their own houses with shared walls and foundations, jointly dismantling the old houses, reusing the building materials, jointly hiring the construction developers, jointly purchasing the building materials at a lower price and jointly monitoring the construction work. It was recognized by the city government and it has motivated the municipal government to solve housing problems in other low income collective neighborhoods based on this method. However, this approach can only be applied if it receives 100% consensus among the community members or at least all members in one row of houses. According to the statements of Mr. Lan, a community member in the Huu Nghi neighborhood, he mentioned that all community members in this neighborhood see that their chosen solution for upgrading houses really helped to solve their housing problems that were prevalent for many years. They feel confident that they can build their own houses with their savings despite the fact that they are people with a low income. Therefore, it can be ranked with a very high level (+ +) for the effectiveness of the solution according to the scale in chapter 3.

b. *Process outcomes*

- Level support from actors through satisfaction

Like Viet Tri, the main approach of this project was to focus on voluntary participation of the neighborhood community through the savings activities with self-help savings groups. In the process of preparation and implementation, it received full support from NGOs such as ACCA and ACVN as well as from the municipal and ward governments. In the first city wide training workshop on participatory planning and self-help housing construction in 2009 organized by the ACCA, the ACVN and the municipal of Vinh, the city leaders and relevant department staff members discussed with ACCA and ACVN experts on how to support community participation in low income housing upgrading. Meanwhile, the representatives and community leaders from 142 collective housing communities had set up criteria for selecting a pilot housing project. The information and data for the project was combined from two sources: (1) from the municipal and (2) from community based surveys within a selected pilot area of the Huu Nghi collective housing area in the Cua Nam ward. This information helped to identify the relevant problems on land and housing issues. It focused on the matters of land tenure, land use right certificate procedures, land plot allocation procedures, building codes, construction permit issuance, and self-help design for low-cost housing. The local community members and local government officials were provided with skills through training workshops, study tours and knowledge exchanges.

When participating in a community participation project carried out in Vinh, officials from the city People's Committee expressed that the main and important technical aspect of this activity was to give the community a feeling that they are cognizant and can control the development themselves. The people in the Huu Nghi neighborhood expressed that they were confident in their ability to solve their own problems with the technical support from the Steering Committee for Community Housing and from voluntary architects from the ACVN and the ACCA.

The satisfaction on the process of implementing the project shows in the width of participation as all 29 households in the neighborhood actively participated. This satisfaction is showed by the results that the CDF of Huu Nghi neighborhood deposited VND 320 million. (\approx US\$16,000) in the saving account after paying back

the loan to the city CDF. The deposit was then used for further development of the neighborhood. It also shows in the full support given by the municipal government to convince the province government to adjust the regulations on land and housing standards.

The satisfaction of the municipal leaders was expressed in the statement of Mr. Nguyen Van Chinh, the Vice Standing Chairman of the People's Committee of Vinh city; "we, our city, already have the policy to renovate the 142 collective housing areas. But with this upgrading project of Huu Nghi collective housing neighborhood, we have more motivation, gained more skills in a new approach and gained more knowledge and understanding regarding community participation in housing renovation" (interview in 2013).

It shows that the level of support management based on satisfaction among actors from the community, NGOs to city government officials who participated in the project is very high. It can be ranked as a double plus (+ +).

- Progress of action on stagnation and conflict prevention

There were two obstacles and one conflict when implementing project in Vinh city. The main conflict occurred during the negotiation among the community members of Huu Nghi collective housing area regarding the rearrangement of the land plots. 29 households in total lived in one story houses of different size ranging from 22 m² to 90m². Within this community, before 2010, no households had been given the land use right certificate. To receive the land use right certificate as well as a construction permit to improve the house, each land plot had to be a minimum of 50m² in size. According to the initial spatial detail plan made by the government, each land plot would have the size of 90m² and therefore at least 10 households would be evicted. The question had been raised as to which households would be relocated but this could not be answered because all of the community members had the same legal status on their land plot. All of the community members also had the same desire to continue to live in this neighborhood. The community meetings were organized to solve the conflict in defining the relocated households and the result was an agreement among the community members for a new community made spatial plan with a land plot rearrangement. After the rearrangement, each household had a land plot of equal area of 47m². In order to receive the legal document for land and housing tenure, the

community members had to solve the conflicts of the issue of different land sizes of each plot before and after rearrangement as well as the issue of having some households being evicted or being relocated. These negotiations were carried out during community meetings in which sometimes ward and municipal leaders participated as the facilitators. This project could only be implemented when these conflicts had been solved and the proposal of rearrangement of land plots for 29 households received a consensus of 100% from the community members.

The two obstacles that had to be overcome in this project were the financial source of the project and the legal regulations on planning and housing standards. Concerning the first obstacle, it was solved with the initial support from the CDF of Vinh city using the ACCA grant of US\$ 40,000 and the savings from the community members of the CDF in the Huu Nghi neighborhood. Even though the community received a loan from the CDF, their savings were not enough to cover the costs of construction if it followed the market price. This obstacle was solved by the community themselves, they found a way to save the construction costs as much as possible. The cost for construction activities was minimized when they agreed to build the entire neighborhood together. They agreed to build their houses with shared walls and foundations. When they all built their houses together, they negotiated to hire the constructors and developers together. They signed contracts to buy construction material at wholesale prices for all 29 houses. There was a saving at every stage of the construction process. They even reused some construction materials from their old houses when jointly dismantling them. In some construction activities, they used community laborers instead of hiring constructors. By using this approach, they saved up to 46.7% of the actual costs of construction in the Huu Nghi neighborhood. So this obstacle was also solved.

Dealing with the second obstacle, if the housing standard stipulated by the provincial government regarding the 50m² minimum size for a land plot, the project would not have been able to be implemented or some of the households would have had to be relocated to another place. All community members within the Huu Nghi area expressed their desire to stay in the area. With the support from the Chairman of the CDF of Vinh city and also the Vice Standing Chairman of the People's Committee of Vinh city, the municipal government of Vinh city made a request to the Nghe An province government and convinced them to accept the smaller size of plots. Seeing

the benefit for the community itself as well as for the city of Vinh, the province government approved the proposal of land plots that were prepared by the community. Thus this obstacle was also solved.

It can be seen that the flexibility of the policy direction from the government at both provincial and city levels and the high level of community participation in width and depth helped to overcome the obstacles and made the implemented project effective. The changes in the role of the local government and the role of the community as mentioned in the above sections also helped to minimize the conflicts. Therefore it is ranked as a double plus (+ +) for progress of action on stagnation and conflict prevention.

The outcomes of the housing upgrading project in Vinh city within the CDF is considered successful, improved living conditions were created for the Huu Nghi community. Moreover, it is now being considered as a good practice for low income housing upgrading in Vietnam, for the community themselves to use their own savings. The Huu Nghi collective housing area was visited by many national and international organizations, academic institutions and NGOs, and due to this the city of Vinh gained fame for its good practice.

The outcomes of the project and its ranking levels are found in the table below.

Table 16: Levels of outcomes of the project in Vinh city

City	Outcomes			
	Content Outcome		Process Outcome	
	Innovation factor	Effective solution	Support	Progress of actions
Vinh	+	++	++	++

These outcomes resulted due to the relationship with the community and its participation and support from local government capacity which will be discussed further in the next section.

6.5 Relationship between community participation and outcomes of the housing upgrading project in Vinh city with support from local government capacity

As mentioned in the previous chapter, housing upgrading is very important for city development. The municipal government of Vinh city was aware of this as they already had a renovating program for 142 collective housing areas to improve the

living conditions of their citizens. Similar to the Viet Tri situation, there were many old and dilapidated collective houses that belonged to the government and the funding for a housing improvement project was seen as a burden on the municipal budget. The uncertainty of property ownership and land use rights prevented the people living there to invest in their own housing improvements.

Like the housing upgrading project in Viet Tri, the main financial resources in the Vinh project came from the CDF at neighborhood level. The Guarantee from the ward and municipal government to support the project can be shown by the formation of the Steering Committee for Community Housing Processes. It can also be seen with the co-production activities when the spatial detail plan was made and the rearrangement of the 29 land plots into equally sized 47m² plots as well as persuading the provincial government to approve the proposal. The flexibility of the local government at city and provincial levels, especially in accepting the spatial detail plan made by the community of the housing projects also helped to resolve the stagnation in the implementation process. It showed effective results in the Huu Nghi collective housing area and Viet Duc collective housing area (Hong, Vice Chairman of People's Committee of Vinh city, interview in 2013). The implemented project in Vinh city has shown that community participation with support from the local government at ward and city levels influenced and changed some key regulations on rigid spatial planning and housing standards and created advantageous conditions to give more benefits to the people. This situation can only happen when there are effective leaders at both community and city levels.

The high levels of both the depth and the width of participation in this project together with the finance scheme ensured that all of the people in the community received the same benefits from project.

The project was indeed to improve the living conditions of the Huu Nghi neighborhood. It involved all of the people in the neighborhood residential area and the people had the feeling of being responsible for the implementation of the work. The clear and transparent communication between community members and the local government in meetings helped to avoid obstacles and solve the conflicts between the community members. It also helped to encourage people to be involved in the project

and support the project. Clear and transparent systems also brought a feeling of satisfaction to the actors involved in the project.

A summary of the levels of each of the sub indicator of 3 variables are listed in the table below.

Table 17: Levels of 3 variables in Vinh city

City	Local government capacity						Community participation		Outcomes			
	Resources management			Administration management			Width of participation	Depth of participation	Content Outcome		Process Outcome	
	Financial resource	Human resource	Information exchange	Goal/priority setting	Structure/ Procedures	Effective leadership			Innovation factor	Effective solution	Support	Progress of actions
Vinh	++	+	++	0	0	+	++	+	+	++	++	++

Similar to Viet Tri, effective leaders were also able to influence the communication channels. In this project, the information exchange mechanism influenced the width of participation. These clear and dual communication channels helped people to discuss and negotiate with the local government. As the channels of communication were efficient, more people were willing to participate in the project. Clear and transparent communication also helped to clearly portray the ideas and proposals of the community as well as give feedback and support from the local government. It helped to support the depth of participation of the community and it had impacts on both the width and the depth of participation. (1) in *Figure 29*

In the Vinh project, the leaders had influence on the human resource. The leaders of the CDF together with the leader of the city People’s committee formed a Steering Committee for the Community Housing Process. It was a committee to support the community housing processes and infrastructure upgrading projects in Vinh. The leaders of city CDF also received support from NGOs to organize training workshops for the community representatives and community leaders. It helped to strengthen the capacity of stakeholders of the project. These activities involved more actors in the participation process. Through these workshops, all of the stakeholders, even the city leaders, gained knowledge of community participation. It helped to change the attitudes of the city leaders and involved actors and therefore it had influence on the depth of participation. (2) in *Figure 29*

Concluding from the analysis in the previous sections, due to the clear and secured financial resources, this guaranteed the involvement of the community members in the project in Huu Nghi. It encouraged full participation of all members in the community

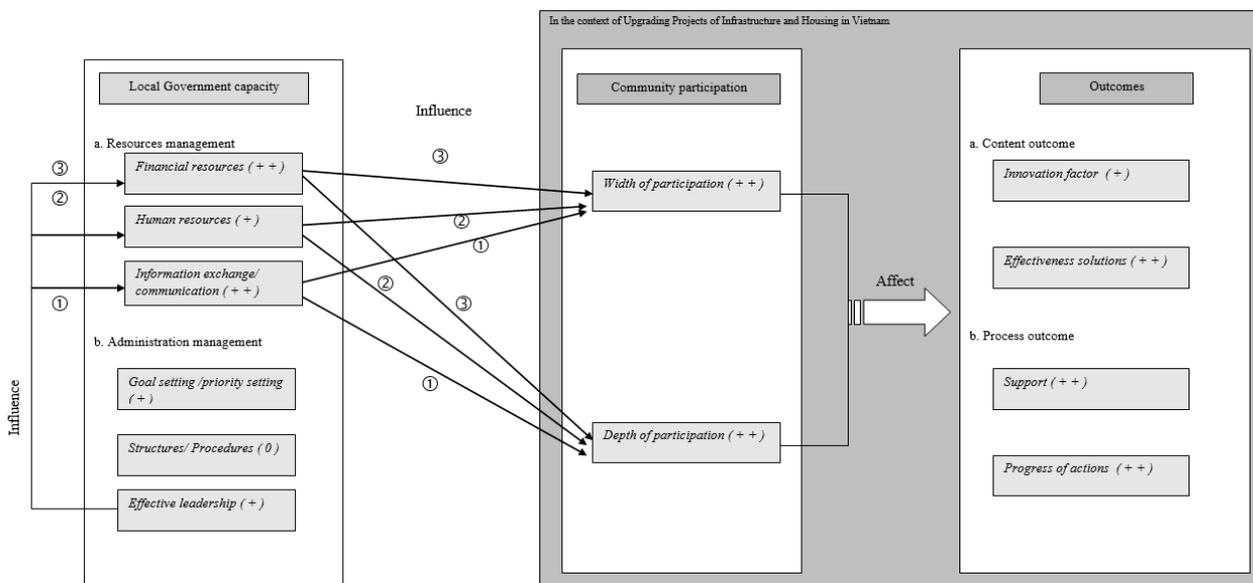
to be involved in the project as well as actively contributing to the final decisions on spatial planning. The financial resources came from community savings and the community made their own decisions as to how to build their own houses based on the fund. (3) in *Figure 29*

The results show that community participation influenced the outcomes of the project. The wide participation together with clear transparent communication helped to prevent and solve any conflicts within the negotiations. It also brought more support from involved actors and created more satisfaction.

The Community participation in the housing improvement project of Huu Nghi housing area within the CDF resulted in good outcomes with some positive characteristics. With community participation in this project, the living conditions in the neighborhood were upgraded without using a financial grant from the state. The detailed plan was prepared and implemented without any evictions due to the consensus among the community after discussion and negotiation. The real participation based on a transparency mechanism in information exchange between community and local government brought the satisfaction and support from community members, NGOs, and CSOs to the project.

The relationship between these three variables can be summarized within the following figure (*Figure 29*).

Figure 29: Relationships between local government capacity, community participation and outcomes of the project in Vinh



It shows that due to the high level of width and depth of participation resulted in good project outcomes in Vinh in both content outcomes and process outcomes. The depth and width of community participation in Vinh needed crucial aspects from local government capacity to support it. Among the local government capacity aspects, information exchange/communication and human resources were the most important for the width and the depth of participation in Vinh. The financial resources also had an impact on participation but due to their limit within the small community, its importance is not as high as in the Viet Tri project. These important aspects were due to the effectiveness of the leadership of the city. There are still some limitations in this project with some average level aspects. Although there was great support from the city government, the lack of a direct financial support policy and mechanisms from the government created difficulties for participation especially in low-income neighborhoods like Huu Nghi. Besides, the priority settings and policy for community participation were too general and they also hampered the initiative. The average level of internal structures and procedures for managing the participatory process within the administrative system due to the lack of specific regulations on encouraging community participation and on financial support should also be improved. These improvements can have positive impacts on human resources and financial resources and based on that, it can create a solid foundation and give a greater support to the depth of participation.

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter provided the case study of Vinh within an urban housing upgrading project. It presented the fact that there is an implementable approach for low-income community to build their own houses with savings. The precondition is that the attitude of the low-income community and municipal leaders has to be changed so that the community has enough confidence to use their own resources to improve their houses by themselves and the municipality has the confidence to transfer some of its power to the people.

This case study in Vinh gives empirical evidence to answer the research questions mentioned earlier. Concerning the characteristics of community participation in the housing upgrading project in Vinh, it showed that all the affected community was actively involved in the process together with the technical support from NGOs and

CSOs such as the Women's Union of Vinh city, the ACVN and the ACCA as well as the support from relevant city departments. In the participation process, the community was given the power to prepare, discuss, negotiate and make decisions in the field of spatial planning and housing design. Those activities were carried out with the support of voluntary architects and technical department staff members in a co-production process.

The local government capacity in Vinh supported community participation especially with a high level of financial resources, human resources and communication. These important aspects were initiated based on the effectiveness of the leadership of Vinh municipal leaders with advice from national and international NGOs and CSOs such as the Women's Union and ACVN. The high ranking of process outcome resulted due to a high level of participation in width and depth, which was guaranteed by secured financial resources and clear and transparent communication between the local government and the community.

However, this model had the key for success when it was applied in the Huu Nghi collective housing area. It had the consensus of the whole community in preparing and implementing project together and also the commitment of the community to perform well. Huu Nghi has a small community, a collective housing area with 102 people, the commitment and consensus due to its size was easier to reach compared with larger communities. The whole community was comprised of low-income households and all of the community members had the same desire to have new upgraded houses. In a commonality community like Huu Nghi, this model of participation can be easily implemented. There could be drawbacks in applying this model in more complicated communities. In the same sort of situation, the model of Viet Tri could be used as a reference with some adjustments. In this case, support from the local government including clear and transparent policy, dual communication, effective leaders, and effective financial support created the foundation for community participation.

The next chapters will provide more cases and from that, the outcomes of the UPIH in other cities with community participation will be further discussed. The pattern of community participation in Vinh city will be compared with other patterns and analyzed to find suitable ways to engage and support community participation in Vietnam.

Chapter 7. Case study of Can Tho city

7.1 Introduction

As mentioned in the previous chapters, with regard to urban issues, housing and infrastructure receive a great deal of attention by both citizens and government as they play an important role in neighborhood community lives. In this chapter, a range of analysis content about community participation in an infrastructure upgrading project in Can Tho city has been presented. There are four major sections in this chapter. The first section begins by focusing on an infrastructure improvement project in Can Tho city with community participation, especially on how community participation was implemented and the width and the depth of participation in this project. The second and third sections provide an analysis and discussion of the findings that were evoked from the support of the local government with community participation and the outcomes of the project respectively. The fourth section contains the discussion on the relationship between the outcomes of project and community participation with support from local government capacity. The content presented in this chapter will partially answer research sub question 2 (What are the characteristics of community participation in UPIH in Can Tho city?), and provide a response to research sub question 3 (What is the local government capacity in Can Tho city and how is it related to the community participation in UPIH?) and research sub question 4 (What is the outcome of the UPIH in Can Tho city with community participation?). The fourth section presents the model of community participation in Can Tho city that will be further discussed by comparing it with other models in 3 other cities to answer the research sub question 4 (What are the best ways to engage and support community participation in UPIH that have a potential to improve and produce a good outcome of the project?)

7.2 Community participation in infrastructure improvement projects

Can Tho is one of 6 cities in the WB funded project of urban upgrading of the Mekong River Delta. The urban upgrading project is part of the National Strategic Program of Urban Upgrading to the year 2020 with the objectives of poverty alleviation in urban areas by improving living conditions and the environment with community participation.

Besides the above objectives, the urban upgrading project also contributed to the improvement of the general environment and hygienic conditions of the whole city of

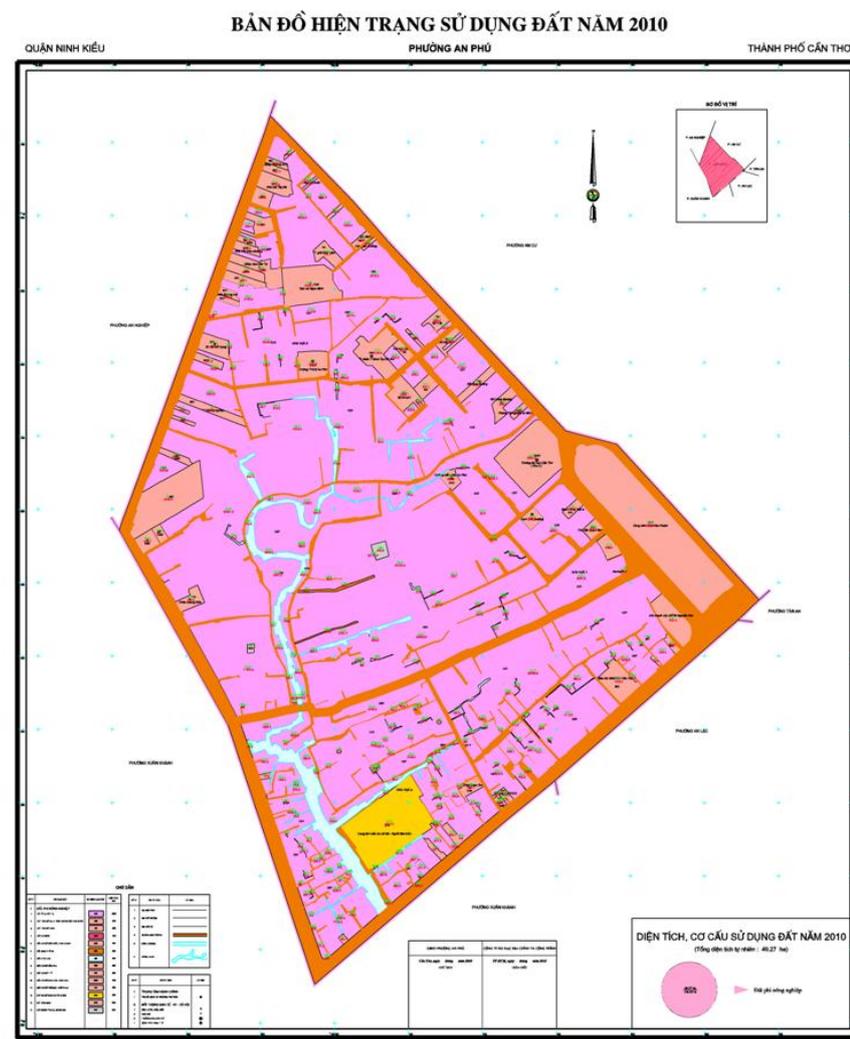


Figure 30: Actual land use plan with small alleys in the neighborhoods of the An Phu ward in 2010

(Source: People’s Committee of Can Tho city)

Can Tho, as well as improving the living conditions and quality of life of the urban poor. The project helped to extend the scale of and approaching capability of basic infrastructure services like sewage, water supply, transportation and environmental hygiene in the low income residential areas; as well as sustainably manage urban infrastructure, housing and urban land following the National Program of Urban Upgrading.

The project was divided into 2 phases: Phase 1 from 2004 to 2007 focused on the wards of An Cu and An Hoi. The 2nd Phase from 2008 to 2014, focused on the expansion of the project to the whole district of Ninh Kieu, and a part of the Binh Thuy district. The total number of effected households was 10,000 (Chau. Deputy Head of the Management Board of Urban Upgrading Project of Can Tho city).

This project was carried out following the Vietnam Urban Upgrading Project (VUUP) objective; “to reduce poverty in the urban areas by upgrading/improving the living conditions and environment of the poor people living in urban areas using planning

methods with the participation of communities”. (WB, 2004). The objective of the project focused on the issue of community participation driven by planning. In addition, these methods were explained more clearly on the task of upgrading tertiary infrastructure that; “one of the objectives will be achieved by upgrading basic tertiary¹² infrastructure and other service in low income areas through partnerships between communities and local governments” (WB, 2004:4). The project objectives were informatory of the project principles.

“The project is based on the principle that active participation by communities in critical stages of preparation, design and implementation is a pre-requisite to effectively respond to the needs in these areas” (World Bank, 2004:4). This is a very important precondition of the funding provider in the project agreement and documents that affected the government policy on supporting community participation and especially on the width and depth of participation that will be discussed further in the following sections. Moreover, the project principles also affected the partnerships between the local government and the communities as it was stipulated that “the design of infrastructure improvements will take into account the communities’ and local administrations’ willingness and ability-to-pay” (World Bank, 2004:4).

In this project, according to the Project Assessment Report No AB854, the World Bank provided the rationale for its involvement in this project that the Government of Vietnam has a commitment to and has a clearly stated emphasis on decentralization and community participation. World Bank support of this project ensured community participation during the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of all project activities. (World Bank, 2004:4).

The financing source for this project came from 3 sources. (1) The financing sources managed by the World Bank provided to the project included a World Bank loan, International Development Association (IDA) grant, grant from French Agency for Development and Japanese Policy and Human Resource Development (PHRD) grant from the Ministry of Finance of Japan. All of these funds were channeled through the World Bank. These financial sources were mainly for the construction costs of upgrading activities. This source of finance accounted for 45% of the total budget. (2)

¹² The infrastructure in Vietnam has been classified in 3 levels: (1) Main regional system, (2) Connected and reconciled system within the urban areas and (3) Distribution system to each household. Tertiary infrastructure is a level 3 system

The counterpart funds were from the state budget. This financial source was mainly for the compensation costs of upgrading activities, resettlement and relocation. This source of finance accounts for 50% of the total budget. (3) The local community contribution in money. This source of finance was mainly for the construction costs of upgrading activities and maintenance work. This source of finance accounted for 5% of the total budget.

According to the 2013 report from the Management Board of the Urban Upgrading Project of Can Tho city, in the 1st phase, 66 small alleys were expanded and they improved the infrastructure in which 63 alleys were in the initial proposal and 3 others were added in accordance with the community requirements. In the 2nd phase, 155 small alleys in Ninh Kieu district were improved in which 97 alleys were included in the initial proposal and 58 alleys were added at a later date. 26 alleys in the Binh Thuy district were improved in which 13 alleys were mentioned in the proposal and the rest were added later. (Management Board of Urban Upgrading Project of Can Tho, 2013).

See *Table 18*

Table 18. Wards in Can Tho city involved in the project

	District	Ward
1	Ninh Kieu	An Cu, An Hoi (1 st phase) Hung Loi, Cai Khe, An Phu, Thoi Binh, An Lac, An Hoa, Xuan Khanh, An Nghiep, Cai Khe, (2 nd phase)
2	Binh Thuy	An Thoi, Tra Noc, Binh Thuy, Huu Nghia (2 nd phase)

An Phu ward is one of the wards of the Ninh Kieu district that were involved in the project. The An Phu ward has 11,752 inhabitants (2013) who live in an area of 49ha. According to the assessment document for the Vietnam Urban Upgrading Project (VUUP), Can Tho city has an increasing population and the investment for infrastructure and service did not meet with the citizens' demand. The An Phu ward is geographically in the center of the Can Tho city and its low income residential areas were developing into a situation of infrastructure and services downgrading. It created environmental risks that affected the population's health in the area and it contributed to bad effects for the whole city. The Project in the An Phu ward was carried out in the 2nd phase of the VUUP in Can Tho. In the An Phu ward, the project belonged to component 1 of the Can Tho project, in which tertiary infrastructure and basic services

for low income areas were upgraded through coordination programmes between the community and the local government.

Before the upgrading project took place, the 1:500 spatial detailed plan of the An Phu ward was not prepared and approved due to the lack of budget from the city. This upgrading project gave the people in the An Phu ward a chance to have the 1:500 spatial detail plan approved which would give the community a possibility to upgrade or rebuild their house or have a land use right certificate. However, the existing small alleys in the An Phu ward were very narrow in width. The average width of the lane was only one meter. The infrastructure system including water supply and sewage was asynchronously built for many years which caused many problems for the neighborhood people.

Community participation in the projects in An Phu ward of Can Tho city has some characteristics

- Width of participation:

According to the Project Management Unit (PMU), due to the projects objectives, the improvement work was only able to be designed, approved and implemented if 100% of the affected households in the community participated in the project and agreed with the solutions. There were 344 affected households in the An Phu ward in this upgrading project. In these affected households, the occupational structure according to the PMU was as follows:

Table 19. Occupational structure of affected households in the An Phu ward

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Businessmen / services / handicraft producers	189	14.5%
Cadres/ officials	107	8.2%
Staff members of companies /workers	211	16.2%
Students	294	22.6%
House-wife/ retired	250	19.2%
Others	252	19.3%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1303</i>	<i>100%</i>

(Source: PMU of Can Tho city)

The above results shows that there was an average of 3.78 members in one household. The majority of the people graduated secondary school and higher levels of education,

including professional colleges, universities (1,020 persons, which accounts for 78.28%). According to the PMU, the income per household per month was between 1 to 3 million VND, accounting for 38.3%, from 3 to 5 million accounting for 28.1%, over 5 million 23.5% and less than 1 million 10.2%. However, the average income per capita per month of affected households in An Phu ward was 768,968 VND; this income level is lower compared to the average income of the whole of Can Tho city (According to 2007 statistics, average income is 1,629,333 VND/capita/month).

These figures showed that the area for upgrading the tertiary infrastructure in An Phu ward is the low income neighborhood. Based on the objectives of the project as well as the requirements from the World Bank for funding this project, the participation of the community, more attention was especially paid to the affected households. The local government officials, members of the PMU and the community members in the An Phu ward revealed that the resettlement policy and resettlement plan were prepared by the local government authorities in coordination with the community leaders and affected households. “Local department officials, local CSOs, local Mass-organizations and approximately 8,900 displaced persons in the whole city were consulted through different channels of communication. These channels included, meetings in the community neighborhood, community consultation, in-depth interviews for cases in which their land would be totally recovered and had to be relocated to another place and questionnaires and surveys for all the households in the project area.” (Mr. Chau, vice head of Can Tho PMU, 2013)

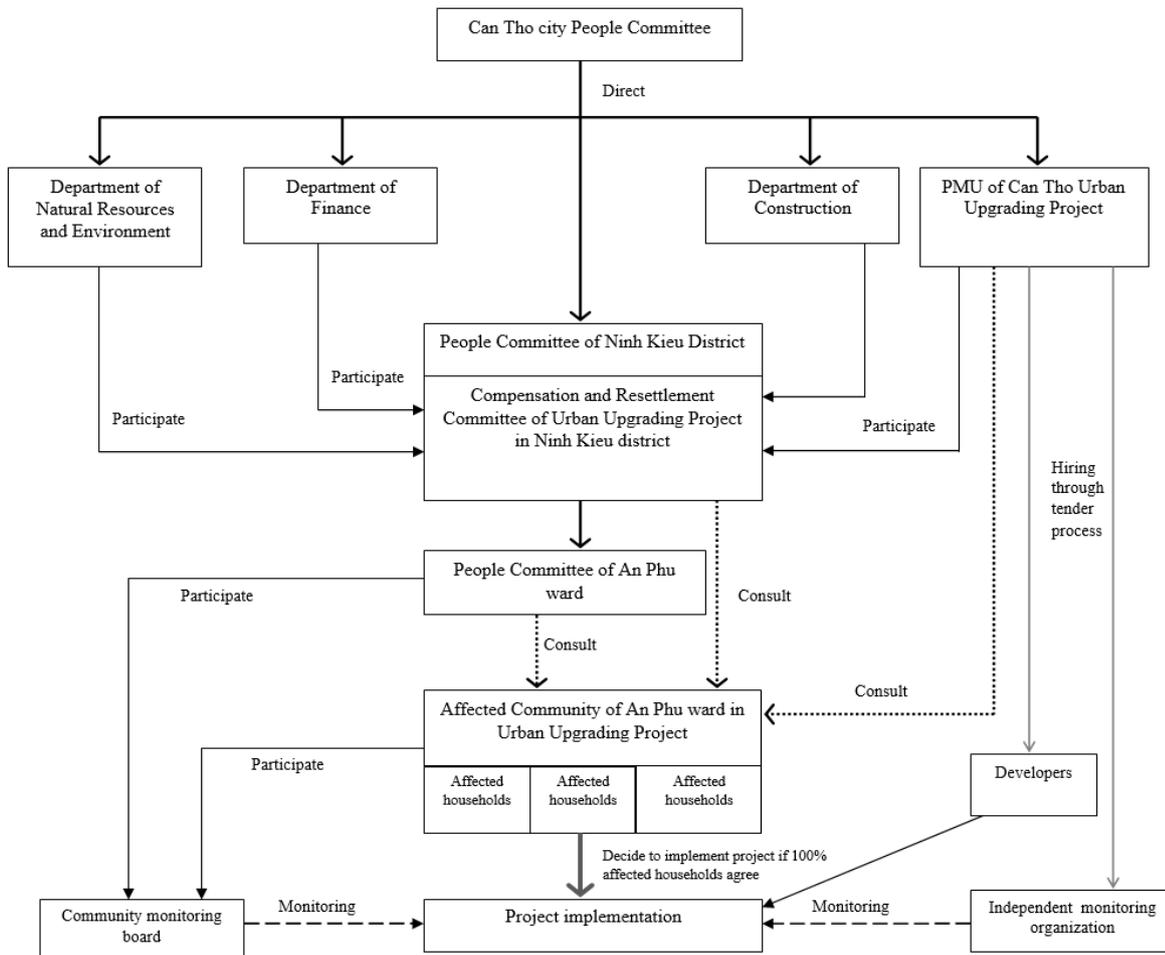
The affected people in the An Phu ward said that they all participated in the project because the implemented project would influence their living environment. In fact, as a prerequisite from the fund providers, as mentioned above, all of the affected people in the upgrading projects had to participate and agree in order that the proposal can actually be implemented. It is required that the affected communities have to participate from the initial stages of collecting information, they should take part in; the surveys, the preparation processes with many meetings, monitoring the implementation process and after the work is finished, to maintain it. They all participated because they received the information from the local government and the PMU that the information during the consultancy period was not only effective for the development of the resettlement plan, the resettlement policy and the resettlement framework but also for the development of the options to widen the alleys, installing

water supply systems and sewage systems as well as regarding compensations and contributions during the implementation phase.

In this upgrading project, the Project Management Unit for the Urban Upgrading Project of Can Tho city (PMU) was formed under the control of the People's Committee of Can Tho city (provincial level) (*Figure 31*). According to the project document approved of by the World Bank, in each district like Ninh Kieu, there was one committee under the district People's Committee (PC) to help with the management of project activities within the district territory. The PMU selected the consultants following bidding with select criteria approved of by the World Bank. The consultants carried out the surveys in the territory including a community survey and prepared the city upgrading proposals. As described in *Figure 31*, the PMU consulted the affected communities in the An Phu ward through an independent consultant. Affected communities were involved in the project from the stage of collecting; information, community desires and needs. This information was the basis for the consultant to prepare the upgrading proposals.

These proposals were approved of by the People's Committee of Can Tho city and publicized to the community. The proposals related to the alleyway expansion infrastructure improvement also required community meetings. In numerous meetings, the affected community, the PMU and the People's Committee officials of the district and the ward participated and discussed the relevant issues. According to the project regulations, the design consultants hired by the PMU worked with the Community Committees and with the utility companies prepared the community upgrading plan in these meetings. The affected community was consulted and given options that were considered for upgrading process which included, costs and cost recovery arrangements. The Community Upgrading Plan consisted of the layout and details of the infrastructure investments. It also included information regarding the participation process and community management structure. The Community Committee in this process consisted of the affected communities, officials from the ward People's Committee, representatives of mass organizations such as the Women's Union, the Veteran Association, the Youth Union, etc. This committee was organized only for this project in order to work with the consultants. The project could only be implemented if the Community upgrading plan received 100% consensus of the Community Committee.

Figure 31: Relationship between the communities, the local governments and the procedures of the project in the An Phu ward



The communities decided on; the size of the alley expansion, the route of the alley and the amount of contributions that each household in the community should pay. The contributions that were decided upon by the community were in the form of land contribution and money. As mentioned above, the money contribution from the local community covered 10% of construction costs of the project (5% of the total cost). The amount of money contributed by the community varied depending on which alternative was selected and decided upon by the communities. The construction costs varied depending on the size of the ally expansion and therefore the amount of money that was need to be contributed from each household varied. Reduction and exemption of the money contribution for poor households was voted upon and decided by the whole community within the meetings. The poor households, whose income was especially low and the households with disabled people in them contributed less. If

100% of the community agreed on the proposal, it was implemented and the Community Monitoring Board monitored it. (*Figure 31*)

At least one member of every affected household in the neighborhood participated in the community meetings to work with the design consultants and the local government (Mr. Chau, Vice head of Can Tho PMU, 2013). In Vietnam, it could be considered as 100% of the affected households were involved in the preparation and decision making stage of the project. Mr. Cuong of the An Phu ward noted that during the community meetings and while working with the consultants and local government, following the project regulations on issues of community participation, the representatives from the mass organizations always participated. Their role in these meetings was as intermediate actors, who helped to solve tensions and conflicts between the affected communities and local government as well as between community members in discussing alternative actions for the project.

Active community participation at all stages of the project was a prerequisite from the funding provider for the implementation of the project. The selected alternative was only able to be implemented if it meet the community desires and needs and received a 100% consensus among the affected communities. It also needed to receive the agreement of the local government as it had to take into account the district and ward investments and development plans. In the An Phu ward, 13 of the 15 alleys were upgraded through this project and it shows great cooperation from the affected community, mass organizations and local government who actually participated in the project. Based on the measurement of the width of participation operationalized in chapter 3, it can be seen that the participation in infrastructure upgrading in the An Phu ward of Can Tho city involved all of the actors including all of the affected community members from the An Phu ward, the local civil social organizations, the officials from the city government, cadastral office, department of construction and the department of natural resources and environment. Therefore, it receives a double plus (+ +) for the width of participation.

- Depth of participation

The level of depth of community participation in planning was mentioned in the 2010 Law of Urban Planning of Vietnam as well as in the Ordinance of Grassroots Democracy. In these legal documents, it is regulated that the affected community

should be consulted, given ideas and comments on the design proposals as well as participate in the monitoring process.

In the upgrading project of Can Tho, the project was based on the principle of community participation at all critical stages of the project as it was the prerequisite of the project at all stages including; preparation, design and implementation. Following that, the consultants collected information regarding community desires and needs as well as meeting with the affected communities' members in numerous community meetings organized by the ward People's Committee and the PMU.

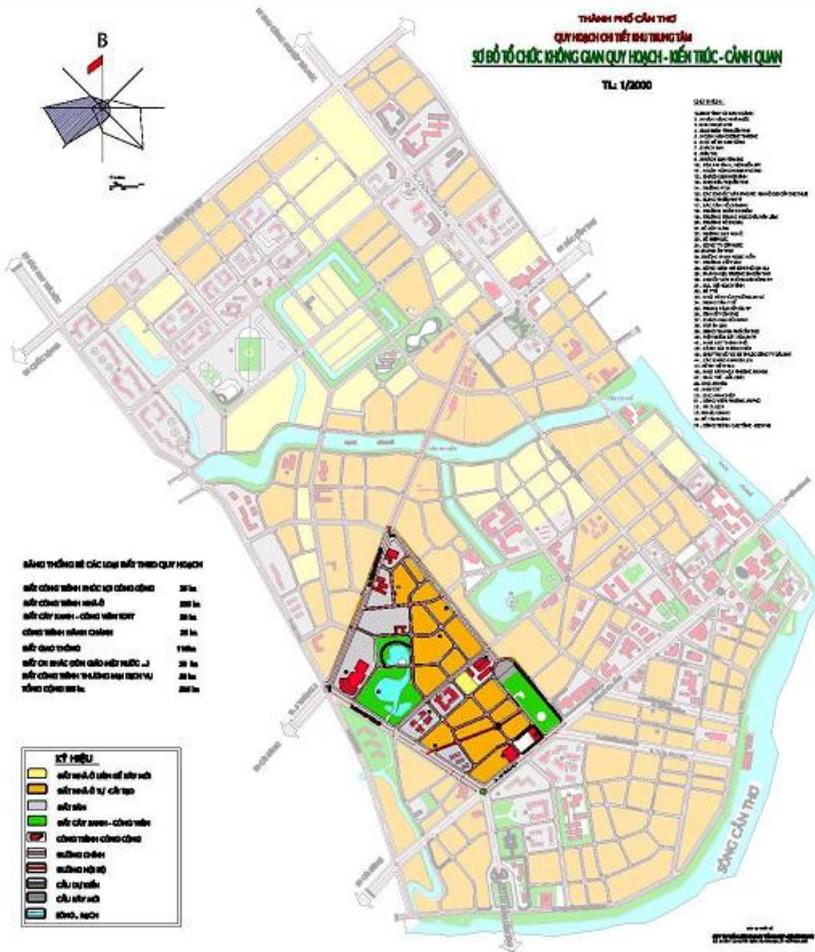


Figure 32: Approved detail plan of An Phu ward on scale 1:2000

(Source: People's Committee of Can Tho city)

In the preparation process, the affected community members worked together with the consultants, the PMU and the local authorities in the planning process. The consultants were hired by the PMU in a tender process. With the advice from the consultants, when upgrading small alleys, the width of the small alleys should be increased. There were several reasons given to widen the small alleys that helped to convince the affected people to accept joining and implementing the project:

- It is easier to access the house
- The land price of the land plot would increase with easier access

- It is better and safer for the living environment, especially for access for firefighters and their equipment

According to the legal regulations on urban planning in Vietnam as mentioned in chapter 4, there are 3 types of urban plans: (1) General/Master plan; (2) Zoning plan and (3) Detail plan. In an urban spatial detail plan, they have both a scale of 1:2000 and a scale of 1:500. The detail plan with a scale of 1:2000 defines the road networks and land use purposes. Whereas, the detail plan with a scale of 1:500 which is based on the detail plan of 1:2000 plays an important role as the basis for investments, potential projects and implemented projects. Therefore, the detail plan with a scale of 1:2000 is the orientation plan for the development and organization of the urban areas because it has no attached regulations on financial issues. In Can Tho city, the Ninh Kieu district already had its detail plan approved on the scale of 1:2000 but it had not fully implemented it as it lacked the detail plans of 1:500. The 1:500 detail plan is only able to be prepared and implemented if there is investment or projects.

The spatial detail plan design for the neighborhood in the An Phu ward on the scale of 1:500 was prepared by the consultants and was based on the approved detail plan with a scale of 1:2000, following the needs and demands of the affected community.

As described and mentioned in the previous chapters, the spatial planning procedure especially the planning for infrastructure development was regulated by the legal documents. It has a top down approach although the affected community was consulted according to the law but there was no feedback mechanism for the information received from the community. Mr. Toan, Vice Director of the Department of Construction of Can Tho city explained that in general, the implementation of the detail planning required a huge budget which mainly came from the state budget. The law regulated that the community only needs to be consulted in the process of preparing the plan, therefore the actual depth of participation of people in making decisions related to spatial planning in previous planning projects was low. Compared to the upgrading project in the An Phu ward, the depth of participation of the community was different.

The An Phu ward community participated at the very beginning of the project, which was in accordance with the principles of the project. They were able to decide on issues of whether the upgrading project in their alleys should be implemented or not

and that decision was based on a consensus among the people in the community. (Mr. Binh, Chief Officer of Ninh Kieu district People's Committee). Although the design of the 1:500 detail plan was based on the 1:2000 plan, the alley route and its width was able to be adjusted following the discussions of the community. It sometimes did not follow the 1:2000 design approved detail plan as the approved plan was able to be adjusted and implemented in this project according to the agreement with the government regarding the project that the design should be based on both the district/ward development plans and the demands of the affected communities. According to the project documents that was accepted and approved of by both the city government and the World Bank, the "infrastructure will be designed to appropriate functional standards to ensure that as many people as possible benefit" (World Bank, 2004:4). Mr. Chau, Deputy Head of the PMU agreed that when the project was completed, the approved 1:2000 detailed plan of the district would be updated with the new changes of route and width.

"Normally, the detail plan is designed and approved of by the authorized bodies but there is a limited budget in the district for its implementation It is an innovative step in preparing, designing and implementing the detail plan in this project because the affected communities were actually involved at the preparation phase by giving their needs, ideas and comments to the design prepared by the consultants. Moreover, their opinions are considered as an important factor in the design and implementation. That a community involved design of a detail plan is updated later and becomes the 'pre-approved' part of the future urban plan is really new and innovative" (Chau. Deputy Head of PMU of Urban Upgrading Project of Can Tho city)

It was regulated in the project that there must be a 100% consensus among the affected community members in any decision regarding carrying out the expansion. If the consensus among the affected communities did not have 100% for the design, the project could not be implemented. In this project, the regulations were focused on a community participation approach in planning. Within this regulation, the consensus among the affected community members on the option was the most important factor in considering a selected proposal.

“There are communities whose properties were located in proximity to the alley that needed to be upgraded who initially refused to participate in the project as they were afraid that they would have to contribute land and money to the project. But seeing the effectiveness and how the environment was greatly improved after being upgraded in other neighborhoods who also participated in the project, they organized themselves to meet and discuss their own alleyway project and eventually also sent a request to participate in the project.” (Cuong. Ng, Chairman of An Phu ward People’s Committee).

The World Bank and the government of Vietnam agreed that the project finance budget also included money from the local community and it needed to account for 10% of the construction costs. This contribution was based on the willingness and ability to pay by the affected community when they agreed to participate in the project. When the people contributed money, they were responsible for what was spent in the project and actively participated in the monitoring processes (Chau. Deputy Head of PMU of Urban Upgrading Project of Can Tho city). In the propagandizing process, the role of the community prestige persons was very important. It needed cooperation between the mass organizations such as the Women’s Union or the Youth Union. (Binh, Chief Officer of Ninh Kieu district People’s Committee Office)

Before carrying out the project in the An Phu ward, the project information was propagandized in the ward office. This information was transferred to the neighborhood community through community leaders in community meetings. After knowing the objectives of the project as well as the information about the costs and benefits of the project including the shared of contribution (10% of the total construction costs according to the regulations decided upon by the city government), the affected community then decided whether they should join the project or not. After several meetings, until the consensus of the affected community reached 100%, an application letter on behalf of the community was prepared by the community and sent to the PMU and local authorities.

However, the requirement of having 100% of consensus for the design of the project was actually not easy to reach. It was a time consuming process, which required the involvement of all agreed members of the community, the mass organizations, and local governments to persuade, convince and negotiate with the members who were

not in agreement with the project. In the approved 1:2000 detail plan (*Figure 32*), the road and alley networks were designed with a minimum width of 6 meters. However, the city could not implement the design as it required a huge budget especially for the cost of compensation, recovery and resettlement. In this upgrading project, the policy was that the “infrastructure will be designed to appropriate functional standards”, so the planning standards are able to be adjusted to appropriate levels according to the discussions and agreements that were made between the community and the local government.

In the preparation process, the desires of the affected community members for the width of the small alleys after expansion was only 4 meters instead of 6 meters as it was originally regulated by the city government in the planning regulations for Can Tho city. This option was discussed among the community members, the PMU, the consultants and the ward and district officials. The cost that each household had to pay in the form of land contribution and benefits that each household gained by widening the lane were considered and the option of having a 4 meter wide lane gained support from the affected community. In some alley neighborhoods, the affected community required that the route of the lane should be adjusted or changed. The affected community with the support of the consultants convinced the local government with following reasons:

- The width of the alley after expansion is 4 meters and every plot of land is able to be reached by the small transportation means that are currently used by the community members. Moreover, it is wide enough for the firefighting equipment to go through.
- It reduced the amount of contribution that the community members had to pay as well as it reduced the compensation costs paid by the state budget.
- It reduced relocation and resettlement which helped to maintain the social fabric of the community.

In this project, the community actively participated in providing ideas for proposals with the support of the local government. Although the approval power still remained with the government authorities, there was still a clear policy for making decisions as the approval of the decisions for the improvement project were only able to be made if 100% of people in neighborhood agreed. As 100% of the people agreed with the

proposal for having a 4 meter wide lane or a changed route within the spatial detail plan, the PMU submitted the proposals and convinced the city government to give its approval. It showed that the voices of the affected people strongly influenced the design of the 1:500 detail plan in the neighborhood. This activity shows that although the upgrading project design was not prepared by the community but by the consultant hired by the PMU, the results of discussions and agreements between the affected community and the local government is the solid basis for the design. It shows cooperation between the two main actors in shaping ideas and standards for the design. Moreover, the affected community had been given the power to decide on issue of whether the project should be implemented in their neighborhood or not.

The design was approved of by the city government as it was the result of cooperation between the local government and the affected community members following the project principles. After receiving the approval of the design, the upgrading works were implemented, monitored and supervised by two monitoring bodies (*Figure 31*). It shows that the community members were involved in all stages of the project.

The city leaders revealed that the information of the implemented infrastructure upgrading projects including the route of the alleyways was updated and used as the ‘pre-approved’ part for the future detail plan design of the city. The result is that the city government not only approved the design prepared by both the community and the local government in this project but also changed the regulations for accepting ‘appropriate standards’ and moreover, they now have a policy that detailed spatial planning can be updated and adjusted following the implemented upgrading project. The approval of the width and the changed routes of the alleys was not only for implementation and getting the project up and running and meeting the project goals, it also shows a change in the city leaders’ attitude by accepting this community made plan as part of a legally approved document. This is the first time in Can Tho, according to Mr. Chau, vice head of the PMU of Upgrading Project in Can Tho city, the detail plan prepared by the city government was updated and adjusted following the detail plan prepared with the communities’ ideas.

Regarding the finance issues, the affected community participated in the form of a contribution. There were two forms of contribution, household contribute their land without compensation and the contribution of money. The money contribution from

households needed to be 10% of the total construction costs of the infrastructure system. According to the city government, the contribution share from affected households guarantees their responsibility in using and maintaining the infrastructure after it was implemented. However, the affected community decided on the share of contribution for each household by themselves according to (1) the width of the land plot of each household that is exposed to the alley; (2) reduction or exemption of a money contribution for exceedingly poor households or households with members with physical disabilities that were defined and accepted by the whole affected community. Their decision on this issue was accordingly accepted by the local authorities.

There was one problem with regard to the financial issues that had a minor effect on the depth of participation. It was the difficulty to arrange counterpart funding from the state for the project that affected the project policy as the district and ward government officials tried to maneuver affected communities in meetings to select options that minimized the costs of compensation and that contributed to land without compensation or selected options to partially change the route of the lane so that the compensation costs were minimized. However, according to the project principle, the design was prepared based on the willingness and ability to pay by both the local government and the affected community. The project was only able to be implemented if it received 100% consensus among the affected community. Therefore, in this project, the government could not impose their ideas on the affected community. So the local government and the community had to work together to find appropriate solutions for the issues.

As can be seen from the project in An Phu ward of Can Tho city, the community together with the local government, the CSOs and the consultants searched for solutions to upgrade the infrastructure system. The ideas from the affected communities were considered the most important factor in preparing options for selection. The city and district government and the PMU were committed to the solutions proposed by the community. Politicians accepted and legally approved the plans being convinced by the PMU. It can be summarized that in the upgrading project in the An Phu ward of Can Tho city, the depth of community participation showed in following:

- The affected community provided information about their needs, demands and desires to the consultants during the project preparation phase.
- The affected community worked together with the local government on the design standards and based on the agreements made between these two actors, the consultant prepared the design.
- The affected community decided whether the project in their neighborhood was implemented or not and the local government committed to that decision.
- Community members were involved in the monitoring process either by being involved in the community monitoring board or by directly reporting to the PMU and the local government.

In Edelenbos’s participation ladder scale, it is considered as ‘co-produce’. Therefore, it receives a plus (+) for the depth of participation.

The community participation in this project can be summarized in the following table with the following ranking levels.

Table 20: Levels of community participation in Can Tho city

City	Community participation	
	Width of the participation	Depth of participation
Can Tho	++	+

This ranking level of community participation will be discussed further in relationship to local government capacity in the next section to understand which local government capacity has resulted in community participation.

7.3 Local government capacity in relation to community participation in infrastructure upgrading projects

As remarked by many officials in Can Tho city, this urban upgrading project was the first time a community had actively participated in infrastructure improvement. However, the affected community members in the An Phu ward expressed that they were involved in the project only due to the clear information that was presented to them from the local authorities and it made them realize what the benefits were they could gain from the project. To clarify this further, local government capacity in

relation to community participation will be further discussed, regarding two areas of administration management and resources management within this section.

a. Administration management

- Availability and degree of implementation of policy/guidelines for community participation

As mentioned in the previous chapter, there was a resolution that was adopted at the 6th Vietnamese Communist Party Congress in 1986. Since the 1990s the slogan of ‘people know, people discuss, people implement, people monitor’ was mentioned and became the guideline for many legal documents. However, the first Law on urban planning which was issued recently in 2009 and came into force in 2010, regulated the process of consulting the community at the preparation stage of the process. Before the commencement of the Urban Planning Law, the regulations on planning issues in the 2003 Construction Law also mentioned the issue of consulting the community. According to the regulations of the 2009 Urban planning Law (Urban Planning Law No 30/2009/QH12, Vietnam National Assembly):

“Article 20:

1. Agencies organizing urban planning and investors of construction investment projects shall collect comments of concerned agencies, organizations, individuals and communities on urban planning tasks and urban plans.

Concerned People's Committees and planning consultancy organizations shall coordinate with agencies organizing urban planning or investors of construction investment projects in collecting comments.

2. Planning consultancy organizations shall collect comments of concerned agencies, organizations, individuals and communities on urban plans.

3. Contributed comments must be fully synthesized, explained, assimilated and reported to competent authorities for consideration before approval of urban planning

Article 21:

1. The collection of comments of population communities on general planning tasks and plans shall be conducted by consulting their representative in the

form of distributing survey cards and questionnaires. Population community representatives shall synthesize comments of their communities in accordance with the law on grassroots democracy.

2. The collection of comments of population communities on zoning planning and detailed planning tasks and plans shall be conducted by opinion polls through public display or introduction of planning options on the mass media”

It can be seen that there is a legal regulation on the issue of community participation on planning, although the level of depth of participation regulated by the law is still not thoroughly defined.

Following the objectives of the project and the prerequisite for receiving ODA support from the World Bank in this urban upgrading project, the policy for supporting community participation was focused upon by the local authorities. The People's Committee of Can Tho city has issued Decision 279/2004/QD-UB dated 06/08/2004, in which regulated all of the tasks, responsibilities and rights of the Project Management Unit of Urban Upgrading Project of Can Tho city. This document also regulated the mechanism for supporting the affected neighborhood community in participating in the project.

Based on the 2003 Law on Construction, in 2006, the local authorities of Can Tho city issued regulations on urban planning. On 5th January 2006, the City People's Committee of Can Tho issued Decision No 01/2006/QD-UBND regarding the regulations on urban planning within the territory of Can Tho. Accordingly, it was required that the planning proposal should be presented to the affected community and their comments should be collected. Based on that, in August 8th 2006, the Construction Department of Can Tho issued document No 126/HD-SXD providing guidelines for procedures on how to prepare, report, evaluate and approve the urban planning design of Can Tho. In this document, there are guidelines for the community consulting processes.

It can be seen that the policy, as well as many legal documents for community participation for urban planning and infrastructure upgrading in Can Tho city were issued and implemented. However, the policy and guidelines to fully support community participation in which the community is given the power to design and select an option that is suitable to their own conditions and their own needs was only

adopted and provided in the form of a regulation for the PMU. There have not been any specific guidelines regarding financial contributions from the community except the general policy from the city. In this policy, it is written that the cost of financial compensation should be reduced because it comes from the city budget. The city policy has to follow the orientation of the sponsors and city government to minimize the relocations and resettlement of the affected households. Although the policy and guidelines for community participation are in place, due to external pressures like in this example where a prerequisite of the project, the policy of supporting community participation at all stages of the project from preparation, design to implementation and monitoring was given and duly implemented by the city government. However, it did not cover all of the related issues such as the lack of regulation for the community to be able to monitor their financial contribution in the project. It can be regarded that the policy/guidelines that supports community participation in most of the issues in the project were available and implemented but it was not fully completed. Based on the above operationalization of the availability and degree of implementation of guidelines to meet the goal of community participation, it can be ranked with a high scale (+).

- Internal structures and procedures for managing the participatory processes

The priority of the local government is to improve the living environment of the neighborhood, it is also the desire of the people. Therefore, the people are willing to participate in the project. Mass organizations at ward level play the important role of propagandizing the people, making them understand the benefits of being involved in the project. As described in the above figure, the PMU, the People's Committee of Ninh Kieu District and the People's Committee of An Phu ward played an important role in supporting and managing the community participation.

The PMU of the Can Tho Urban Upgrading Project is responsible for implementing:

- On behalf of the Can Tho People's Committee, implementing and monitoring all activities in the project and under the management of the People's Committee (PC)
- Preparing and updating plans in accordance with the approved plan and policy framework and submitting them to the Can Tho People's Committee and the World Bank for approval before implementing

- Giving guidance to all activities of the district and wards in accordance with policies and instruction of the project
- Preparing and organizing community consultations as well as monthly informing the community about the project activities
- Coordinating components and organizations involved in the project
- Establishing procedures to quickly implement the necessary adjustments and solving any complaints from the affected community
- Establishing communication mechanisms to ensure technical support and logistics for the project implementation

It can be seen that although the PMU is the authority which was formed only for this project, it has a central role in coordinating all stakeholders' activities and creating the linkage between the local governments and the community. Community members revealed that normally they found it difficult to express their complaints to the city government. In this upgrading project, the communities complaints were directly received at the PMU's reception unit or at the district and ward People's Committee and then transferred to city People's Committee. Information from People's Committee was directly transferred to the communities in meetings accompanied by explanations from the PMU and district and ward People's Committees. In hiring consultants, the PMU worked on behalf of the city People's Committee. It helped the community to convince the city People's Committee to approve the changes of redesigned routes and widths of the alleyways which satisfied the community. It helped to create the basis for district and ward government to convince the community to participate in the project. The People's Committee not only supported the PMU activities in managing community participation, the district and ward People's Committees also have the following responsibilities:

- Assigning cadres to support the preparation and implementation of the project in their territory
- Providing support to other organizations including the PMU in publicizing information regarding the project and collecting information from the affected community through surveys for the project proposal design
- Organizing community meetings and consultations

- Establishing communication channels to the PMU as well as supporting and consulting with affected communities and passing the complaints
- Supporting the PMU to be able to quickly solve the complaints from the affected community

Actually, in organizing the meetings and consultation with the affected communities, the staff members of the PMU expressed that they faced some difficulties. These difficulties include the complexities in administrative procedures for the community to contribute land to the project without compensation, in changing the route of the alleys in the new design prepared with the community's ideas and comments. It required a lot of time and many administrative procedures to receive a positive decision from city government. The community meetings were often organized by the PMU which took place in a ward culture house where the neighborhood community meetings are always held. They also commented that although the PMU was founded under the city People's Committee, it has no administrative power. Therefore, its activities are mainly effective in creating direct channels of communication between affected communities and the local government and the city government as well as coordinating the participation processes of community in the upgrading projects.

In all of these activities, the PMU has transferred project information through the district and ward People's Committee. The ward and district committees informed community leaders, using the mass organizations at district and ward levels to convince and maneuver the community to participate in the meetings. The ward People's Committee also used the volunteers in the ward mass organizations to convey project information to the affected community members. Moreover, the leader of the district and ward people's committee assigned cadres to participate in meetings and work together with the community and consultants in the designing process. All of this support from the district and wards People's Committee helped the PMU to connect with the community and manage the participation.

Although there is no specific regulation on how to coordinate the structures and procedures for managing community participation in Can Tho, the organization of the PMU created a structure for coordinating activities to support community participation. The PMU is not an administrative authority but it coordinates and manages the participatory processes of the project on behalf of the City People's

Committee and receives support from the district and ward People's Committee. Therefore, the structures and procedures of the administrative systems for supporting community participation was followed to a reasonable extent. Following the scale regarding internal structure and procedures in chapter 3 and based on the above operationalization, it can be ranked as a high level (+).

- Effective leadership

In the Can Tho Urban Upgrading Project, the city government created a solid foundation for the community to participate in the project. With support from city leaders, the PMU was founded along with clear regulations which were parts of its task. Mr. Man, Chairman of the People's Committee of Can Tho city in 2008 – 2011 revealed that one of the Vice Chairman's of the city People's Committee was assigned to be in charge of the PMU. Although he was not the head of the PMU but he received reports monthly from PMU leader on the project activities. The Vice Chairman supported the PMU in coordinating with the relevant departments and sectors in the preparation, implementation and monitoring processes. The city leader who is in charge of the PMU activities from 2011 was Ms. Vo Thi Hong Anh, Vice Chairwoman of the city People's Committee. According to decision 2788/QĐ-UBND issued by the city People's Committee, Ms. Anh was the Vice leader of the city People's Committee and had direct responsibilities for the following tasks:

- Urban management and development activities: Urban planning, urban development, urban infrastructure development, public services; real estate; and the flood proof project for the city of Can Tho
- Investment promotion and the ODA project
- Projects, programmes, strategies on urban development, housing development, urban upgrading and safe water supply

Her authority was assigned by the city government; she held regular meetings with the PMU almost every two weeks. Mr. Chau, Head of PMU revealed that the PMU conversed with her directly to report about any stagnation and discussed about possible solutions to deal with the conflicts in the project. She was assigned related city departments such as the Department of Construction, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Department of Finance, as well as the district and ward to

cooperate with the PMU and to meet the affected communities. She was also the city leader who accepted the flexible solution of adjusting the width of the alleys and route changes following the community ideas and desires making it possible to implement the project, in order to improve the neighborhood with the appropriate standards.

Following the Decision 279/2004/QĐ-UB dated 06/08/2004, which regulated all the tasks, responsibilities and rights of the Project Management Unit of the Urban Upgrading Project of Can Tho city, the PMU operated on behalf of the city People's Committee and therefore, the Head of the PMU had some powers which required cooperation from the district and ward People's Committee regarding project related issues.

One of the reasons for the successfulness in implementing the project was that the flexibility of the city leaders following the advice of the PMU to accept the proposal from the community about the width of the alleyways, and organizing the adjustment on compensation prices which were applied to the affected communities. All of these activities helped to reduce stagnation and solve conflicts within the community and make the project run smoothly. According to the approved regulations for designing small alleys in the 1:2000 detail plan, small alleys were required to be designed to be at least a 6 meters wide. However, after many consultations during many meetings within the neighborhood, the desired width eventually agreed upon by the affected community members was 4 meters wide because it minimized the negative effects to the community with regard to site clearance but it was still wide enough to access the land plots for firefighters and their equipment and motorbikes. The leader of the Can Tho city was not too rigid and did not stick to the approved 1:2000 detail plan and they accept the width of 4 meters instead of 6 meters. It not only reduced the contribution of the people but it also made it easier for the route adjustment of the lane. And more importantly, it gave a 100% consensus among people in the community to go ahead with the project (Tam. Tr, Chairman of An Phu Ward Fatherland Front Committee). These changes in the proposals also received strong support from the People's Committee of Can Tho city, District and ward People's Committee leaders as it followed the project principle that it is based on the community needs, it helped to reduce compensation costs and it was accepted in the appropriate standards. In the accepted appropriate standard, the width of alleys on a 1:2000 detail plan was reduced but it is still within guaranteed safety standards for firefighting. Some of the routes of

the alleys were redirected, and it still guaranteed a smooth movement of traffic and accessibility to every plot of land in the neighborhood. Moreover, these changes followed the World Bank stipulated prerequisite of the project on ability to pay by both the local government and the affected communities.

The Chairman of the An Phu ward also had some ideas to make his leadership more effective. One of his ideas was to prepare a “Handbook of guidelines on some basic administrative procedures and some current need to know regulations” including some administrative procedures that were often encountered by people, some regulations for the community on how to participate in preparing, implementing and monitoring projects. Mr. Nguyen Viet Cuong, Chairman of the An Phu People’s Committee revealed that; “We collected the basic administrative procedure regulations, which are the need-to-know regulations and compiled them into a handbook. After that, we disseminated these regulations to cadres and community leaders in neighborhoods. Along with this activity, the ward People’s Committee cooperated with the community training centers which are unofficial training centers at ward level organized by the community for the propagandizing program and disseminated the handbook to every household”

These specific regulations include:

- Information on the required documents for each basic administrative procedure
- Official forms for each basic administrative procedure
- A summary of the community members roles in participating in the projects following the Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy
- Contact information of the related city and district departments that was needed by the community members in each basic administrative procedure

He stated that this handbook was beneficial for both the people in the community and the cadres at ward level. This handbook was given to each community leader, every cadres and every household in the An Phu ward. This handbook helped community members know exactly what the requirements were for all the administrative procedures. This handbook also provided basic information regarding legal regulations for the community members so that they would have a “self help guide and learn” before getting involved in the administrative procedures or participating in the project

within their neighborhood. This activity really helped the cadres with their work at the office because the community members helped each other to understand the regulations in the handbook before they approached the People's Committee with administrative procedures.

For the improvement of this activity, the ward People's Committee of An Phu provided a survey form for the community members after implementing the handbook program. According to Mr. Cuong, the Chairman of the An Phu People's Committee, the result of the survey showed that 87% of the surveyed people in the An Phu ward assessed this handbook as necessary for their work relating to the administration procedures, 83% felt satisfied with the content of the handbook. People in the An Phu ward expressed that this was a useful document but they requested that this document should be updated yearly with the newest regulations. The neighborhood community leaders also played an important role in the participation processes of the community. There are 61 neighborhood community leaders in the whole An Phu ward. They were selected by the community member themselves through an electoral process within the community meetings. They are prestigious people within the community, they are devoted to the community and wish to benefit the community as a whole. The term for a neighborhood community leader is two and a half years. Although they are not official cadres, they received allowances from the city budget. Based on the regulations issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs that defined the tasks and responsibilities of the neighborhood community leader, the neighborhood community leaders in the An Phu ward carried out the following activities

- Organize community meetings and transfer the project information to every affected household. In these meetings, the community leaders played the role of the person who convened the people and encouraged them to participate and preside in the meetings
- Cooperate with community members and consultants. To work with the people that disagree or have problems with the proposals and encourage them to discuss within the meetings and find acceptable solutions and convince them of the benefits of the final plan

- Collect the legitimate wishes, desires, demands and needs of the community and present them to the district and ward People's Committee to be able to come up with solutions to solve any problem

This was the main channel of communication between the city and the neighborhood community. As admitted by the city, district and ward leaders, the neighborhood community leaders greatly contributed to the participation process. The successfulness of the project depended on the community leaders as they are persons who directly convinced and maneuvered the community members to participate in the project. This was due to the fact that the project required 100% consensus to the proposal among its affected community members before it could be implemented. The results of 13 out of 15 lane neighborhood communities that joined the upgrading project in the An Phu ward shows the effectiveness of the community leaders in convincing and supporting community members in the participatory processes.

Despite the fact that there was a consistently high level of effective leadership involved in supporting the community participation in both the People's Committee and the neighborhood community level, the local government leadership did not create a favorable mechanism and support policy on financial issues for community participation. The policy on financial issues was decided upon by the leader of the City People's Committee and project managers but the percentage of money contribution from community members to the project was assigned by the city People's Committee. The city leader provided favorable mechanisms on financial issues. However, it was only applied to the households that contributed land without compensation. In this situation, they received a reduction in the amount of money they had to contribute. For other households whose land has been recovered, there was no favorable mechanism or policy regarding financial issues. It caused conflicts that needed solving at the city government level, changes and adjustment in the compensation prices. This conflict will be discussed further in the section of stagnation and conflict prevention. It showed that policy for conflict prevention that supports community participation was not fully prepared for or in place. In line with the operationalization of effective leadership in supporting community participation above, it receives a high level or plus (+) score.

Along with the administration management in local government capacity, the resource management issues related to community participation will be discussed in the next section.

b. Resource management

- Availability of financial resources to support community participation

The financial resources for this project came from 3 main sources: the World Bank (45%), the state budget (50%) and community contribution (5%). The financial resource from the state budget or the counterpart fund mainly covered the compensation and resettlement costs. The funding from the World Bank and the community contribution was for construction costs of infrastructure upgrading. In the agreement between the World Bank and Vietnamese Government, it was regulated that the funding was given on the condition that it met the objectives of the project “to alleviate poverty in urban areas by improving the living and environmental conditions of the urban poor using participatory planning methods, and influencing planning processes to become more inclusive and pro-poor” . Besides, one of the project principles is that “The design of infrastructure improvements will take into account the communities’ and local administrations’ willingness and ability-to-pay.” (World Bank, 2004:4). Therefore, it affected the financial policy of the whole project.

According to the leaders of the PMU of Can Tho Upgrading Project, along with the funding from the World Bank, the city government of Can Tho had to secure sufficient counterpart funds for the project. However, the difficulty in arranging that fund affected the project policy as the district and ward government officials tried to maneuver the affected communities in meetings to select the option that minimized costs of compensation and contributed land without compensation (Mr. Chinh, member of community in lane 71 of Ly Tu Trong Street, 2014). This approach will led to some conflicts that will be discussed further in the next sections.

In the financial mechanism, together with the ODA funding from the World Bank, there was a financial contribution of about 5% from the total budget (10% of budget for the construction of tertiary infrastructure systems) which were mobilized from the community. According to the city government, the contribution share from the affected households guaranteed their responsibility in using and maintaining the infrastructure after it was implemented. In the An Phu ward, the total contribution of

affected communities in money is 740 million VND (average □ 0.56 million VND /person) compared with the average income per capita per month of the affected households in An Phu ward is 768,968 VND. However, the actual contribution of each household in the affected neighborhood was different because it depended on the following two variables:

- **The front width of the land plot of each household in the lane:** The construction cost for upgrading infrastructure was divided by the length of the lane in meters. This unit cost is multiplied by the width of each household's land plot to calculate the contribution.
- **The household's income status:** The neighborhood community defined and voted that households with specific needs could be given preferential treatment and their contribution could be reduced. They are poor households or household with disabled people and invalids. It was agreed by the whole community that the contribution from these households could be reduced or exempted.

The construction costs were calculated by an independent consultant and given to the affected community in the neighborhood community meetings. It was a transparent process so that the community members were able to discuss and define the contribution share of each household. Nevertheless, there was no policy or regulation for the community to supervise and monitor the process of spending the budget. Ms. Hang from the neighborhood community of lane 71 of Ly Tu Trong Street expressed that some of the community members wanted to participate in the monitoring processes of not only the quality of work in construction but also the way their contribution was spent.

With the financial support from the World Bank, the state budget counterpart funding and the contribution from the community, the financial sources for project with community participation was secured and stable. It was assumed that the financial resources for the project with community participation were available, thus the financial resource to support community participation were also available. The financial resources to support community participation are the indispensable part of financial resources for community participation projects. In this upgrading project in Can Tho, the main funding sources were from an external source (ODA) and from the state budget, it was secured by the agreement signed between the Vietnamese

government and World Bank. Therefore, in this case of Can Tho city, it can be ranked as having a high level of availability of financial resources to support community participation (+).

- Availability of human resources

There is no reported data and information about the effect of PAR in recruiting employees to work for the community participation projects in the An Phu ward. However, in an interview with Mr. Cuong, the chairman of the People's Committee of the An Phu ward, he mentioned that the cadres were sufficient in number for all activities including supporting the upgrading project within the ward. There were a total of 22 cadres in the An Phu ward in which, some of them participated in city organized workshops which were related to community participation within the urban upgrading project.

According to Mr. Cuong, there were unofficial cadres or 'semi-official' cadres as he called it in the ward. There were a total of 61 unofficial cadres who were leaders of neighborhood communities and leaders of residential areas. They received some allowance for their work within the neighborhood but according to the assessment from the local governments, they played important roles in maneuvering community members to participate in neighborhood activities. Especially in the Vietnam Urban Upgrading Project funded by World Bank, "The project is based on the principle that active participation by communities in critical stages of preparation, design and implementation is a pre-requisite to effectively respond to the needs in these areas" (World Bank, 2004:4)

To serve the project, the PMU was founded under the direct control of city People's Committee. There were a total of 23 officials in the PMU of which, there were 3 persons with master degrees, 11 engineers and 7 people who had a bachelor's degree. This body helped the city People's Committee to manage the project in the whole city and guaranteed the local authorities commitments in supporting the community participation in the project.

Based on the project principles, the consultants who were hired through tender processes were also professional consultants within the community participatory approach. Mr. Nguyễn Quang Huân – General Director of Infra-Thanglong, the consultancy company in the project mentioned:

“In order to have a truly effective urban upgrading project, people need to be attracted to fully participate in the project, from the stage of project preparation, implementation until the project operation. Only people who live in the affected neighborhoods can understand their own needs, and which living conditions the community wants to improve immediately and in the long-term. Therefore when surveying in the preparatory stages of the project , in addition to the professional requirements the opinions of the people in the project area were also needed for full consultation. Then the project was implemented to meet 3 factors: (1) the correct orientation, proper planning following local approved development plan; (2) Guaranteeing the technical requirements (3) meet the aspirations of the people at maximum level”

It can be assessed that there were well trained staff who supported the community participation and based on the above operationalization of the availability of human resources in local government capacity, it can be ranked as a double plus (+ +).

- Communication and learning orientation

The mass organizations at ward level especially the Fatherland Front and the Women’s Union were effective means of connecting to the community used by the PMU, People’s Committee of City, district and wards. The neighborhood community leaders were also the active actors in the maneuvering process. Using these channels, information and orientation from city and wards were transferred to the people and the feedback from the community was received and communicated to the PMU and local the governments.

In the preparation, implementation and monitoring processes, information exchange and communication process in the project were transparent. However, at the early stage of the project, some of the affected households complained that the information regarding the issue of financial contribution of each household of 10% of construction cost was not clearly explained by the local government and conveyed to the community. It affected some of the households and they initially rejected joining the project. The improvement in the communication channels in providing correct and detailed information with sufficient explanations on the contribution methods through the specific sections of reception within the PMU cleared the issue.

There was only one complaint regarding the communication issues, although the project was transparent the information given to the affected communities was not thoroughly revealed especially regarding the delays in project implementation due to external reasons such as being dependent on other community consensus before it would be possible to implement projects in one package. According to Mr. Tien, Director of the PMU of the Can Tho Upgrading project, the principle of the project was to implement a few small alleyways in one package. The implementation required 100% consensus among the affected community residents in the neighborhood. Therefore, when the consensus of all affected members was eventually reached, the implementation of the upgrading work was able to be carried out simultaneously. The fact that it also depended upon the consensus of other communities within the improvement area caused project delays, where some small alleys had already reached a consensus for implementing the project. This also caused conflicts between the PMU, the local government and the community. This issues will be discussed further in the next sections.

There was adequate communication between the government and the communities. However, in several cases, complaints from the community did not receive timely feedback or were not given a clear enough explanation such as the case of the implementation delay due to being dependent on another community consensus which was part of a package of improvement projects. The PMU fixed this problem by forming a reception unit to receive the complaints from the community and give clear feedback to them as soon as possible so that the problem would be able to be solved as soon as possible. There was not a fully active dual channel of communication with frequent and reliable communication channels during the initial stages of the project but with time it improved and by the implementation stage of the project was sorted out, so it can be ranked as (+).

The local government capacity provided support for community participation. This below table is a summary of local government capacity with ranking levels

Table 21: Levels of local government capacity in Can Tho city

City	Local government capacity					
	Resources management			Administration management		
	Financial resource	Human resource	Information exchange	Goal/priority setting	Structure/Procedures	Effective leadership
Can Tho	+	++	+	+	+	+

Following the previous chapters, the results of the supporting from the local government regarding community participation will be discussed in the analyzing section of the outcomes of upgrading projects.

7.4 Outcomes of the infrastructure upgrading

a. Content outcomes

- Innovation factor

The idea of community participation in the planning process is not new in Vietnam. The City Development Strategy has been implemented in many cities in Vietnam, including Can Tho in which a participatory approach was applied. However, after being prepared, the CDS was not applied in the planning system in Vietnam, despite the fact that the CDS has many advantages and is considered as a good strategy for improved planning compared with the traditional spatial master plans in Vietnam which are prepared using a top down approach.

The innovation factor in this project is not in the approach of having community participation at the preparation, implementation or monitoring phases. The innovation is in the results of this process. Community participation was the basic principle at all stages of preparation, design and implementation. The communities were encouraged to participate in providing information about their needs and their ideas that were duly given to the consultants. According to Mr. Huan, the General Director of the consultancy company used in the project, many implemented infrastructure design plans were adjusted to fulfill the desires of the community, including simple issues such as defining lane elevation and the width of the lane. These issues have been discussed thoroughly with the communities, the local government and the consultants within the meetings. These adjustments were regularly checked during the implementation stage by the community members who were involved in the preparation process to see whether their ideas and comments were followed. The completely new content was the community involved design of the infrastructure systems which was implemented and then updated in future master plans as the 'pre-approved' part of the plan.

This innovative content in Urban Upgrading projects was different to the content within the City Development Strategy. Although they both advise community

participation at all stages, the product outcome of the CDS process are only in the form of a general strategy. It is only able to be used as a basis for further technical plans. Community participation in the urban Upgrading project in Can Tho is supported by the local government and was carried out with using a professional consultancy company and using participatory planning methods. The result of this participation process is very concrete and can be implemented with the supervision of the involved community members. Moreover, these results after being implemented became legally approved results that were incorporated into future spatial plans of the city.

It shows that the innovation factor includes changes in policy of the city government along with the effective leadership of the local government leaders, allowing community members to be actively involved in the process of preparation, design and monitoring. Compared to the usual system in Vietnam of top down decision designing of spatial detail plans, the community driven design of the spatial detail plan in the Can Tho upgrading project was accepted and approved of by the city government can be considered as innovative content. Moreover, it was implemented and used as being a ‘pre-approved’ part of the future detail plan of the city which, normally in Vietnam, is decided and designed top down by the government institutions following government ideas. These results are very new within the urban planning issues in Vietnam. Considering this factor and following the scale in chapter 3, it can be ranked as having a very high level in innovative factors (+ +).

- Effectiveness solution

According to the report from the city of Can Tho, the affected neighborhood communities were the direct beneficiaries in this urban upgrading project as the infrastructure system was improved giving a better quality than before the project implementation. The effective solutions showed in the approval of the community involved infrastructure plan and the plan was implemented with 100% consensus of the community members. This solution also helped to solve the problem of any infrastructure plan that lacked sufficient neighborhood details or the problem of having an unimplemented infrastructure plan due to the lack of state budget for implementation. The project requirement of having a 100% consensus before the project implementation helped to avoid any ‘forced relocation’ situations whereas in

top down planning projects, ‘forced relocation’ situations often cause many problems for both the households and the local government.

Mr. Le Minh Chanh, occupant of one house in lane 12 of Ly Tu Trong street, An Phu ward, noted that; “The width of the lane has been widened from 1 meter to 4 meters wide that has enabled the land plot to be accessible by car. The community members even in a 4 meter broad lane are now able to run household businesses so that they can earn more and life is much better”. According to Mr. Chau, Vice Director of the PMU of Can Tho, in the An Phu ward as well as in other wards of Can Tho, many people living in the neighborhood small alleys (less than 4 meters broad) that have not been included in the upgrading plan of Urban Upgrading Project of Can Tho have sent a request to the Can Tho People’s Committee and the PMU asking for an expansion of the project to include their neighborhood, they are also willing to contribute land without compensation, resettle part of their houses and architecture works so that the project can help them to upgrade the infrastructure system.

The solutions really address the problems of the neighborhood as it was prepared, adjusted and implemented following the communities desires. The goals and objectives of the project were effectively fulfilled and therefore, the World Bank agreed to give more funding for the next phase of the upgrading process in Can Tho. It can be ranked as a double plus (+ +) for the effectiveness of the solution according to the scale in chapter 3.

b. Process outcomes

- Level support from actors through satisfaction

The principle of the project is a bottom-up community participation approach in planning and it was the prerequisite to effectively respond to community needs in the project areas. At the critical stages of preparation, design and implementation, community participation received full support from the municipal, district and ward government. As it was a principle of the project and the prerequisite for the funding, the selected consultant firm was also a professional company who deals with participatory approaches in planning. As mentioned above, many infrastructure design plans were adjusted to fulfill the community desires, including simple issues such as defining lane elevation and the width of the lane and those plans were approved of before they were implemented. The desires of the affected community were discussed

thoroughly within the communities, the local government and the consultants in the meetings. The adjustments were monitored at the implementation stage by the community members who were involved in the preparation process to control whether their ideas and comments were followed. All of these activities and including the support of the local government and consultants gave satisfaction to the neighborhood community and encouraged them to actively contribute ideas and participate in the project.

However, there were some complaints about the delays of the project. As mentioned, the principle of the project is that the implementation was carried out in the form of a package composing of a number of small alleys. The implementation required a consensus of 100% among all of the households in the affected neighborhood. Therefore, when the consensus of all affected members in the lanes was reached, the implementation of upgrading works was able to be carried out simultaneously. The fact that it depended upon the consensus of other communities within the improvement package caused project delays, some small alleys reach a consensus for implementing the project quicker than others, so they had to wait. There were several small alleys in residential area No 3, lane 108 of 30/4 street of the An Phu ward where a contribution of 10% construction costs was agreed upon but the construction was delayed after a breaking ground activity without timely explanations from the PMU and the developer. In this situation, the community was unable to monitor the construction schedule and progress.

Regarding the financing issues, the contribution of the affected households was 10% of the construction costs but there was no specific regulation for how a community could monitor the expenses. This point was queried upon by some of the households in the affected communities.

From all the above facts, it can be seen that there is adequate satisfaction and support from the stakeholders such as the city People's Committee, the PMU, the district and ward committees through entire process of community participation within the project and therefore, it can be ranked as a plus (+)

- Progress of action on stagnation and conflict prevention

Stagnation in the Urban Upgrading Project of Can Tho city was due to the rigid regulations related to the width of the alleyways in the planning issues. This regulation

was issued by the city People's Committee. According to the regulation, the width of the alley should be designed with minimum of 6 meters in width. However, this upgrading project had some specific characteristics that were different from the new design spatial plan. This project followed the principle in which "infrastructure will be designed to appropriate functional standards to ensure that as many people as possible benefit." (World Bank, 2004:4) and the undesired effects to the affected community such as relocation and resettlement had to be minimized. In numerous of community meetings with consultants and the local government, in order to reach the project principle, the affected community expressed the desire of having the width of land to be expanded to only 4 meters in width instead of 6 meters. This option received the consensus of 100% of the community members but it needed the approval of the city government to be legally accepted and to be implemented. With support from the PMU as well as the district and ward governments, this option was submitted to the City People's Committee and the city government was convinced to accept the changes as it helped to fulfill the people's needs and followed the projects principle. In this situation, the flexibility of the city government in adjusting policy helped to solve the stagnation.

The main conflict in this project was related to financial issues. As mentioned earlier, along with the funding from WB, the city government of Can Tho had to prepare sufficient counterpart funds for the project. However, the difficulty in arranging these funds affected the project policy as the district and ward government officials tried to maneuver the affected communities in meetings to select the option that minimized the cost of compensation and pressed the dwellers to choose the option of contributing their land without any compensation or select the option to partially change the route of the alleyway so that the compensation costs were minimized. There were several complaints that the compensation price was too low.

An example of this was the conflict in alley No 71 of Ly Tu Trong street, An Phu ward. The majority of the 34 households in the lane community reached the consensus on the option provided by the consultant but only 4 households rejected it. The 4 households requested that the lane expansion should be calculated from the center of the current lane to both sides, so that it would be fair in the contribution of land to the project for those households living along the alley. Mr. T.V.C in lane 71 expressed that he supported the idea to widen the lane but he could only accept the option of

expansion from the center of current lane, but not the option that partial changes to the lane route should be made and the expansion should be towards his plot of land. While explaining the options to the 4 households that had rejected the plan, the PMU and the consultants had given the reasons for the design of the route that was based on the project principle in which the design of infrastructure improvement had to be taken into account and the local government ability to pay. If the design has a basis from center of the current lane, the cost for compensation would go beyond the ability to pay of the city for this lane. The architecture works on Mr. T.V.C plot of land was a low cost temporary house with a brick fence, whereas the house which was across the lane was a two story brick building. In this specific situation, to solve the conflict and make the affected community members feel that they were being fairly treated, the PMU leader requested the City People's Committee to adjust the compensation price for those who had to contribute more land due to the partial route changes. After many discussions, the plan was accepted by the 4 households who had initially rejected the proposal and this conflict was solved. The project in alley No 71 Ly Tu Trong Street received the consensus among all affected community members and it was implemented.

Regarding the complaints about the compensation price, the PMU and the consultants requested that the affected community households in the An Phu ward should give comments regarding the compensation price in accordance with Decision No 53/2005/QD-UB of the People's Committee of Can Tho city. There was a total of 275 comments from the 334 affected households of the An Phu ward, in which 16 were considered reasonable, 93 were considered as too low and 166 households had no idea regarding the compensation. To solve this situation not only for the An Phu ward but for all of the affected communities within the whole city of Can Tho, the People's Committee of Can Tho issued Decision No 91/2008/QD-UBND dated 22/9/2008 regulating the adjusted price of compensation for houses, constructions, and architectural works. With the new Decision No 91/2008/QD-UBND, the adjusted compensation prices were amended to 1.6 times the previous amount that was first stipulated in Decision No 53/2005/QD-UB. By issuing the decision, there were no further complaints from the community members.

However, there was only one minor complaint from the affected community members as mentioned above, which was the lack of clear policies and mechanisms for the

community members to monitor the way their financial contributions were spent in the project. Although it is a minor complaint but in order to have the good outcome, transparency should be guaranteed in all aspects of all the processes.

It can be seen that the flexibility of policy direction from the city level and the high support of community participation from the PMU and the local governments helped to overcome the obstacles, solve the conflicts and helped the project be implemented effectively. Therefore it is ranked as a plus (+) for progress of action on stagnation and conflict prevention.

The outcomes of the infrastructure upgrading project in Can Tho city was considered successful in creating improved living conditions for the affected poor community. The outcomes of the project in ranked level are in the table below:

Table 22: Levels of outcomes of the project in Can Tho city

City	Outcomes			
	Content Outcome		Process Outcome	
	Innovation factor	Effective solution	Support	Progress of actions
Can Tho	++	++	+	+

These outcomes resulted from the relationship with community participation with support from local government capacity, the next section discusses in greater detail the relationships between these variables.

7.5 The relationships between community participation and the outcomes of the infrastructure upgrading projects in Can Tho city with support from local government capacity

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the infrastructure upgrading project was very important as the outcome of the project directly affected the neighborhood community. In Can Tho city, the project was carried out in the low income areas where the basic infrastructure systems were incomplete and did not meet the people needs.

The project was carried out with major funding from an external source and the prerequisite for funding was the guarantee from the local government of active community participation in all critical project stages of preparation, design and implementation. The guarantee showed in the policy of having 100% consensus of the

affected community regarding the design options before implementation. It also showed in the co-production activities while making the spatial detail plan and adjusting the regulations on the width of the lanes that were finally approved of by the city government. The effective leadership from local government leaders, the flexibility of the local government at city level helped to resolve any stagnation and conflicts between the community and the government. The implemented project in Can Tho city showed that community participation with support from the local government at ward, district and city levels influenced and changed some key regulations of rigid spatial planning. The results of this participation process were very concrete and were able to be implemented under the supervision of the involved community members.

The high level of the depth and the width of participation in this project ensured that all of the people in the community gained benefits from project. In the definition of the Law on Urban Planning of Vietnam, the term of ‘community consultation’ is very broad. It could mean the informing level, consultation level or the co-production level. In the upgrading project in Can Tho, although it was called a ‘consultation process’ by the local government of Can Tho city and the PMU, the actual participation of the affected community in the project through all the critical project stages of preparation, design, implementation and monitoring showed co-production activities. In order to get the 100% consensus of the community in the project, the local government had to commit to the solutions prepared by an independent consultant firm following the affected community ideas and comments. It is different from the situation of advising in community participation where the local government is committed to the results in principle but may deviate from them in the final decision making. The project improved the living conditions of the neighborhood and almost all of the community members were satisfied with the project outcomes. However, the delayed communication in providing thorough explanations to the community in some cases and no specific regulations as to how the communities are able to monitor the way their contribution is being spent have brought some negative points in community satisfaction.

The summary of the levels of each sub-indicators of 3 variables is in the table below.

Table 23: Levels of 3 variables in Can Tho city

City	Local government capacity						Community participation		Outcomes			
	Resources management			Administration management			Width of participation	Depth of participation	Content Outcome		Process Outcome	
	Financial resource	Human resource	Information exchange	Goal/priority setting	Structure/ Procedures	Effective leadership			Innovation factor	Effective solution	Support	Progress of actions
Can Tho	+	++	+	+	+	+	++	+	++	++	+	+

In the Can Tho project, as analyzed in the previous sections, the funding prerequisite of community participation at all stages of the project has made the city leaders work to find effective ways to support community participation. The flexibility of the city leaders in the adjustment of the regulations related to urban upgrading project issues created solid foundations for successful community participation (0).

Effective leaders are always able to influence communication channels. However, the actual leaders of the community, the persons who are devoted to community activities, were less active than those in Viet Tri and Vinh city and therefore it influenced the depth of participation. There was adequate communication which was conveyed enough project information to the community so that all of the affected households eventually participated in the project. (1) in *Figure 33*

In this infrastructure upgrading project, the leaders influenced the human resources that supported community participation. There is one Vice Chairman of the City People’s Committee who was also appointed to be in charge of the PMU. The local government leaders from city to district and ward levels used the system of the PMU, ‘semi-official’ cadres and the professional consultants to maneuver and support community participation. All processes were carried out by stakeholders with the priority principle of community participation. (2) in *Figure 33*

Following the analysis in the previous sections, information about clear and secure financial resources from the World Bank and the state budget guaranteed that the community members involved in the project gained benefits from it. The funding prerequisite from the World Bank influenced the width and the depth of participation as community participation was the basis principle. (3) in *Figure 33*

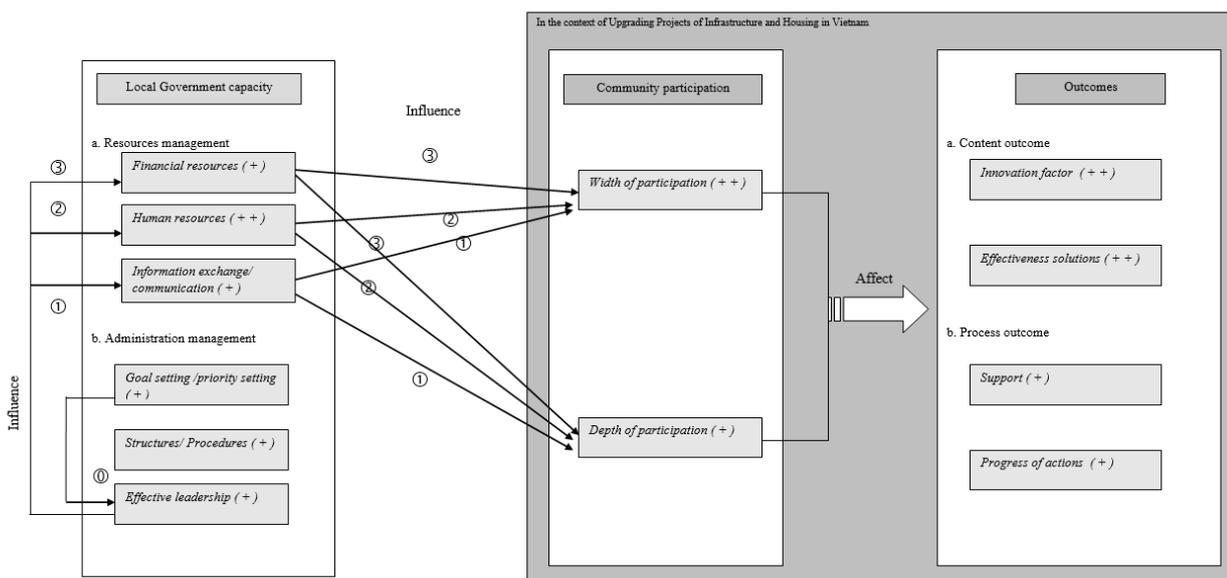
The result shows that community participation influenced the outcomes of the project. The high level of human resources with well trained staff to support community participation together with the wide participation helped bring the innovative content

of outcomes and results forming effective solutions. If the communication channels are only adequate these will lower the satisfaction of actors at the outcome.

The community participation in the infrastructure upgrading project in Can Tho resulted in good outcomes with some positive characteristics. The community participation in this project, living conditions in the neighborhood were upgraded, many low income households were satisfied with the project results as they now have access to basic infrastructure. The spatial detailed plan was prepared and implemented due to 100% consensus among the community after many discussions and negotiations with the local government.

The relationship between these three variables can be summarized in the following figure (*Figure 33*).

Figure 33: Relationships between local government capacity, community participation and the outcomes of the project in Can Tho



It showed that the high level of width and depth of participation with support from local government capacity resulted in good outcomes of the project in Can Tho in both content outcomes and process outcomes. It is interesting to see that aspects of local government capacity influenced each other and then it was channeled through resource management giving an impact on community participation. Among the local government capacity aspects, human resource is the most important for the width and the depth of participation in Can Tho. Financial resources also had an important impact on participation as it actually influenced the width and the depth of

participation following the funding prerequisite and priority policy for community participation.

There were some limitations in this project as mentioned earlier. The adequate level of information exchange and communication to solve the feedback from the affected community members lowered the level of the depth of participation and had a negative impact on the satisfaction of the actors in the outcomes. Although it was regulated by the Grassroots Democracy Ordinance that the community can monitor the financial issues if their participation was in the form of a money contribution in the project, but unfortunately in Can Tho there was no such a policy for the community to be able to monitor it. The policy of community participation on monitoring financial contributions should have been prepared so that the community was able to supervise this issue. Such an action could create more transparency in the project and bring more satisfaction to the outcomes of the stakeholders.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the case of Can Tho city and its infrastructure upgrading project. It showed that, although community participation in spatial planning was not fully implemented, there was an implementable approach for the low income community to participate and design a detailed plan for their neighborhood. The precondition was to change the attitude of the municipal leaders. Community participation had to be considered it was a prerequisite of the project which would have affected the policies as well as the priorities of the project.

This case study in Can Tho gave empirical evidence to partially answer the research questions in chapter 1, concerning the characteristics of the community participation in the infrastructure upgrading project in Can Tho, it is showed that all of the affected community were actively involved at all stages of the preparation, design and implementation processes together with technical support from the consultant.

The local government capacity in Can Tho supported community participation at a high level during all of the aspects of the project, especially using a very high level of human resources. The important aspects were initiated based on a high level of priority setting policies for community participation and effectiveness of the leadership of Can Tho municipal leaders. The high ranking levels content outcome resulted due to a high level of participation in width and depth which were guaranteed due to secure financial

resources and a very high level of human resources who were well-trained regarding the community participation approach.

However, this model has a key for success. It had the funding prerequisite of community participation and included secure financial resources. Due to these preconditions and the policy, the local government leaders had to commit to the community participation approach in order to achieve a 100% consensus among the community members. The prerequisite of having 100% consensus in the implementation of the project for neighborhood communities also created some conflict problems as the nature of every household is different and their desires were sometimes not the same. In this situation, the government leaders had to be flexible. In this case, support from the local government including clear and transparent policies and dual communication with an effective feedback mechanism to encourage devoted community leaders created the foundations for community participation.

In this project, the district and ward governments followed the prerequisite of the project. The project could not have been implemented if the consensus had not have been reached. In that case, the government was unable to impose their ideas over the community desires because the consensus also depended upon the communities' willingness and their ability-to-pay. A consensus could only be reached if there were discussions and negotiations between all of the equal level actors. Therefore, during the discussions and negotiations, the government and the community had equal roles. In addition, the commitment from the local government also influenced the participation of the community. The commitment from the local government to support community participation guaranteed the implementation of participatory planning methods and influenced the planning processes. With that commitment for supporting community participation, the government from the district and the ward played equal roles as did the affected community in discussions and dialogs for the preparation of the spatial detail plans and the infrastructure design which included appropriate standards that took into consideration the communities and local administration's willingness and ability to pay. This commitment prevented the affected community from idea and purpose imposition of the local government in the planning preparation like it normally worked in many urban planning projects in Vietnam. The prerequisite of the project affected the priorities of this project. It also changed the local government leaders' attitude towards community participation. It

encouraged a high level of community participation in both the depth and the width to reach a mutual understanding among affected communities and local government to solve the neighborhood issues of improved infrastructure. The outcomes of this project showed that effective solutions could be reached with a high level satisfaction of involved actors when there is a commitment by the local government to support a high level of community participation in which, the interaction between the citizens and the government representatives succeeded in taking place.

The next chapter will provide another case study regarding an infrastructure upgrading project and from that, the outcomes of UPIH with community participation will be further discussed. The pattern of community participation in Can Tho city will be compared with other patterns and analyzed to find suitable ways to engage and support community participation in Vietnam.

Chapter 8. Case study of Nam Dinh city

8.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, we have seen 3 cases in Vietnam where housing and infrastructure have been paid attention to by both citizens and government. In these projects, housing and neighborhood infrastructure have been improved following the communities' desires and wishes and it showed that it had an important role in the lives of the neighborhood communities. In this chapter, community participation in an infrastructure upgrading project in Nam Dinh city has been presented and analyzed. Similar to the previous chapters, there are four major sections in this chapter. The first section begins by focusing on the infrastructure improvement project in Nam Dinh city focusing on community participation. It discusses how community participation was implemented and the width and the depth of participation in this upgrading project. The second and third sections focus on the analysis and discussions of the findings that were elicited from the support of local government enabling community participation and the outcomes of the project respectively. The relationship between the outcomes of project and community participation with support from local government capacity will be discussed in the fourth section. The content presented in this chapter will follow the previous chapters in answering the research sub questions (What were the characteristics of community participation in UPIH in Nam Dinh city? What is the local government capacity in Nam Dinh city? and how is it related to community participation in UPIH? and What is the outcome of the UPIH in Nam Dinh city with respect to community participation?). The fourth section summarizes the model of community participation in Nam Dinh city that will be further discussed by comparing it with other models in three other cities to answer the research sub question 4 (What are the best ways to engage and support community participation in UPIH that have potential to improve and produce a good outcome of the project?)

8.2 Community participation in infrastructure improvement project

Similar to Can Tho city, Nam Dinh is one of the four cities in the World Bank funded project of urban upgrading of the Mekong River Delta. The urban upgrading project is in the National Strategic Program of urban upgrading to the year 2020 with the objectives of poverty reduction in urban areas by improving living conditions and environment with community participation in all stages of the project.

Besides the above objectives, the urban upgrading project also contributes to the improvement of the general environment and hygienic conditions of the whole city of Nam Dinh, especially the improvement of the living conditions and the living quality of the urban poor areas. The project helped to improve the basic infrastructure services like sewage, water supply, transportation and environmental hygiene in the poor residential areas of the city. It fostered the planning approach for urban improvement with residential community participation that met the actual demands of the neighborhood community.

The project in Nam Dinh was divided into two phases: Phase 1 from 2004 to 2006 focused on the ward of Van Mieu. In the 2nd Phase from 2007 to 2014, the project expanded to the rest of 19 wards of Nam Dinh city. The total amount of people who received direct benefits from the project were 200,000 (PMU of Nam Dinh, 2014).

This project in Nam Dinh was also carried out following the Vietnam Urban Upgrading Project (VUUP) objective “to reduce poverty in the urban areas by upgrading/improving the living conditions and environment of the poor people living in urban areas using planning methods with the participation of communities” (WB, 2004:4). The objectives of the project focused on the issues of community participation driven planning. These methods have been clearly explained regarding the tasks of upgrading tertiary infrastructure as “one of the objectives will be achieved by upgrading basic tertiary infrastructure and other service in low-income areas through partnerships between communities and local governments” (WB, 2004:4). The regulations were clear regarding the community participation approach in the project principles.

“The project is based on the principle that active participation by communities in critical stages of preparation, design and implementation is a pre-requisite to effectively respond to the needs in these areas” (World Bank, 2004:4). In Nam Dinh, similar to Can Tho city, this was also a very important precondition from the funding provider in the project agreement and documents that affected the government policy on supporting community participation and especially on the width and depth of participation. Moreover, project principles regulated that “the design of infrastructure improvements will take into account the communities’ and local administrations’ willingness and ability-to-pay” (World Bank, 2004:4). This regulation had an impact

on the relationship between the community and the local government which will be discussed further in the next sections.

In this project, according to the report on the Project Assessment Report No AB854 for all of the four cities involved in the project including Nam Dinh, the World Bank provided a rationale for its involvement in the project that the Government of Vietnam had a commitment and it clearly had an emphasis on decentralization and community participation. The World Bank's support of this project ensured community participation during the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of all project activities. (World Bank, 2004:4).

The financing resources for this project came from three sources. (1) The financing resources managed by World Bank that were provided for the project included: a World Bank loan, an International Development Association (IDA) grant, a grant from the French Agency for Development and a PHRD grant from the Ministry of Finance of Japan. These financial sources were all channeled through the World Bank. This finance source is mainly for the construction cost of upgrading activities. This source accounted for 90% of the construction budget. (2) Counterpart funds from the state budget. This financial source was mainly for the compensation costs of the upgrading activities, resettlement and relocation. This resource accounts for 100% of the compensation budget and 7% of the construction budget (3) The monetary contribution from the local community. This financial source was mainly for the construction costs of upgrading activities and maintenance works. This source accounts for 3% of the construction budget.

According to the 2012 and 2014 report from the Management Board of the Urban Upgrading Project of Nam Dinh city, in the 1st phase, only one residential area in the Van Mieu ward was improved as a pilot project. The 1st phase was implemented during the period of 2004-2009. In the 2nd phase during the period of 2010 - 2014, there were 25 residential areas, which comprised of 19 wards, were involved in the project (Management Board of Urban Upgrading Project of Nam Dinh, 2013). See *Table 24*

Table 24 . Summary of Project in Nam Dinh city

	Proposed	Actually implemented in the 1 st phase	Actually implemented in the 2 nd phase	Total
Number of low-income neighborhoods / wards which were improved	22 neighborhoods 15 wards	1 neighborhood 1 ward	25 neighborhoods 19 wards	26 neighborhoods 20 wards
Number of people who received direct benefit	70,432	11,271	176,455	187,726
Area (ha)	261,6 ha	37,7 ha	242 ha	279,7 ha
Total loan credit from the World Bank (million US\$)		1,0	7,9	8,9

The Tran Te Xuong ward is one of the wards of Nam Dinh city that was involved in the project. The Tran Te Xuong ward is the ward of Nam Dinh city that has many low income families (*Figure 34*). It has 13,657 inhabitants (2012) in the area of 74 ha. According to the assessment document for the Vietnam Urban Upgrading Project (VUUP), Nam Dinh city has faced a strong urbanization process in recent years, which has helped to cause degrading in the infrastructure of the area. The infrastructure was poor and over time deteriorated becoming inadequate. Due to the limited state budget in a small and poor city like Nam Dinh, “unsystematic and incomprehensive repairs caused the urban infrastructure to be degraded, incapable of drainage, flooding streets and environmental pollution” (DRCC, 2011:11)

The project in Tran Te Xuong ward was carried out in the 2nd phase of the VUUP in Nam Dinh. In the Tran Te Xuong ward, the project belonged to component 1 of the project of Nam Dinh, in which tertiary infrastructure and basic services for low income areas would be upgraded through coordination programmes between the community and local government.

According to the report from Nam Dinh PMU, 24 neighborhoods of the 29 residential neighborhoods participated in the project, in which 4 out of 24 neighborhoods were outside of the low income residential area, namely group’s No. 8, 9, 10 and 11. However, they were willing to participate in the project and the neighborhoods themselves requested it. Following the information provided by the communities, the neighborhood community was able to decide whether they were willing to participate in the project or not. Participating in the project was not a compulsory task for the affected communities from the PMU or municipal government. The target of the

project was to give priority to the low income areas. However, the middle income neighborhoods were also able to request to join the project if all the community members agreed. The total number of households committing to participate and gain benefits from the project was 1,350. (DRCC, 2011:21).

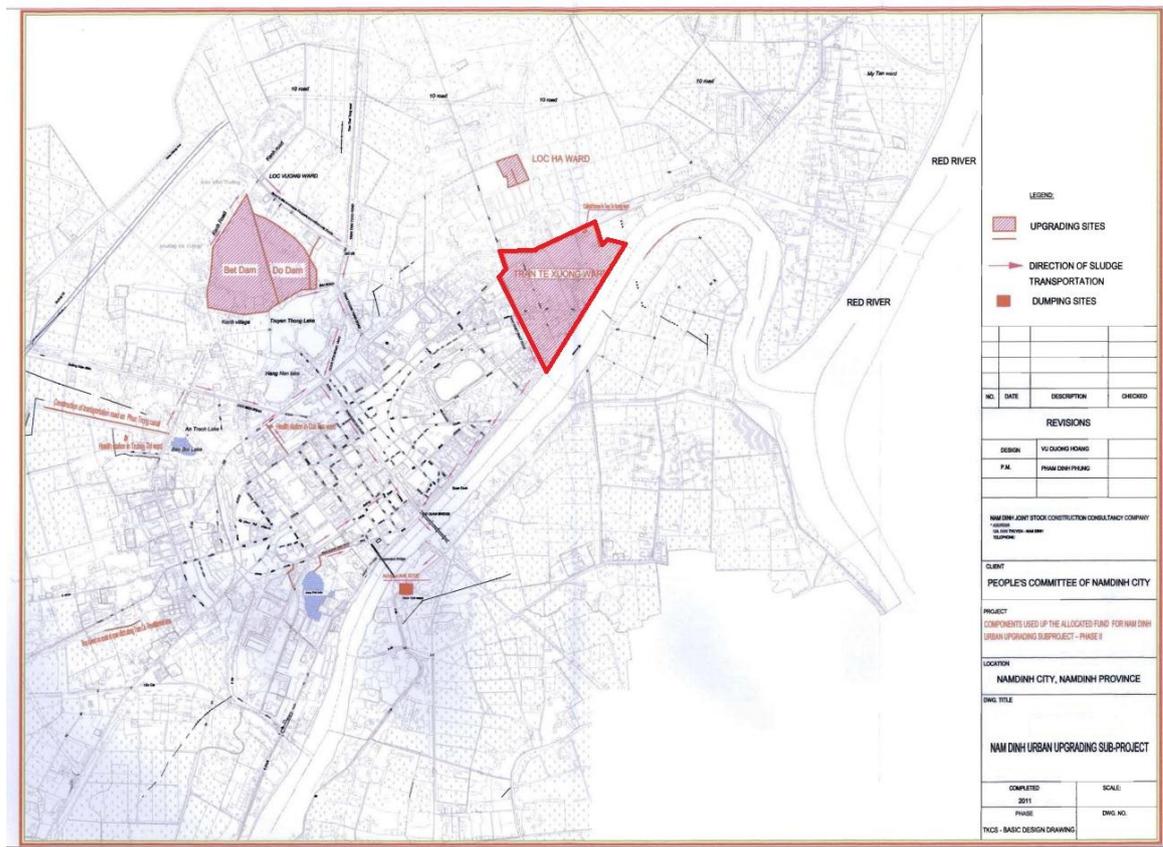


Figure 34: Tran Te Xuong ward in Nam Dinh city

(Source: People’s Committee of Nam Dinh city)

The upgrading project in Tran Te Xuong ward dealt mainly with surface upgrading activities of the existing small roads and alleys within the neighborhoods and upgrading the existing sewage and water supply systems. The improvement of tertiary infrastructure in the neighborhood also contributed to the improvement of the living environment quality and hygiene as it solved the problem of flooding and covered the opened sewage system. The upgrading project in the Tran Te Xuong ward did not have the issues of relocation and resettlement. In the Tran Te Xuong ward project, there were a total 57 small roads and alleys within the neighborhood, in which 45 alleys were upgraded. 3 of the 45 alleys did not initially participate, but they changed their minds when they saw the positive impacts from the other improved alleys. The width

of 3 alleys was expanded to 3 meters following community requests. (Tien, V.V, Vice-chairman of Tran Te Xuong PC, 2013).

The Community participation can be seen from the projects in Tran Te Xuong ward of Nam Dinh city with the following characteristics

- Width of participation

According to the Project Management Unit (PMU) of Nam Dinh, due to the project objective and principle, the improvement work was only able to be designed, approved and implemented if 100% of the affected households in the community participated in the project and agreed with the solution. The direction from the People's Committee of Nam Dinh also regulated that in the tertiary infrastructure improvement projects within the neighborhoods, it is required that the project can only be implemented if the community members consensus reaches 100%.

The upgrading project in Tran Te Xuong ward was based on the approved spatial detail plan of Nam Dinh city. In the process of preparation and implementation, the PMU of Nam Dinh city had hired independent consultants to make the design. The consultants were hired through a bidding process using World Bank regulations. It was a transparent and open process.

Based on the objectives of the project as well as the requirements from the World Bank for funding this project, the participation of the community, especially the affected households was paid more attention to, compared with other actors and indirect beneficiaries. The PMU of Nam Dinh together with the People's Committee of Nam Dinh city and the consultants organized consultation meetings with the communities of the affected neighborhoods as well as carrying out surveys in the form of questionnaires for all of the affected households in project area. The consultation meetings were organized at two levels. The first level was the meeting with all of the affected neighborhoods, representatives of PMU, local authorities and mass organizations. The second level was the meeting with all of the local ward authorities, representatives of PMU and the Nam Dinh city People's Committee. These two levels of meetings guaranteed that all of the actors had access to the project information.

The PMU of Nam Dinh city and Nam Dinh city People's Committee admitted that one of the causes for the delay of the project in the 1st phase of project in Van Mieu ward

was the late involvement of the community in the project, few people were initially involved in the project and this created conflicts with the local government in implementing the project. In the 1st phase of project in the Van Mieu ward as a pilot sub-project, the project information was only publicized once, following the normal top down approach of informing affected communities about the project and their contribution share. As a consequence, affected communities did not receive enough information and did not know of their rights, benefits and tasks when participating. Some of the affected community members rejected to participate. It took much time to convince the people in the affected community, some of the works in Van Mieu ward were delayed or postponed. Therefore, to solve these problems in the 2nd phase, the PMU of Nam Dinh and Nam Dinh city People's Committee organized meetings and consultations for all of the affected households at the very early stages of the project. "We realized that in the community driven project like this, the more people involved in the project, the faster the project runs. The sooner people participate in the project, the better the project is" (Chuc, Chu, Deputy Director of PMU of Nam Dinh, 2013).

According to the final report of the Vietnam Urban Upgrading Project (VUUP) to the World Bank (2014), in the preparation phase, the majority of the affected households in the neighborhood community had participated in the preparation and implementation processes. The number of directly affected people in Nam Dinh city was 17,645 (VUUP, 2014). There were several types of community meetings (see *Table 25*). These figures were calculated based on the number of people who participated in every meeting. In these meetings, as tradition in Vietnam, every household/family had one representative who participated. According to the results of the survey carried out by the consultant, 99.1% of the affected community members participated in the project in at least one of the different participation forms (VUUP, 2014:12). The rest of the affected community (0.9%) did not participate in any meetings.

Table 25. Participation of affected people in the preparation process (in the whole city of Nam Dinh)

Form of participation	percentage
Being informed about project information through radio, publicized notices at People’s Committee office or through community leaders in the community meetings	90%
Participate in community meetings for general project information	96.2%
Participate in discussion meetings with consultants on upgrading alternatives	87%
Participate in discussion meetings on contributions	83.5%

(Source: VUUP, 2014)

Table 26. Affected community participation in the implementation process (in the whole city of Nam Dinh)

Form of participation	Percentage
Participated in meetings	97%
Participated in monitoring activities	62.4%
Directly helped the constructors at the construction site in the implementation process	59.2%

(Source: VUUP, 2014)

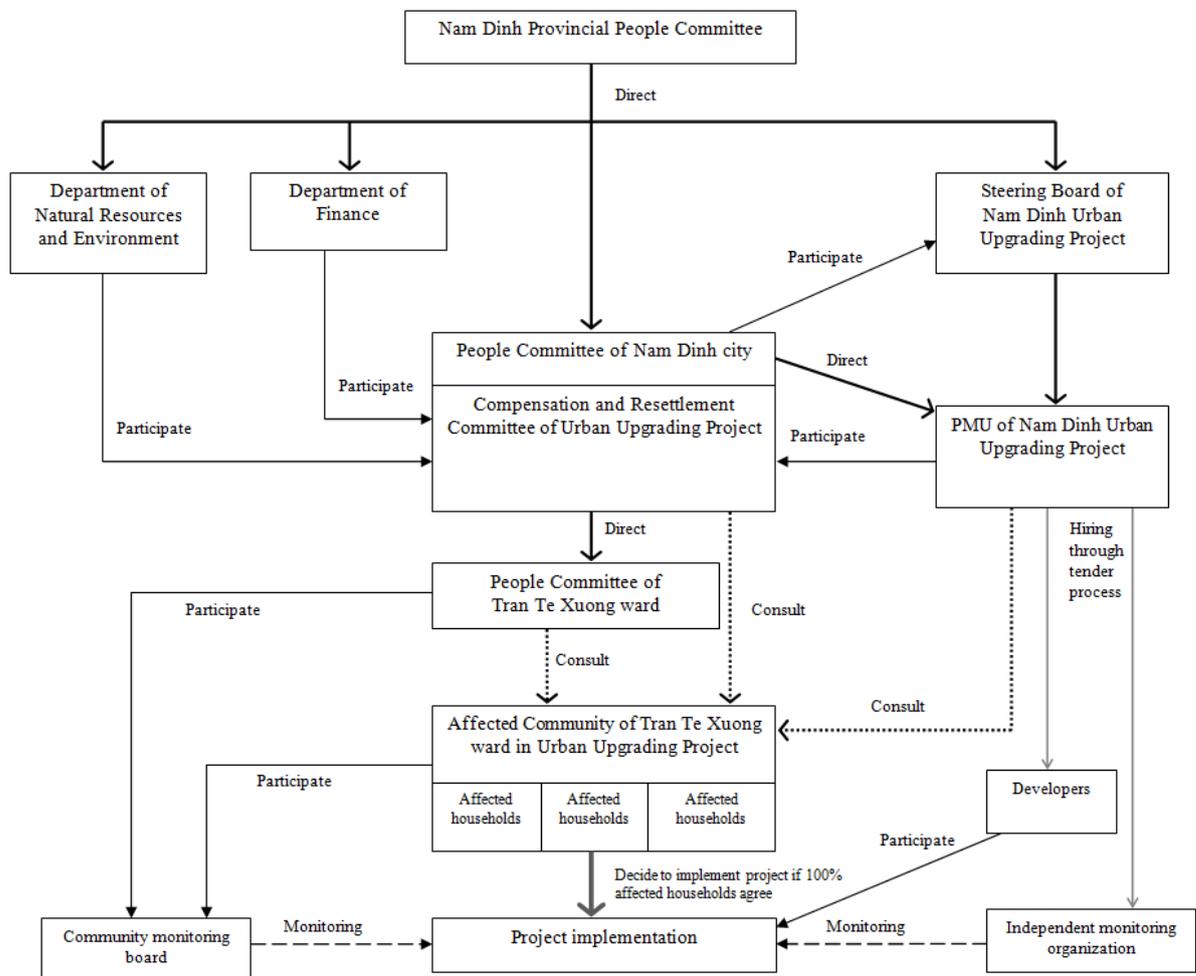
The affected people in Tran Te Xuong ward revealed that they participated in the project because the implemented project would improve their living environment. In fact, as the prerequisite from the World Bank as mentioned above that all affected people in the upgrading project had to participate and agree on the proposal before it can be actually implemented. It was required that the affected communities had to participate from the initial stage of information collection, to the preparation process, monitoring the implementation processes and maintaining the work after being handled.

The tertiary infrastructure upgrading project carried out in Nam Dinh city with community participation was implemented in only 2 wards namely Tran Te Xuong and Loc Ha. In Tran Te Xuong ward, 24 out of the 29 residential neighborhood communities participated. The low income groups were from areas No.1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28 and 29. The total number of households who committed to be involved in the project was 1,350. In the Loc Ha

ward, there was only 1 neighborhood community that participated with 25 households. The vast majority of people in the neighborhood of Tran Te Xuong ward participated in the project

The people in Tran Te Xuong ward expressed that they participated because they received adequate information from the local government and the PMU at a very early stage of the project and that the information given during consultancy was not only effective for the development of options for widening alleys, installing water supply systems and the sewage systems but also for the contributions during the implementation phase.

Figure 35: Relationships between communities, local governments and procedures of the project in Tran Te Xuong ward



In this upgrading project, the Project Management Unit of Urban Upgrading Project of Nam Dinh city (PMU) was formed under the control of the People’s Committee of Nam Dinh city (district level) (Figure 35). The People’s Committee at provincial level

paid attention to implement this project in Nam Dinh city and they formed the Steering Board for this project at provincial level. This Steering Board had the Vice Chairman of Nam Dinh Province People's Committee as the head and the standing deputy was the Chairman of Nam Dinh city People's Committee. This board comprised of members from the PMU of Nam Dinh and leaders of related provincial departments. The PMU of Nam Dinh was under the supervision of both the People's Committee of Nam Dinh and the Steering Board for the project at provincial level. In the project, the PMU selected the consultants which followed a bidding with select criteria which was approved by the World Bank. The consultants carried out surveys in the territory including the community survey and prepared the city upgrading proposals. As described in *Figure 35*, the PMU consulted the affected communities in the Tran Te Xuong ward through independent consultants. The consultants in the Nam Dinh project trained the community volunteers. There were a total of 158 community volunteers from the Women's Union, Youth Union and neighborhood communities who participated in the project in Nam Dinh city. These community volunteers formed groups and they received training from consultants to collect information from the affected households. They distributed questionnaires, received community opinions and demands for the upgrading project. Affected communities were involved in the project from the stage of collecting information, community desires and needs. They participated in the community meetings as well as in processes of answering questionnaires and surveys. This information was the basis for the consultants to prepare the upgrading proposals.

These proposals were approved of by the People's Committee of Nam Dinh city and publicized to the neighborhood community. The proposals related to the alley expansion infrastructure improvement required community meetings. In numerous meetings, the affected community, the PMU, the people's committee officials of Nam Dinh city and Tran Te Xuong ward participated and discussed. According to the project regulations, the design consultants were hired by the PMU to work with the communities and with the utility companies to prepare a Community Upgrading plan during these meetings. The affected community was consulted with three options in which every option was considered namely; upgrading options, costs and cost recovery arrangements. The Community Upgrading Plan consisted of the layout and details of the infrastructure investments. It also gave information regarding the participation

processes and the community management structure. Each option was prepared based on the actual situation of infrastructure in the neighborhood and the ability to pay by the community members and it also had to follow the technical requirements of the Urban Upgrading Project. The project was only able to be implemented if the Community upgrading plan received 100% consensus of the affected community and local authorities (*Figure 35*). Although it is the element of the depth of participation, according to the community, it affected the community members' willingness to participate in the project. When the information of project principle was conveyed to the people, it encouraged many community members to be involved in the project from the early stages.

There were only three alleys that were expanded. Communities decided upon the size of alley expansion, the route of the alley, the contributions to the project and the amount of contributions that each household in the community should pay. The contributions that were decided upon by the community were the form of land contribution and money. In general, the contributions were calculated based on the width of the land plot that was exposed to the alley. However, there were several cases of poor households in which their contribution in money was exempted. These cases were voted upon and selected by the community. Some households contributed land without compensation in these cases the amount of monetary contributions that they had to pay were reduced or removed. This was also decided upon by the community. These meetings as in the *Table 25* showed that the people were involved in the preparation process. The leaders in Tran Te Xuong ward expressed that at least one representative of every affected household in the neighborhood participated in the community meetings. In these meetings, they worked with the independent consultants, community volunteers and the local government. In Vietnamese context, it could be considered as the majority of the affected households were involved in preparation and decision making stages of the project. In community meetings, working with consultants and the local government, following the project regulations on issues of community participation, the representatives from the mass organizations such as the Women's Union and the Veteran Association always participated. Their role in these meetings was as intermediate actors that help to encourage people to participate in the project and solve the tensions and conflicts between affected

communities and local government as well as between community members in discussing alternative solutions to make the project work.

Active community participation at all stages of the project was a prerequisite from the World Bank when approving funding for the implementation of the project. In order to reach a final decision regarding upgrading the alleys within the neighborhoods, it took time and the affected community members were involved in many meetings to select the appropriate options for their neighborhood. The selected options for infrastructure improvement were only able to be implemented if it meets all of the communities' desires and needs and has a 100% consensus among all of the affected communities. It also needed to receive the agreement of the local government as it had to also take into account the district and ward investment and development plans. In Tran Te Xuong ward, 45 of the 57 small roads and alleys (79%) were upgraded due to this project and the affected community, mass organizations and local government participated in the project. The upgrading project in Tran Te Xuong ward was part of the upgrading project in Nam Dinh city. Currently, figures are not yet available regarding the participation of the Tran Te Xuong ward project only, but the picture of participation in the whole city of Nam Dinh including the Tran Te Xuong Ward shows that the vast majority of the affected community members in Nam Dinh actively participated in the project. Based on the measurement of the width of participation operationalized in chapter 3, it can be seen that the participation in infrastructure upgrading in the Tran Te Xuong ward of Nam Dinh city involved many actors including all of the affected community members of the Tran Te Xuong ward, local civil social organizations and the officials from city government and related departments. Therefore, it receives a double plus (+ +) for the width of participation.

- Depth of participation

The level of the depth of community participation was mentioned in the 2007 Ordinance of Grassroots Democracy. This legal document regulated that the affected community should be consulted, given ideas and comments regarding the design proposals as well as participate in the monitoring processes.

In the upgrading project of Nam Dinh, the project principle was to ensure community participation at all critical stages of the project as it was a prerequisite of the project during preparation, design and implementation. Similar to the project in Can Tho city,

the consultants in Nam Dinh collected information regarding community desires and needs by conducting surveys and through community volunteers as well as meeting the affected community members in numerous community meetings organized by the ward People's Committee and the PMU.

The neighborhood communities in the Tran Te Xuong ward participated at the beginning of the project, according to the principles of project. According to Mr. Tien, Vice Chairman of the Tran Te Xuong ward People's Committee, neighborhood communities were able to decide for themselves the issues of whether the upgrading project in their alleys should be implemented or not and that decision was based on a consensus among the people of the community. This decision was based on the results from a number of meetings where three design options were discussed. If the three options did not meet community demands as well as the ability to pay of the community, they could decide not to implement the upgrading work in their neighborhood.

It was regulated in the project that a 100% consensus among the affected community members had to be achieved in every decision regarding carrying out the improvements. If the consensus among affected communities was not 100% for the design, the project could not be implemented. In this project, the regulation focused on the approach of community participation in planning. Under this regulation, the consensus among the affected community regarding which option to choose was the most important when considering which proposal to select.

“There were three communities, whose properties are located in proximity to the alley to be upgraded, initially they did not intend to participate in the project, they had many reasons including the attitude of untrustworthiness with the project objectives and goals. But seeing the benefits and living environment improvement from other neighborhoods that had participated in the project, they re-organized themselves and met and discussed the possibility to join the project which eventually resulted in them sending a request to participate.”
(Du. H.N, Director of PMU of Nam Dinh, 2013).

As agreed among the funding providers, the World Bank and the government of Vietnam, the project finance budget included a money contribution from the local affected community and it accounted for 3% of the construction costs. This

contribution was based on the willingness and ability to pay of the affected community when they agreed to participate in the project and selected the appropriate option for infrastructure improvement. Mr. Du from the PMU of Nam Dinh expressed that although the amount of money that needed to be contributed was not much, when people contribute money, they feel responsible for how it should be spent in the project and actively participated in the monitoring processes. Actually, they did not directly monitor the funds that they contributed but the quality of the infrastructure works that their contributed money had helped to upgrade. As described in *Figure 35*, the community monitoring board had frequently monitored every step of the construction works following the approved design. These designs were publicized in the People's Committee office so that the affected community members were able to monitor it by themselves. They expressed that normally, they would only check the origin of the construction materials to guarantee that it came from qualified suppliers and checked the concrete-mixing ratio to guarantee the concrete quality. The monitoring process of the community received support from independent monitoring organizations with technical related issues. The project information dissemination and publicizing processes were the very important role of the community leaders, prestigious community persons and community volunteers. It needed cooperation with the mass organizations such as Women's Union or the Youth Union to transfer the project information to the affected communities as well as to give feedback from the community to the PMU and consultants for the design alternatives of the infrastructure improvements. (Ms. Lua, PMU staff on community and environment issue, 2013). As mentioned earlier, many community volunteers who participated in the project were members of local mass organizations.

The upgrading project in Tran Te Xuong ward carried out tertiary infrastructure improvements. It included the widening of alleyways,, the improvement of water supply systems to each household, the improvement of local sewage and drainage systems and sanitation, the improvement of alleyways and small road lighting. Learning from the experiences in the Van Mieu ward in the 1st phase of the project in Nam Dinh, where the project had been delayed due to the lack of community participation at the commencement stage of the project, the affected communities were involved very early in the Tran Te Xuong ward upgrading project. This experience will be mentioned further in the next section of conflict prevention.

Before carrying out the project in the Tran Te Xuong ward, the project information was publicized at the ward office and the culture house of the community where people often met and participate in leisure and entertainment activities. This information included the project objectives, the project principles, and the cooperation regulations within the project. This information was disseminated to the neighborhood community through community leaders in community meetings and through community volunteers to each household. After knowing the objective of the project as well as the information about the costs and benefits of the project, including the contribution that each household had to pay (3% of the total construction costs according to the regulation decided upon by the city government), the affected community decided whether they wished to join the project or not. After several meetings, until there was a 100% consensus of opinion from the affected community, an application from the community was then prepared by the community and sent to the PMU and the local authorities. As mentioned in *Table 25* and *Table 26*, affected people received project information through the radio, announcements during public broadcasting from ward, community leaders and community volunteers. Community members participated in the community meetings where more detailed information of project including the project goal, objectives, and project principle were provided. In these meetings, as well as through community leaders and community volunteers, community needs and demands were also raised and provided to the independent consultants. In the next meetings, the 3 options prepared by the consultant following the community needs and demands were discussed. The affected community members, the staff of the ward People's Committee and the PMU discussed the options based on technical standards and the approved spatial detail plan and especially the ability-to-pay of both the community and the government. When the affected community agreed and decided to implement the upgrading work following the selected option that had already been made by both community and the government, the community also made the commitment to contribute 3% of the construction costs. The next meetings of the community on the contribution issue focused on the share of each household/family as well as the selection of poor household cases that had been exempt from the monetary contribution. The result of these meetings was based on the consensus among the community members who participated in the meetings and it was committed to by both community and the government.

In the implementation process, the community helped the constructors at the sites with facilities like electricity and water supply that were used for the construction works. The main activities of the affected community members in the implementation process were the monitoring of activities. Many people had participated in the community meetings with the consultants and constructors to make detailed revisions of the designs for the infrastructure. The monitoring results were also frequently reported in these meetings so that the time frame of the implementation process was guaranteed. According to the report of the PMU of Nam Dinh to the World Bank, the time frame of the implementation process in the 2nd phase was guaranteed and followed the schedule, compared to the 1st phase in the Van Mieu ward where the implementation process took 3 times longer than the expected time frame due to the lack of affected community members participation in the decision making of the design and conflicts between the affected community and the local government in issues of compensation and planning design.

The consultants and the PMU of Nam Dinh city agreed that, compared to the 1st phase in the Van Mieu ward, in the Tran Te Xuong ward at the 2nd phase, the clear and transparent communication of the project information to the affected communities had encouraged more people to be involved in the project and it helped to speed up the implementation process. “When people clearly know about the projects objectives and understand their rights and obligations, they understand that they will gain benefits by participating in the project. It helps to increase the consensus among the community for the implementation of the project” (Tien, V.V, Vice Chairman of Tran Te Xuong ward People’s Committee, 2013).

The consultant and the PMU of Nam Dinh city cooperated with the local authorities to train the community volunteers on how to collect information about the needs and demands of the community, how to mobilize people to participate in the project and how to transfer the project information to each household. They were members of the Youth Union and Women’s Union who lived in the neighborhood and were willing to participate in the project. They participated in most of the community driven activities in the neighborhood. These community volunteer groups cooperated with the community leaders and elderly, reputable and knowledgeable persons within the neighborhood community to organize community meetings to discuss the project.

In this project, the community actively participated in providing ideas for the proposals with the support of the local government. Although the approval power still remained with the local government authorities, according to legal regulations, there was a clear policy from the city government for making decisions and that the approval decision for the tertiary infrastructure improvement project could only be made if 100% of people from the neighborhood agree. As mentioned earlier and illustrated in *Figure 35*, the independent consultants prepared three options with different alternatives based on the affected community needs, ideas and opinions which were suitable to the actual planning situation and the community's ability-to-pay of 3% of the total construction costs of the upgrading works. These three options were discussed with in the community meetings with the participation of affected community members, community leaders, local government at ward level, members of the PMU and the consultants. Considering the three options, the participants in the community meetings would select the most appropriate option that met the community demands, followed the technical standards and especially, it needed to be in line with the community's ability-to-contribute. This stage normally took time to accommodate for discussions and selections, according to the PMU report to the World Bank (PMU report, 2014). This activity shows that although the upgrading project design was not prepared by the community but by the consultant hired by the PMU, the results of the discussions and agreements between the affected community and the local government in the meetings formed a solid basis for the design. The selection of the design made by the community was checked for project technical criteria by the consultant. These results were then discussed in the meetings with the community and the local authorities until they reached an agreement on the appropriate alternative for the upgrading. However, according to the final report of the PMU of Nam Dinh, the discussion meetings were also held even after the selection of the design had been made. The detailed design of the upgrading works needed to be revised following the new community demands and proposals. It shows the co-operation between the two main actors in shaping ideas and standards for the design. Moreover, the affected community was given the power from the city government to decide on the issues of having the project implemented in their neighborhood or not. The consensus by the community was a precondition for the project to be approved by the local government.

But the latter has the power to formally approve the project under the condition that this approval is committed through a community decision.

The design was approved by the city government as it was the result of cooperation between the local government and the affected community following the project principles. After receiving the approval of the design, the upgrading work was implemented under the monitoring and supervision of two monitoring bodies (*Figure 35*). In addition, the approved design was publicized in the community meetings with the affected communities. It was also publicized in the ward People's Committee office. All documents of the approved design were given to the local authorities, the community monitoring board and the affected communities. "These activities helped all stakeholders closely cooperate to monitor the implementation process" (Du. Hoang, Director of PMU of Nam Dinh, 2013). It shows that the community members were involved at all stages of the project.

In the implementation process, the design of tertiary infrastructure including information regarding construction material ratio for mixing concrete and mortar were publicized on the neighborhood notice board. This information was the basis for the community to monitor the work quality. The monitoring process was not only through the community monitoring board but the members of the neighborhood community were also able to monitor the project implementation separately and individually (Nguyen, neighborhood community member at Tran Te Xuong Ward, 2013). The Community Monitoring Board was elected by the neighborhood community and recognized by the Fatherland Front of Ward's Resolution. The Board comprised of between 5 to 9 people who were volunteers, knowledgeable persons and prestigious community members.

Mr. Nguyen, a member of the neighborhood community No.10 in Tran Te Xuong ward, revealed; "The construction work in this project was of better quality compared to other work that the State invested in and constructed without community monitoring because in this upgrading project, people participated and contributed; they had a voice and they feel responsible to monitor the quality of the work". People self-organized the monitoring teams under the community monitoring boards which were nominated by the community and approved of by the ward's Fatherland Front (Lua. D, member of Construction and Investment Management Board of Nam Dinh city, 2013).

The nomination was carried out during the community meetings in the implementation process. The people who were nominated were community leaders, reputable, dedicated and knowledgeable persons who were willing to participate in the community monitoring board. Affected community members were also given the right to monitor the upgrading work and follow the project information about the design and building material quantum that was publicized in the community house, and public information notice boards. The information about the monitoring processes were then reported during community meetings and disseminated to the local government and the PMU office. It showed the willingness of the people in the community to participate in the project that influences their living conditions when there is support and clear regulations for community participation.

Regarding the finance issues, the affected community participated in the form of a contribution. There were two forms of contribution, either the household contributed the land without compensation or they contributed money. The money contribution from the households accounted for 3% of the total construction costs of the tertiary infrastructure system. According to the city government, the contribution share from the affected households guaranteed their responsibility in using and maintaining the infrastructure after it was implemented. However, the affected community decided the share of contribution for each household by themselves according to (1) the width of the land plot of each household that was exposed to the alley; (2) reduction or exemption of a money contribution for poor households that were demarcated and accepted by the whole affected community.

There were criteria issued by the government to define a household that could be considered as a poor household. In a small city like Nam Dinh city where communities have closed relationships, the situation of a poor household/family is known by all of the community members because the neighborhood community has to select and vote for them and the poor family will receive a subsidy from the government. In the project, the regulations for reduction and exemption of a money contribution for the poor households were discussed and decided within the community meetings. Normally the share that the poor households had to pay, was paid by all the rest of community members. The local government was committed to the community decisions regarding these issues.

As can be seen from the project in the Tran Te Xuong ward of Nam Dinh city, the community together with the local government, CSOs and the consultant searched for appropriate solutions to upgrade their tertiary infrastructure systems. The ideas from the affected communities were the most considered factors in preparing options for selection. The city government and the PMU were committed to the solutions selected by both the affected community and the local authorities. Politicians accepted and legally approved the decisions after the PMU helped to convince them. It can be summarized that in the upgrading project in the Tran Te Xuong ward of Nam Dinh city, the depth of community participation showed in followings:

- Affected community provided information about their needs, demands, desires to the consultant for the project preparation phase.
- Affected community, community volunteers, community leaders and local authorities closely cooperated in providing information and discussing it.
- Affected community worked together with the local government to make the design standards and based on the agreements between these two actors, the consultant prepared the design.
- The affected community decided whether the project in their neighborhood was implemented or not and the local government was committed to that decision.
- Community members were involved in the monitoring process either via the community monitoring board or by directly reporting to the PMU and the local government.

In the Edelenbos’s participation ladder scale, it is considered as ‘co-produce’. Therefore, it receives a plus (+) for the depth of participation.

The community participation in this project can be summarized in the following table with the ranking levels.

Table 27: Levels of community participation in Nam Dinh city

City	Community participation	
	Width of the participation	Depth of participation
Nam Dinh	+ +	+

This ranking level of community participation will be discussed further in relationship to local government capacity in the next section to understand which local government capacity has resulted in community participation.

8.3 Local government capacity in relation to community participation in infrastructure upgrading project

Similar to Can Tho city, in Nam Dinh, this urban upgrading project was the first time that the community actively participated in infrastructure improvement. However, the people in the affected community in the Tran Te Xuong ward admitted that they were involved in the project at the 2nd phase when it was implemented in the Tran Te Xuong ward due to the clear and transparent information from the local authorities and from that they realized the benefits they could gain when actively participate in the project. As mentioned in the previous section, the width and the depth of community participation in upgrading projects in Nam Dinh received support from the local authorities. In order to make it more clear, local government capacity in relation to community participation will be further analyzed in two areas of administration management and resources management in this section.

a. Administration management

- Availability and degree of implementation of policy/guidelines for community participation

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the Resolution adopted by the 6th Vietnamese Communist Party Congress in 1986, since 1990s the slogan of ‘people know, people discuss, people implement, people monitor’ was mentioned and become the guideline for many legal documents. In Nam Dinh city, the local authorities added to the slogan and made it become ‘people know, people discuss, people implement, people monitor and people benefit’. It became the guidelines for Nam Dinh city authorities in providing regulations and policies that support community participation.

Following the objectives of the project and the prerequisite for receiving ODA support from the World Bank in this urban upgrading project, the policy for supporting community participation was focused upon by the local authorities. The People’s Committee of Nam Dinh city issued the Document 412/TB-UBND, which regulated all the tasks, responsibilities and rights of the Project Management Unit of Urban Upgrading Project of Nam Dinh city as well as the tasks of the related municipal

departments, local authorities and the municipal community consultant board. This document also regulated the mechanism for supporting affected neighborhood communities in participating in the project. Moreover, this document gave the information about the rights of affected communities in participating.

According to the city leaders of Nam Dinh city, this project was a big project that was implemented in Nam Dinh, Nam Dinh city is a provincial city and it has less administrative power in comparison with Can Tho city. Therefore, to support the project, Nam Dinh city authority requested Nam Dinh Provincial People's Committee to form a Steering Board for the project at provincial level. The People's Committee of the Nam Dinh Province issued Decision No 326/QD-UBND to form the Steering Board, in which regulated the tasks, responsibilities and rights of all members to support the project, especially focusing on the issues of supporting community participation following the project objectives and principles. The Head of the Steering Board was the Vice Chairman of the People's Committee of Nam Dinh Province. The standing Deputy Head was the Chairman of the People's Committee of Nam Dinh city. Other members were the Head of the provincial department of Planning and Investment, Finance, Construction, Natural Resources and Environment.

At city level, the People's Committee of Nam Dinh city and the PMU of Nam Dinh city issued the Guiding Regulation for Community Activities in the World Bank Project in Nam Dinh City. In this document, it regulated that the objectives of the community activities in the Nam Dinh project guaranteed the project principles and objectives in community participation issues. It is regulated that; "all infrastructure works will be upgraded to meet the communities' demands and ability-to-pay, reduce resettlement and relocation. The publicity of the project will widely be carried out so that the affected communities and the beneficiaries from the project know and understand their rights and responsibilities to participate in the project. Activities in the project guarantee that communities actively participate in all stages of the project from planning, implementing, and project management (operation and maintenance). It is requested that all of the work for the upgrading project should be geared towards what best suits the communities' needs, ability-to-pay and ability-to-participate." (PMU of Nam Dinh, 2008)

It can be seen that the policy as well as many legal documents for community participation for infrastructure upgrading in Nam Dinh city were issued and implemented. However, the policy and guidelines to fully support community participation in which the community is given the power to design and select options that are suitable to their conditions and their needs were only adopted and provided in the form of regulations for the PMU. The regulations only mentioned the money contribution from the affected communities was 3% of the total construction costs of the upgrading project.

There have not been any specific financial guidelines for community participation except the general policy from the city. One of the policies was that the financial compensation costs should be reduced as it came from the city budget. Moreover, it had to follow the orientation of sponsors and the city government in minimizing the relocation and resettlement of the affected households. Although the policy and guidelines for community participation were in place due to the external pressures as it was a prerequisite of the project, the policy of supporting community participation at all stages of the project from preparation, design and implementation is given and implemented by the city government. However, it did not cover all of the related issues such as the lack of regulations for the community to monitor their financial contributions in the project. In both the Can Tho and the Nam Dinh project, the community had no power to monitor the financial issues. Although the project principle is “active participation by communities at critical stages of the preparation, design and implementation is a prerequisite”, this regulation was too general. The local government with a top-down system was reluctant to transfer part of its power to the community in all issues. It is seen that the policies and guidelines that supports community participation in most of the issues in the project are available and were implemented but they were not fully completed. Based on the scale of the availability and degree of implementation of the guidelines for the goal of community participation, it should be ranked and given a high scale (+).

- Internal structures and procedures for managing participatory processes

The priority of the local government in Nam Dinh city was to improve the living environment of the neighborhoods, it was also the desire of the people. Therefore, many people in Nam Dinh were willing to participate in the project. Many mass

organizations at ward level such as the Women's Union, the Veteran Association, the Youth Union played an important role of information dissemination and propagandizing the people, making them understand the benefits of being involved in the project. As described in the above figure, the PMU, the People's Committee of Nam Dinh city and the People's Committee of Tran Te Xuong ward played important roles in supporting and managing community participation.

According to the project requirements, similar to Can Tho city, the PMU of Nam Dinh Urban Upgrading Project was responsible for implementing:

- On behalf of Nam Dinh People's Committee, implementing and monitoring all activities in the project and under the management of People's Committee (PC).
- Preparing and updating plans in accordance with the approved plans and policy framework and submitting them to Nam Dinh city People's Committee, Nam Dinh provincial People's Committee, Steering Board of the project at provincial level and the World Bank for approval before implementing
- Hiring consultants and developers following the World Bank guidance and regulation in tendering.
- Giving guidance to all project activities in accordance with policies and instructions of the project.
- Preparing and organizing community consultation as well as monthly informing the community about the project activities.
- Coordinating components and organizations involved in the project.
- Establishing procedures to quickly implement the necessary adjustments and solving any complaints from the affected community.
- Establishing communication mechanisms to ensure technical support and logistics for the project implementation.

It can be seen that although the PMU is the authority which was formed only for this project, but it had a central role in coordinating all stakeholders' activities and creating the linkage between the local governments and the community. Nam Dinh city is a provincial city, therefore it is smaller in administrative size compared to Can Tho. The affected community members admitted that they did not have difficulty in expressing

their complaints to the city government. In this upgrading project, the communities' complaints were directly received in the PMU's reception unit and ward People's Committee and then transferred to the city People's Committee. Information from the People's Committee was directly transferred to the communities in meetings with an explanation from the PMU of Nam Dinh and ward People's Committee. In hiring the consultant, the PMU worked on behalf of Nam Dinh city People's Committee. Supporting the PMU of Nam Dinh activities in managing community participation, the Tran Te Xuong ward People's Committee also had some responsibilities:

- Assigning cadres to support the preparation and implementation of the project in their territory.
- Providing support to other organizations including the PMU in publicizing information regarding the project and collecting information from the affected community through surveys for the project proposal design.
- Organizing community meetings and consultation.
- Establishing communication channels to the PMU as well as supporting and consulting with the affected community and passing on their complaints.
- Supporting the PMU to quickly solve the complaints of the affected community.

Actually, in organizing the meetings and consultations with the affected communities, the staff members of the PMU of Nam Dinh city expressed that they faced some difficulties. These difficulties were regarding the complexities in the administrative procedures from the assessment to the approval process. It required a lot of time and many administrative procedures to get a decision from the city government. The community meetings were often organized by the PMU in the ward culture house where the neighborhood community meetings were always held. They also commented that although the PMU of Nam Dinh is founded under the city People's Committee, it has no administrative power. The PMU of Nam Dinh acted as a coordination unit for this project only and it would be reformed and merged into other administrative units after the completion of the project. Therefore, its activities were mainly affective in creating a direct channel of communication between the affected community and the local government and the city government as well as coordinating

the participation process of community in the upgrading project. Because the PMU of Nam Dinh city had no administrative power, although it is acted as the representative of the investors in the project, it faced difficulties in site clearance for the project, especially when there were cases of complaints. In the 1st phase of the project, in the Van Mieu ward, the decentralization from Nam Dinh city to the PMU of Nam Dinh had not been regulated, all activities in the process of collecting information from the community, designing, and the site clearance had to be sent to the People's Committee of Nam Dinh city and then asked for approval from People's Committee of Nam Dinh Province. It took a lot of time for all of these administrative procedures. When there were complaints about the compensation prices and requests for changes of details in the design from the affected community, the PMU of Nam Dinh had no power to make decisions. In these cases, the PMU of Nam Dinh had to transfer it to the Nam Dinh city People's Committee or Nam Dinh Provincial People's Committee. This stagnation had been partly solved in the 2nd phase of project, some of the power regarding administrative decisions had been transferred to the PMU and they were allowed to make decisions on behalf of the government, such as the decision for the approval of details of design revisions following community demands and requests.

In all these activities, the PMU of Nam Dinh transferred the project information through the ward People's Committee. Tran Te Xuong ward People's Committee informed the community leaders, using the mass organizations at ward level to convince and maneuver the community to participate in the meetings. The ward people's committee also used the volunteers in the ward mass organizations to transfer project information to affected community members. Moreover, the leaders of the ward people's committee assigned cadres to participate in the meetings and worked together with the community and consultants in the designing process. All of this support from the Tran Te Xuong ward people's committee helped the PMU to connect with the community and manage the participation.

Supporting the PMU of Nam Dinh in this project, as mentioned, the People's Committee of Nam Dinh city requested the People's Committee of Nam Dinh province to establish a Steering Board for the Project at the provincial level. This Steering Board was able to decide on the overall orientation of the project. It was the main communication channel with the Central Government, the Ministries and the

World Bank. It helped to create a thorough direction from the provincial level to the city level.

There was a regulation issued by the People's Committee of Nam Dinh city on how to coordinate the structures and procedures for managing community participation in Nam Dinh city. Following this regulation, the organization of the PMU of Nam Dinh city created a structure for coordinating activities that supported community participation. However, the PMU of Nam Dinh city is not an administrative authority and it only coordinated and managed participatory process of the project on behalf of the City People's Committee and received support from the district and ward People's Committee. Therefore, the structure and procedure of the administrative system for supporting community participation in the upgrading project of Nam Dinh was complicatedly organized. The procedures and structure worked successfully to a reasonable extent but it still took time to deal with the complaints from the communities on the issues of land price compensation, this was mainly due to the complex administration procedures on this financial issue. Following the scale on internal structure and procedures in chapter 3, it should be ranked and given a high level (+). This aspect has an effect on the satisfaction of the affected community members and it will be further discussed in the next section.

- Effective leadership

In the Nam Dinh Urban Upgrading Project, the city government created a solid foundation for the community to participate in the project. With support from city leaders, the PMU founded along with clear regulations regarding its task. Mr. Hung, Chairman of the People's Committee of Nam Dinh city between 2006 – 2011 revealed that the leaders of the Nam Dinh Province People's Committee paid much attention to this project from the initial steps of applying for the approval from the World Bank. This project was made a high priority on the list when applying for it by the Official leaders from the local government of Nam Dinh province and Nam Dinh city. The leaders of Nam Dinh considered that this project would have a great influence on the development of Nam Dinh city and the Nam Dinh province.

As mentioned above, the People's Committee at provincial level paid great attention to implement this project in Nam Dinh city and they formed the Steering Board for this project at provincial level. The Vice Chairman of the Nam Dinh Province People's

Committee was the head of the Steering Board, the standing deputy was the Chairman of the Nam Dinh city People's Committee. This boards members comprised of people from the PMU of Nam Dinh, leaders of related provincial departments such as the department of finance, construction, natural resources and environment. The Steering Board at provincial level had plenary meeting quarterly.

The PMU of Nam Dinh was under the supervision of both the People's Committee of Nam Dinh and the Steering Board for project at provincial level. The Chairman of Nam Dinh city People's Committee required that all the leaders of the wards had to cooperate with the PMU of Nam Dinh in providing information to the communities, carrying out the consultation processes, organizing meetings with communities to discuss and select the options and together with the community monitoring board and the independent monitoring unit to supervise the implementation of the project. "The city leader required that the leaders of the ward have meetings with the PMU of Nam Dinh once a month to resolve any problems in the project. But we had contact with the PMU almost every day to discuss the solutions whenever a problem occurred, thus, we did not need the 'official meeting' as planned" (Mr. Tien, Vice Chairman of Tran Te Xuong ward People's Committee)

The Vice Chairman of Nam Dinh Provincial People's Committee supported the PMU in coordination with the relevant departments and sectors during the preparing, implementing and monitoring processes. With his authority assigned by the provincial government, the Steering Board met every three (3) months gave instructions and made changes and amendments to the local policy supporting the implementation of the project. Mr. Du, the Head of the PMU of Nam Dinh revealed that the PMU directly contacted the leaders of the Steering Board to report about any stagnation and discuss solutions to deal with the conflicts in the project. He assigned related provincial departments such as the Department of Construction, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Department of Finance, and the ward People's Committee to cooperate with the PMU and to meet with the affected communities.

The neighborhood community leaders also played an important role in the participation process of the community. They were selected by the community members themselves through an election process during the community meetings. They were prestigious persons in the community and devoted to benefiting the

community. They had a term of two and a half years as neighborhood community. Although they were not official cadres, they received allowances from the city budget. Based on the regulations issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs that defined the tasks and responsibilities of the neighborhood community leader, the neighborhood community leaders in Tran Te Xuong ward carried out following activities

- Organized community meetings and relayed the project information to every affected household. In these meetings, the community leaders played the role as the people who convince the community members to participate and preside the meetings.
- Cooperated with the community members and consultants to work with anyone who disagreed with any of the proposals and to find the problems. Encourage the people to have discussions and help find acceptable solutions and encourage them to have a 100% consensus for which ever plan they chose.
- Collect the legitimate desires, demands and needs from the community and present them to the ward People's Committee and the PMU of Nam Dinh city to help to form solutions.

This was the main channel of communication between the city and the neighborhood community. As admitted by the city and the ward leaders, the neighborhood community leaders greatly contributed to the participation process. The successfulness of the project depended upon the community leaders as they were persons who directly convinced and maneuvered the community members to participate in the project. This was because the project proposal required 100% consensus among the affected community members before it could be implemented. 45 out of 57 alley neighborhood communities joined the upgrading project in Tran Te Xuong ward these results show the effectiveness of the community leaders in convincing and supporting community members in the participatory process.

In Nam Dinh city, together with a consistently high level of effective leadership supporting community participation in the both People's Committee and neighborhood community level, the official leaders of government at province level tried to establish a financial mechanism to arrange funds for the upgrading project.

The supporting policy on financial issues was decided upon by the official government leaders of the City and provincial People's Committee and project managers. The percentage of money contribution from community members to the project was assigned by the city and provincial People's Committee. In addition, the city and provincial leaders encouraged the ward People's Committee to maneuver households to contribute land and architecture works to the project without compensation. Within the 1st phase it caused conflicts in the Van Mieu ward that required solving by the city government which resulted in changes and adjustment in the compensation price in the 2nd phase of the upgrading project. This conflict is discussed more in the section of stagnation and conflict prevention. But it showed that the policy for conflict prevention that supported community participation was not fully prepared. The leadership in supporting community participation in the Nam Dinh upgrading project showed the effectiveness of community participation when encouraging the affected community to be involved in all stages of the project but it still had minor limitations due to the complex administrative procedures in Vietnam. The upgrading project in the 1st phase was delayed because of the lack of information provision that was given to the affected community as well as the inflexible city and PMU leaders in dealing with the complaints from the community regarding the compensation price due to the administrative procedures, but the upgrading project in the 2nd phase ran smoothly with amendments in the procedures and due to the effectiveness of the leadership, therefore it should be ranked as plus (+).

Along with the administration management in local government capacity, the resource management issues relating to community participation will be discussed in the next section.

b. Resource management

- Availability of financial resources to support community participation

The financial resources for upgrading tertiary infrastructure in the Nam Dinh project came from three (3) main resources: the World Bank, the state budget and community contribution. For the construction costs, it accounted for 90%, 7% and 3% respectively. The financial resource for compensation, site clearance, resettlement and project management came from the State budget or the counterpart fund. In the agreement between the World Bank and Vietnam Government, it was regulated that

the funding was given to meet the objectives of the project “to alleviate poverty in urban areas by improving the living and environmental conditions of the urban poor using participatory planning methods, and influencing planning processes to become more inclusive and pro-poor.” One of the project principles was that “The design of infrastructure improvements will take into account the communities’ and local administrations’ willingness and ability-to-pay.” (World Bank, 2004: 4). Therefore, it affected the financial policy of the whole project.

According to the leaders of the PMU of Nam Dinh Upgrading Project, along with the funding from the World Bank, the city and provincial government of Nam Dinh had to secure sufficient counterpart funds for the project. However, the difficulty in arranging these funds affected the project policy as the district and ward government officials tried to maneuver the affected community with in meetings to contribute land without compensation or select the option that minimized the compensation costs. According to the Guiding Regulation for Community Activities in World Bank Project issued by the city government of Nam Dinh, the tasks and responsibilities of local government were: “.. Propagandizing and maneuvering affected neighborhood community members (in project of widening alleyway, installing drainage and sewage systems and building public works) to contribute land voluntarily to meet community demands, follow the approved spatial plan...” Mr. Hung, the Chairman of Nam Dinh city People’s Committee admitted that the difficulties in providing financial source from the state budget for the site clearance and compensation slowed down the implementation process. In the report made by the Nam Dinh city People’s Committee, it was reported that although the city and provincial government of Nam Dinh had focused on the issues of providing a state budget for site clearance and compensation, but the initial available budget for the implementing project had met only 30% of the proposal. It caused delays in implementing the project. This problem was solved with help from the Steering Board and Nam Dinh Provincial People’s Committee. The city and the province government prioritized the financial issues of the project. The city of Nam Dinh had applied a specific mechanism for attracting a financial budget. The city of Nam Dinh invested and developed an infrastructure system on its vacant land and then sold it to private developers so that they could receive a budget for the upgrading project. This action helped to secure the counterpart budget from city government for the project.

In the financial mechanism, together with the ODA funding from the World Bank, there was a financial contribution of about 3% of the total budget for the construction of the tertiary infrastructure was mobilized from the community. According to the city government, the contribution share from the affected households guaranteed the communities feeling of responsibility when using and maintaining the infrastructure after it had been implemented.

The construction costs were calculated by the independent consultants and provided to the affected communities in the neighborhood community meetings. It was a transparent process, community members were able to discuss and define the contribution share of each household. Nevertheless, there was no policy or regulation that enabled the community to supervise and monitor the process of spending the budget. It was not only in Can Tho city but also in Nam Dinh city, community members wanted to participate in the monitoring processes of not only the quality of works in construction but also the way that their contribution was spent. Mr. Nga Vu Van in Tran Te Xuong Ward expressed that many members in his neighborhood asked the PMU of Nam Dinh city to participate in the monitoring processes of their financial contribution. But there were no official policies or regulations for that and they had to focus only on the quality of the works that were implemented in their neighborhood. The community monitoring board was only able to supervise the implementation of the upgrading works they were able to check that the technical standards and the quantum of construction material as prescribed in the project file was followed.

With the financial support from the World Bank, the state budget of counterpart funding and the contribution from community, the financial sources of the project with community participation was secured and stable. If it is assumed that the financial resource for project with community participation was available, this would mean that the financial resource to support community participation was also available. This is because financial resource to support community participation is the indispensable part of the financial resources in a community participation project. In the upgrading project of Nam Dinh, the main funding sources were from an external source (World Bank) and from the state budget, it was secured by the agreement signed between the Vietnamese government and the World Bank. Although the compensation price was complained about by the affected community in the 1st phase of the project, the improved communication and information exchange channels in the 2nd phase together

with the secured source of budget mentioned above and the effective leadership in changing the policy to apply a price which was close to the market price helped solve the issues. From the above analysis, the availability of financial resources to support community participation in Nam Dinh city was high, therefore, it receives a plus (+).

- Availability of human resources

Like the An Phu ward of Can Tho city, there was no reported data and information about the effect of PAR in recruiting employees to serve within the community participation projects in the Tran Te Xuong ward. However, in the interview with Mr. Tien, the Vice chairman of People's Committee of Tran Te Xuong ward, he mentioned that the cadres were sufficient in number for all of the activities including supporting the upgrading project within the ward. Following the legal regulation regarding the organization of the People's Committee at ward level, the Tran Te Xuong ward had recruited sufficient cadres for its activities. There were a total of 22 cadres in the Tran Te Xuong ward in which, some of them participated in workshops that had been organized by the city which were related to community participation within urban upgrading projects.

Supporting the activities in the neighborhood communities, there were a number of un-official cadres or 'semi-official' cadres as they were called by the local authority. There were a total of 55 unofficial cadres who were leaders of the neighborhood communities and leaders of residential areas. They received some allowance for their work within the neighborhood but according to the assessment from the local governments, they played an important role in maneuvering the community members to participate in the neighborhood activities. Especially in the Vietnam Urban Upgrading Project funded by the World Bank, "The project is based on the principle that active participation by communities in critical stages of preparation, design and implementation is a pre-requisite to effectively respond to the needs in these areas" (World Bank, 2004: 4).

To serve the project, the PMU was founded under the direct control of the city People's Committee. According to Mr. Hung, the Chairman of Nam Dinh city People's Committee, the number of officials in the PMU of Nam Dinh city was much fewer than of the PMU of Can Tho city although if it is compared to the volume of work in both cities it was almost the same. There were a total of 12 officials in the

PMU. This body helped the city People's Committee to manage the project throughout the whole city and guaranteed the local authorities commitment to support community participation in the project. There was one hindrance for the PMU's officials in Nam Dinh city in carrying out the project which was the incapability of using English during their daily work. This was because Nam Dinh was a small and poor city and there was no attraction policy from city and provincial government for a high quality of staff. It caused difficulties in working with international bidding packages and providing reports to the World Bank. This disadvantaged Nam Dinh city compared to a big and prosperous city like Can Tho.

However, the Director of the PMU of Nam Dinh city was involved in the Master program in Urban Management in Hanoi Architecture University. In this Master's program, there were several modules related to community participation issues such as planning using a community driven approach, strategic planning and participation in infrastructure development. He disseminated the ideas and knowledge to the staff members of the PMU on issues of community participation. The PMU staff learned the knowledge and experience by doing the activities of supporting community participation in the project.

It can be assessed that there was an adequate level of trained staff to support the community participation and based on the scale of the availability of human resources in local government capacity, it should be ranked as a plus (+).

- Communication and learning orientation

Like all projects with community participation, the mass organizations of Tran Te Xuong ward especially the Fatherland Front and the Women's Union were effective means to connect to the community which was used by the PMU, People's Committee of City and ward People's Committee. The neighborhood community leaders were also active actors in the maneuvering process. Using these channels, information and orientations from the city and wards were disseminated to the people and the feedback from the community was received and disseminated to the PMU and the local governments.

In the preparation, implementation and monitoring processes, information exchange and communication processes in the project were transparent. However, in the 1st phase of the project in Van Mieu ward, the city leader of Nam Dinh city admitted that

at the commencement of the project the information was not clearly explained by the local government and disseminated to the community. This affected some of the households and due to this they rejected to join the project. Many community members were unaware of their roles, rights or responsibilities when participating in the project. It caused delays for the implementation of the project in the 1st phase. The improvement of the communication channel in the 2nd phase of project in the Tran Te Xuong ward in providing correct and detailed information with in depth explanations through community volunteers, community leaders, and local authorities solved the problem.

In the implementation process of 2nd phase upgrading project in Nam Dinh city, the People's Committee of Nam Dinh city publicized the mechanisms to deal with community member's complaints on the city's website and on boards at city hall. At city hall, there was a specific unit that was geared to receive and deal with community member's complaints which regularly updated the situation of solving those complaints on the website. The city leaders presided meetings with citizens every 2 weeks to solve the complaints. The times of the meetings were publicized in the public media. The procedures for complaint solving followed the project policy framework. If a community member was not satisfied with the solution given by the city government and the PMU of Nam Dinh city, they could send their complaint to a higher level of the People's Committee of Nam Dinh province for a more thorough solution. This was the dual channel of communication used in Nam Dinh city. According to the PMU leader, all complaints files and solution profiles were archived in three (3) places: Ward People's Committee office, the PMU office and the specific unit for receiving and dealing with community member's complaints at the city hall.

Although there were delays with dealing with community complaints in the 1st phase, the whole communication and information exchange system had significantly improved by the 2nd phase and it worked effectively. The communication channels in Nam Dinh city can be considered as a dual-channel of communication. The feedback mechanisms in this system worked effectively and therefore, it should be ranked as double plus (+ +)

The local government capacity provided support for community participation. This table below summarizes local government capacity in ranking levels.

Table 28: Levels of local government capacity in Nam Dinh city

City	Local government capacity					
	Resources management			Administration management		
	Financial resource	Human resource	Information exchange	Goal/priority setting	Structure/ Procedures	Effective leadership
Nam Dinh	+	+	++	+	+	+

Following the previous chapters, the results of the support from the local government regarding community participation will be discussed in the analyzing section of the outcomes of upgrading project.

8.4 Outcomes of the infrastructure upgrading

a. Content outcomes

- Innovation factor

The idea of community participation was not new in Nam Dinh. A City Development Strategy (CDS) was prepared in many other cities in Vietnam including Nam Dinh city in which the participatory approach was applied. However, after being prepared, the CDS was not applied within the planning systems of Vietnam, despite the fact that the CDS contains many advantages and is considered to be an improved planning strategy compared with the traditional spatial master plans in Vietnam which are prepared using a top-down approach. In Nam Dinh city, the local government tried to apply the CDS in their own way. Mr. Hung, the Chairman of People’s Committee of Nam Dinh city expressed that the local government of Nam Dinh city appreciated and was committed to the community ideas in the CDS, so they used the CDS as a basis and foundation for the policy orientation in the city’s People’s Council Resolution. This Resolution was the fundamental document for the spatial master plan according to the contemporary legal regulations. Used in this way, the community participated indirectly in the decision making process with their ideas.

The innovation factor in this project is not in the approach of having community participation in the preparation, implementation and monitoring phases. The community participation is the basic principle for all stages of preparation, design and implementation. The communities participated in providing information about their needs and their ideas to the consultant. According to the consultancy company in the

project, many implemented infrastructure design plans were adjusted to fulfill the community desires, including simple issues such as defining the alley elevation level, the width of the alley and the crosscut design of the sewer. These issues were discussed thoroughly within the communities, local government and consultants in the meetings. These adjustments were regularly checked in the implementation stages by the community members involved in the preparation process to see whether their ideas and comments were followed. The completely new content, were the new ideas and changes in local authority policy to give decision power to the affected communities to decide whether to implement the project in their neighborhood or not. It was admitted by the community and local government that the outcomes of the project followed the approved detail plan of the city with some revisions following community demands and needs.

It shows that the innovation factor was present with changes in policy from the city government including effective leadership from local government leaders, allowing the community members to be actively involved in the process of preparation, design and monitoring. The content of the project was not entirely new in Nam Dinh city. It only focused on the content of work monitored by the affected community members. “The quality of the infrastructure work was ensured by the community monitoring it along with the supervision of independent monitoring units hired by the PMU. The people in neighborhood No.9 of Tran Te Xuong ward proposed to the City People’s Committee that the community should, henceforth, monitor all state budget invested infrastructure improvement work to guarantee its quality as it directly affects the people’s lives” (Ms. Lan, community member of neighborhood No 9 in Tran Te Xuong ward, 2013). The upgrading project in Tran Te Xuong ward was implemented following the approved spatial detail plan. This spatial detail plan and the master plan had been prepared with the innovative ideas of the indirect actual participation of all of the communities in Nam Dinh city CDS. The result of community participation innovation in this project was however limited to the community monitoring of the quality of infrastructure upgrading works. Considering this factor and following the scale in chapter 3, it could not be ranked as an innovative factor (n/a).

- Effectiveness solution

Following the project objectives, according to the report from the city of Nam Dinh, the affected neighborhood communities were direct beneficiaries of this urban upgrading project as the infrastructure system was improved delivering better quality. The solutions were effective which can be shown by the approved community-involved design of the infrastructure, that design was implemented with a 100%



Figure 36: Neighborhood alley after upgrading in Tran Te Xuong ward

consensus among affected community members. This solution also helped to solve the problem of having an unimplemented infrastructure plan which was not implemented due to the lack of state budget although the spatial detail plan was approved.

Mr. Vu Van Nga, living in alley No 82/181 of Phu Long street, Tran Te Xuong ward, mentioned: “this neighborhood could be considered as the suburb of Nam Dinh city. The infrastructure system was built during the ‘subsidized period’ which was before 1980s. The drainage was an open system. It caused a lot of problems including flooding and bad odors and especially, it did not guarantee a hygienic condition for living in the neighborhood. When it was upgraded in this project, all of the alleys were elevated, the infrastructure was greatly improved with a closed drainage system, street lights and a fresh water supply. We do not have to suffer the situation of flooding and the living environment has been improved”. According to Mr. Du, Vice Director of the PMU of Nam Dinh, in Tran Te Xuong ward as well as in other wards of Nam Dinh, the upgrading project with the active involvement of the community members had changed their habits and attitudes towards community involvement in the neighborhood public works. The upgrading project did not only improve the living conditions and bring benefits to the affected communities, it helped to create

conditions for people to have the awareness of how to sustain a clean and hygienic public environment and protect the infrastructure works within their neighborhood. It showed the activities of communities in forming the community self-organized groups with community prepared regulations to maintain the infrastructure works and keep the neighborhoods living environment clean.



Figure 37: Upgraded alley with covered drainage system in Tran Te Xuong ward within project

It can be seen that the solutions really addressed the problems of the neighborhood as it was prepared, adjusted and implemented following the communities desires. The goal and objectives of the project were effectively fulfilled. Considering the robustness of the solution, there was a

lack of policy and regulation from the city and provincial government to ensure the durability of the community participation in this project after it was implemented and handed over to the community. The financial contribution from the community to the project accounted for 3% of the construction costs and it was regulated in the project document. The city and the provincial government required that the community needed to make a commitment in the form of a money contribution for maintenance infrastructure works after being upgraded. However, there were no clear regulations on how the community should manage and monitor this source of finance. Therefore, clear policies, guidelines, procedures and structures that help community continue to work and maintain the solutions in this upgrading project needed to be added. The fact that the project showed that the short term objectives of the upgrading project were successfully met but the long term objectives to make sure the infrastructure that has been made lasts and to keep upgrading the infrastructure works with the participation of the communities has not entirely been fulfilled. It can be ranked as a good

condition of solution or plus (+) for the effectiveness of the solution according to the scale in chapter 3.

b. Process outcomes

- Level support from actors through satisfaction

The principle of the project is the community participation approach in planning and it was the pre-requisite to effectively respond to the community needs in the affected area. In the critical stages of preparation, design and implementation, the community participation in the Tran Te Xuong ward received full support from both the municipal and ward government of Nam Dinh city. As the principle of the project and the prerequisite for the funding, the selected consultants were from a professional company that dealt with participatory approaches in planning. As mentioned above, many infrastructure design plans were adjusted to fulfill the community desires, including simple issues such as defining the alley elevation level, the width of the lane as well as the design of the drainage systems and street lights and these plans were approved to then be implemented. The desires of affected community were discussed thoroughly with the communities, local government and the consultant in the meetings. These adjustments were monitored at the implementation stage by the community members involved in the preparation process to control whether their ideas and comments were followed. Especially, in the Tran Te Xuong ward upgrading project, the quality of the implementation works was monitored carefully by two teams from an independent monitoring unit and the community monitoring board. Individual members of the affected community were also involved in the monitoring activities. All of these activities and the support from the local government and the consultant have brought great satisfaction to the neighborhood community and it encouraged them to actively contribute ideas and participate in the project.

Regarding the financing issues, the contribution of the affected households was counted as 3% of the construction costs but there were no specific regulations for the community to monitor the expenses. This issue was queried by some households within the affected communities. There were also some minor complaints about it in the community meetings.

Looking at all of these facts, it can be seen that there was adequate satisfaction and support from the stakeholders such as the city People's Committee, the PMU, the

district and ward committee throughout the entire process of community participation in the project and therefore it can be ranked as a plus (+).

- Progress of action on stagnation and conflict prevention

The stagnation in the Urban Upgrading Project of Nam Dinh city was not too serious, according to Mr. Hung, Chairman of People's Committee of Nam Dinh city. He expressed that the biggest problem was during the 1st phase of the project in the Van Mieu ward of Nam Dinh city, when the mode of communication with affected community was not effective. As mentioned in the communication section, in the 1st phase of the project in the Van Mieu ward, the project information was not clearly explained by the local government and disseminated to the community. So it affected some of the households and refused to join the project. Many community members were not fully informed as to their roles, their rights and responsibilities initially in the first phase of the project. It caused a delay in the implementation of the project in the 1st phase. The improvement of the communication channels in the 2nd phase of project in the Tran Te Xuong ward in the form of providing correct and detailed information with full explanations through the community volunteers, community leaders, and local authorities solved the problem. Moreover, the dual channels of communication that were organized by the municipal and provincial government in the 2nd phase of the project solved the stagnation in communication. All of the activities of the People's Committee of Nam Dinh city, the PMU of Nam Dinh city including publicizing the mechanism to deal with community member's complaint on city's website and on a notice board at the city hall, organizing a specific unit to receive and deal with community member's complaints at the city hall and especially the city's leaders meetings with the community at the city hall that took place every two (2) weeks to solve the complaints minimized the amount of complaints and solved problems which arose during the implementation of the upgrading project.

The main conflict in the 2nd phase of this project was related to financial issues. As mentioned earlier, along with the funding from the World Bank, the city and provincial government of Nam Dinh had to prepare sufficient counterpart funds for the project. However, the difficulty in arranging the funds affected the project policy as the city and ward government officials tried to maneuver the affected community in meetings to select the option that minimized the costs of compensation and the

members were encouraged to contribute land without compensation. There were several complaints that the compensation price was too low. As admitted by the city leader, the difficulties in providing financial resources from the state budget for the site clearance and compensation slowed down the implementation process in the 1st phase of the upgrading project in the Van Mieu ward. This problem was solved through the guidance from the Steering Board and Nam Dinh Provincial People's Committee with a policy for finance. The financing issues in the 2nd phase of the upgrading project were given a high priority by city and provincial governments. The specific mechanism for attracting a financial budget had been applied in Nam Dinh with the approval from the provincial government. This action based on the principle "exchange land for infrastructure" in which the city of Nam Dinh invested and developed the infrastructure system on a vacant land plot and then sold it to private developers, the money that was earned from this deal provided them with a budget that was able to be used for the infrastructure upgrading project. This action helped to secure the counterpart budget from the city government for the project

Concerning the complaints regarding the compensation price, in the Tran Te Xuong ward project, there were no complaints on this issue due to the fact that there were no cases of resettlement or relocation. The improvement and upgrading activities of the tertiary infrastructure in Tran Te Xuong was based on a spatial approved detail plan. Only three (3) alleys were widened but the width after widening was only three (3) meters and the people were persuaded to contribute their own land without any compensation.

However, concerning complaints on the compensation price in the project at city-wide scale, the PMU of Nam Dinh city had reported that 35% of the complaints were regarding this issue of the total 254 complaints. In this issue, the municipal and provincial government organized an Assessment Office for land price. This office had made the assessment and proposed the compensation price of land that was asymptotic with the actual land price on the market. This activity solved the problem in many cities in Vietnam, the compensation price of land being recovered by the state is always much lower than the actual land price on the market. This helped to bring satisfaction to the affected community members whose land had been recovered.

Regarding financial issues, there were only minor complaints from affected community members as mentioned above, that although there was an overall regulation it lacked a detailed policy and mechanism for community members to monitor the way their financial contributions were spent in the project.

It can be seen that the flexibility of the policy direction at city level and the high amount of support in community participation from the PMU and the local governments helped to overcome the obstacles, solve the conflicts and make the project implemented effective. The dual channel of communication helped to disseminate project information and ideas between the local government and the affected communities and it made the needs of the people understood and it supported the project. The effectiveness of the leadership in arranging secured sources of finance for compensation reduced and solved the financial tension issues in applying the compensation price that was close to the market price. Therefore it is ranked as a double plus (+ +) for progress of action on stagnation and conflict prevention.

The outcomes of the infrastructure upgrading project in Nam Dinh city is considered to be successful in creating improved living conditions for the affected poor community. The outcomes of the project in ranked levels are in the below table.

Table 29: Levels of outcomes of project in Nam Dinh city

City	Outcomes			
	Content Outcome		Process Outcome	
	Innovation factor	Effective solution	Support	Progress of actions
Nam Dinh	n/a	+	+	++

These outcomes resulted from a relationship with community participation with the support from local government capacity, the next section will provide the discussion to see the full picture of the relationship between these variables.

8.5 Relationship between community participation and outcomes of the infrastructure upgrading project in Nam Dinh city with support from local government capacity

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the outcome of the infrastructure upgrading project was very important as it had a direct effect on the neighborhood community. In

Nam Dinh city, the project was carried out in the low-income areas where the basic infrastructure systems were incomplete and did not meet the people needs.

The project was carried out with major funding from an external source and the prerequisite for funding was the guarantee from the local government of active community participation in all critical project stages of preparation, design and implementation. The guarantee showed in the policy by only being able to have a 100% consensus of the affected community on the design option before implementation. The effective leadership of local government leaders and the flexibility of the local government at city level helped to resolve the stagnation problems and conflicts between the community and the government. The implemented project in Nam Dinh city showed that the community participation with support from the local government at ward and city level were able to create the improved infrastructure with a high level of satisfaction from the affected community. The results of this participation process were very concrete and were able to be implemented under the supervision of the involved community members.

The high level of depth and width of participation in this project ensured that all of the people in the affected community gained benefits from the project. As mentioned in the previous chapter, in the definition of the Law on Urban Planning of Vietnam, the term of ‘community consultation’ is very broad. In the upgrading project in Nam Dinh, although it was also called the ‘consultation process’ by the local government of Nam Dinh city and by the PMU, the actual participation of the affected community in the project at all of the critical project stages of preparation, design, implementation and monitoring showed co-production activities. In order to receive a 100% consensus of the community in the project, the local government had to commit to the solutions of the infrastructure system which had been prepared by an independent consultant following the affected community ideas and comments. The solution was designed and selected based on the willingness and ability-to-pay of the affected community. It was different from the situation of advisory community participation where the local government is committed to the results in principle but may deviate from them in the final decision making. The project indeed improved the living conditions of the neighborhood according to the desires of the affected community members and almost all of the community members were satisfied with the project outcomes. However, the unclear communication in providing thorough explanations to the community in the 1st

phase of the project and that there were no specific regulations for the communities to monitor the way their contribution was spent was regarded as a negative effect and lessened community satisfaction.

The summary of the levels of each sub-indicators of the three (3) variables can be seen in the following table:

Table 30: Levels of 3 variables in Nam Dinh city

City	Local government capacity						Community participation		Outcomes			
	Resources management			Administration management			Width of participation	Depth of participation	Content Outcome		Process Outcome	
	Financial resource	Human resource	Information exchange	Goal/priority setting	Structure/ Procedures	Effective leadership			Innovation factor	Effective solution	Support	Progress of actions
Nam Dinh	+	+	++	+	+	+	++	+	n/a	+	+	++

In the Nam Dinh project, similar to Can Tho city, which has been analyzed in the previous sections, the funding pre-requisite of community participation in all stage of the project made the city leaders work in very effective ways to support community participation. The flexibility of the city leaders to adjust the regulations related to urban upgrading project issues created a solid foundation for the successful community participation. Flexibility was shown within the activities of forming a Steering Board for the upgrading project that helped to strengthen the administrative power of the PMU. It was also shown in the formation of an Assessment Office of Land Price who were able to adjust the compensation land price. And finally, it is the city government ability to adjust regulations which provided the affected community with the power to decide on the implementation of the project within their neighborhood. Effective leadership showed at both municipal and provincial levels that had many consequences for communication and financial issues. (0) in *Figure 38*

The effective leaders were always able to influence the communication channels. In Nam Dinh city, the actual leaders of the community, the persons who were devoted to community activities, were active therefore it greatly influenced the depth of participation. The municipal government and the PMU of Nam Dinh city used the community leaders and community volunteers as a communication channel to transfer project information to the affected community members and receive feedback from them. The dual channels of communication in the upgrading project in Nam Dinh using the city website, direct communication at city hall and the PMU office, were effective mechanisms to receive and give feedback and solve complaints which in turn

brought satisfaction to the affected community members and encouraged them to participate in the project. There was an adequate amount of communication that was effectively disseminated to the community so that all of the affected households participated in the project. (1) in *Figure 38*

Following the analysis in the previous sections, information about clear and secured finance resources from the World Bank and state budget guaranteed that the community members who were involved in the project understood they will gain benefit from the project. Following the agreement signed by both the Nam Dinh government and the World Bank, the municipal and provincial government of Nam Dinh had to guarantee financial resources for all of the activities in the project. With clear and transparent communication channels, the affected community understood and knew that they would be guaranteed to receive the benefits if they were involved in the upgrading project. As mentioned earlier, although the municipal and provincial government of Nam Dinh city faced difficulties in arranging financial resources, they managed to apply the policy of “exchange land for infrastructure” to receive secure and enough funding for the project. The funding pre-requisite from the World Bank influenced the width and depth of participation as community participation was the basis principle. (2) in *Figure 38*

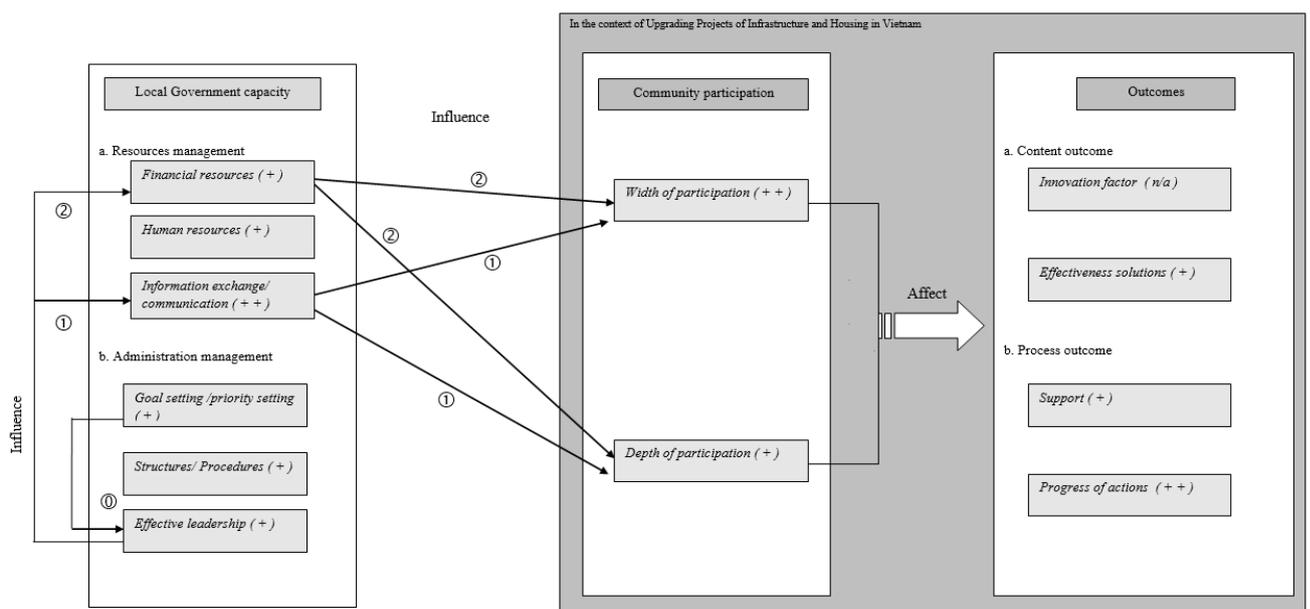
The results show that the community participation influenced the outcomes of the project. The high level of communication channels increased the satisfaction of the actors with the outcomes. The community participation in the infrastructure upgrading project in Nam Dinh resulted in good outcomes according to the interviewed subjects of the affected community members in the Tran Te Xuong ward as well as in other wards of the city. Due to the community participation in this project, the living environment of the neighborhoods were upgraded, the hygiene conditions of the neighborhoods were improved as the people of the community did not have to face flooding as well as the drainage system problems. The affected community assessment after the project had been completed that was implemented in Nam Dinh showed that the percentage of alleys that had problems of flooded was reduced from 45% to 5.7%. (PMU report, 2014). They expressed that the improvement of the infrastructure helped to improve the quality of the living environment. The PMU report of Nam Dinh city reported the outcomes of upgrading tertiary infrastructure, the outcomes are summarized below:

- (i) 46,700 households had connected to the upgraded infrastructure system
- (ii) 7.47 Km of alleys had received street lights with 313 bulbs installed
- (iii) Improvement works:
 - + 75,744 Metres of closed sewage system
 - + 83,809 metres of concreted-surface-alleys

Many low-income households were satisfied with the results of the project as they had access to basic infrastructure such as water supply and feeling safer at night with street lights in their alleys.

The relationship between these three variables has been summarized in the following figure (Figure 38):

Figure 38: Relationships between local government capacity, community participation and the outcomes of the project in Nam Dinh



It is shown that the high level of width and depth of participation with support from local government capacity resulted in good outcomes of the project in Nam Dinh in both the content outcomes and the process outcomes. Among the local government capacity aspects, information communication was the most important for the width and the depth of participation in Nam Dinh. The financial resources also had an important impact on participation as it actually influenced the width and the depth of

participation due to the funding pre-requisite and priority policy for community participation.

There were some limitations in this project as mentioned earlier. The innovation in the content of outcomes is only average. It only has an average level because the tertiary infrastructure upgrading projects were based on the approved spatial detail plan and there was almost no changes in that plan except some minor detail adjustments in the design following the ability-to-pay of both affected community's and the local government. The innovative content outcomes can only be attributed to the new policy in which community participation was stressed as the basic and fundamental principle for the project implementation. The actual results of monitoring the works of the affected community was highly appreciated by the neighborhood community members but it could not be considered as innovative content. However, this result together with the high level of information exchange and communication to solve the feedback from affected community members had a positive impact on the satisfaction of the actors in the outcome. Similar to Can Tho city, it was regulated by the Grassroots Democracy Ordinance whereby the community is able to monitor the financial issues if they have given a money contribution to the project, but in Nam Dinh there was no such policy enabling the participated community to monitor the funds. The policy of community participation on monitoring financial contribution should have been added so that the community was able to supervise this issue. This action could create more transparency in the project and could be classified as innovative content of the project outcomes.

8.6 Conclusion

This chapter deliberated over the case of Nam Dinh city and its tertiary infrastructure upgrading project. It showed that, although it was regulated according to the Grassroots Democracy Ordinance on the issue of community participation in every development works within the neighborhood, the neighborhood community members revealed that the actual participation of the affected community in previous State funded projects was not high if compared to this upgrading project in Nam Dinh city. The case in Nam Dinh city included the affected low-income community members who were actually involved in the upgrading project from the preparation stage until the monitoring stage. It showed that there was always an implementable approach for

the low-income community to participate and design the infrastructure for their neighborhood. The precondition was that the attitude of municipal leaders needed to be changed. The community participation had to be considered as the pre-requisite of the project and then it will have an effect on the policies as well as on the priorities of the project.

The case study in Nam Dinh gives empirical evidence to partially answer the research questions in chapter 1 concerning the characteristics of the community participation in the infrastructure upgrading project in Nam Dinh, it showed that all the affected community were actively involved at all stages including the preparation, design and implementation processes of the tertiary infrastructure system together with technical support from the consultant. However, the design of the system was based on the approved spatial detail plan, so the community-design was actually only an adjustment of this following the willingness and ability-to-pay of the affected community before it was implemented. The focus of community participation in the Nam Dinh project was in the monitoring activities. The people who were involved in the monitoring processes and who were satisfied with the monitoring results guaranteed the quality of the infrastructure works that would serve them after it was implemented.

The local government capacity in Nam Dinh city supported the community participation at a high level in all aspects of the project, there was especially a very high level of communication and information exchange. The important aspects were initiated based on the high level of priority setting policy for community participation and the effectiveness of the leadership from the Nam Dinh municipal leaders. There were high ranking content processes which resulted from a high level of participation in width and depth which were guaranteed by the secured financial resources and the very high level of communication and information exchange.

Similar to Can Tho city, this model had a key for success which was the funding pre-requisite of community participation and secured the financial resources. Due to the pre-condition, the local government leaders had to commit to use a community participation approach in order to achieve 100% consensus among community members. This pre-requisite of having a 100% consensus in order to implement the project in the neighborhood communities required that all of the project information had to be transparent and disseminated to all of the affected community members. The

support from local government including the clear and transparent policies, the dual communication which included an effective feedback mechanism created the foundation for community participation.

The commitment from the local government to support community participation guaranteed the implementation of the participatory approach. With that commitment to support community participation, the government, both the city and the ward, played an equal role as did the affected community in discussions and dialogs for the preparation of the infrastructure design with appropriate standards that took into account the communities' and the local administration's willingness and ability-to-pay. The project could not have been implemented without a 100% consensus from the affected community members on the design. This principle made local the government role in discussions as that of an equal to the affected community. The local government was unable to impose their ideas and opinions over the community's and therefore, they played an equal role in discussing the various options for the design. The pre-requisite of the project also affected the priorities of this project and changed the local government leaders' attitude towards the issue of community participation. It brought a high level of community participation in both depth and width that was able to reach a mutual understanding among the affected communities and the local government in solving neighborhood infrastructure issues and to achieve an improved living environment. The cooperation between the local government and the affected community showed that if there is clear and transparent information in the project this leads to sharing responsibilities and willingness to contribute between all of the actors. Similar to the Can Tho case, the outcomes of this project showed that the effective solutions could be reached with a high level of satisfaction from the involved actors when there was a commitment from the local government to support community participation in which the interaction between the citizens and the local government representatives was actually realized.

The next chapter will provide a comparison and analysis of four (4) cases of housing and infrastructure upgrading projects and from that, the patterns of community participation in the UPIH will be further discussed. These patterns of community participation in the four (4) cases will be compared and analyzed to find suitable ways to engage and support community participation in Vietnam.

Chapter 9. Multiple case analysis and discussion on patterns of community participation

9.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, 4 cases where communities participated in housing and infrastructure upgrading projects in Vietnam have been discussed. In these projects, housing and neighborhood infrastructure were upgraded to meet the community desires and it was carried out with the involvement of the local government.

In this chapter, the patterns of community participation in housing and infrastructure upgrading projects in the four cases will be compared and analyzed. There are two major sections in this chapter. The first section focuses on the analysis of the four cases in four cities to find the relationships between aspects of local government capacity, community participation and the outcomes within each case, based on the previous chapters. It discusses which elements were the most important factors that influenced the community participation process and helped to reach good outcomes within each of the upgrading projects. The second section will focus on the analysis and discussion of the findings that were evoked from the four models of community participation with the respect to the involvement of the local government and the outcomes of the project respectively. This section discusses patterns that go beyond the four single cases, and to explicitly show how strong the patterns are and come up with case transcending patterns.

These two sections will answer the question focusing on the patterns of community participation in the UPIH (In what way does the community participation affect the outcomes of the UPIH in cities in Vietnam with the precondition of local government capacity?)

9.2 Multiple-case analysis of four community participation patterns in housing and infrastructure upgrading projects

Housing and infrastructure upgrading has increasingly been paid much attention to by both the government and the neighborhood people in Vietnam as these projects directly affect the community living conditions. The four cases of upgrading projects on urban development which were carried out in the four cities of Vinh, Viet Tri, Nam Dinh and Can Tho varied in scale but it has been shown that the issue of involving the

neighborhood community in the projects at all stages was a very important aspect. These four cases that have been discussed in this dissertation were small upgrading projects with the community member's houses and tertiary infrastructure projects that were connected directly to each house and an important feature was that the community members participated in the processes of planning, implementation and monitoring.

The nature of the two infrastructure upgrading projects in Nam Dinh and Can Tho were slightly similar but they were different from the projects in Viet Tri and Vinh. In all four cases, the projects received financial support from international donors. However, in Nam Dinh and Can Tho city, the financing was provided by the World Bank with agreements with the Central State Government of Vietnam and the involved community members did not have to directly pay back the loan. In Viet Tri and Vinh, the financial support was provided by international NGOs through the Community Saving Program (Community Development Fund) and the involved community members had to directly pay the loan back. The initiative for the projects within the four cities was from the NGOs and municipal government based on the neighborhood community's needs and demands. In these four cities, the projects were implemented in the low-income areas of the city and they all received a contribution from low-income affected households in different forms. The levels of participation in these four cases were different which will be discussed further in the next section but most of the affected community members were satisfied with the results of participation and the outcomes of the project. The pattern of the community participation will be summarized within the following sections.

a) The case of Viet Tri city

In the case of the housing improvement project in Viet Tri city, the finance for this project was based on a loan scheme. Households were encouraged by the CDF management board and the city government to organize and be involved in the savings program to receive a loan which was based on a grant budget from international organizations. The loan amount did not cover all of the construction costs but it was considered as a catalyst for the house owner to spend money on their-own housing development. Moreover, the incentive so that the community members' participated in the project was the approval and implementation of the community-prepared detail-

plan of the neighborhood that guaranteed land use right certificates and house ownership certificates for the neighborhood households.

It was the high level of the width and the depth of participation in this project and the support from local government capacity, such as the clear and transparent communication system with frequent, open and reliable channels and clear and focused policy on supporting community participation that ensured that all of the people in the community received benefits from the project, influenced the projects effectiveness and brought satisfaction to the actors involved in the project.

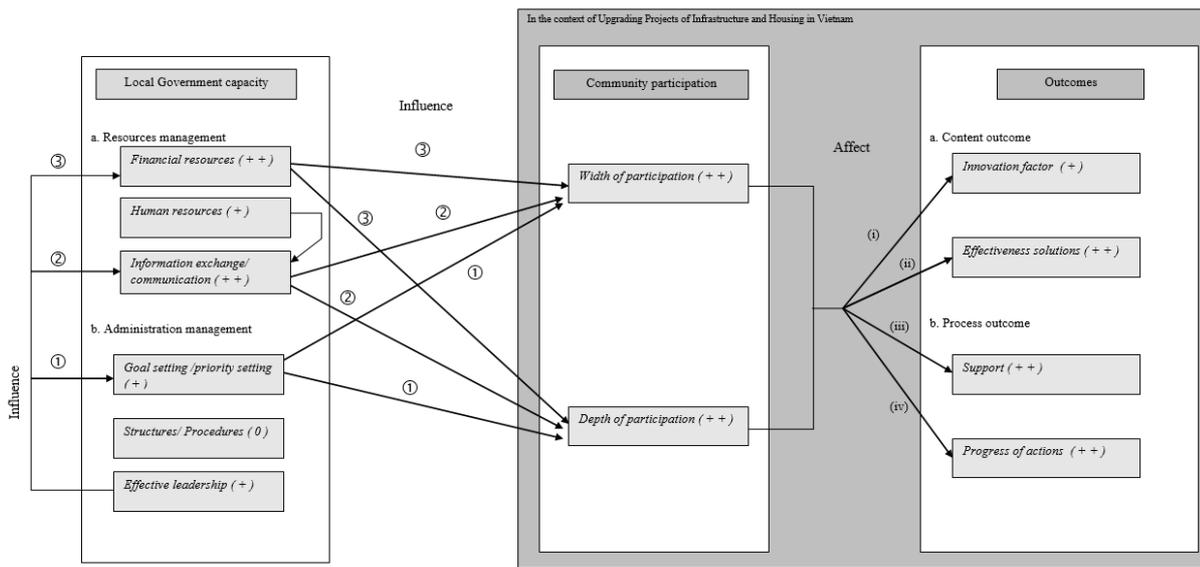
The table below summarizes the levels of each of the sub-indicators of the three variables.

Table 31: Levels of indicators of 3 variables in Viet Tri city

City	Local government capacity						Community participation		Outcomes			
	Resources management			Administration management			Width of participation	Depth of participation	Content Outcome		Process Outcome	
	Financial resource	Human resource	Information exchange	Goal/priority setting	Structure/ Procedures	Effective leadership			Innovation factor	Effective solution	Support	Progress of actions
Viet Tri	++	+	++	+	0	+	++	++	+	++	++	++

As can be seen from the above table, the aspects of financial resources and information exchange/communication were a very high level. Community participation was supported and based on that, both the width and the depth of participation reached a very high level. As a consequence, the outcomes aspects were also ranked a very high level. The relationship between these three variables can be shown in the following figure:

Figure 39: Relationships between local government capacity, community participation and outcomes of the project in Viet Tri

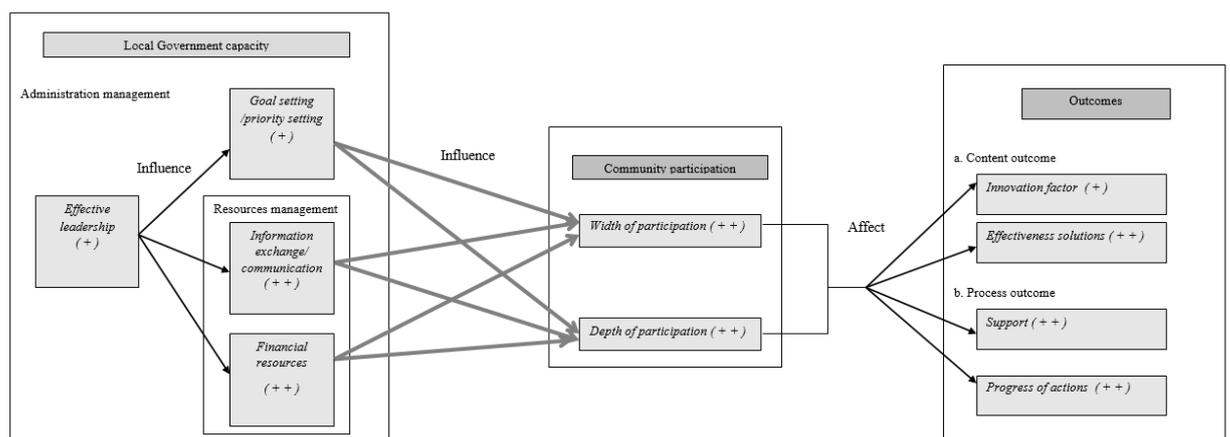


In the relationship between community participation, local government capacity and outcomes in Viet Tri city, it can be noted that there were three important aspects of local government capacity that directly affected the community participation process. They were the goal and priority settings, information exchange and the financial resources aspects of the local government capacity variable.

The effective leadership had an indirect influence on the participation process as it not only influenced the goal/priority settings it also influenced the policy for community participation, the way of information exchange and communication and the direction of guaranteed financial resources. In the housing improvement project in Viet Tri, the community participation advocating policy, the clear and dual communication channels and the high level of availability of financial resources strongly influenced the width and the depth of participation. While the supporting policy for community participation created the framework for the community to perform, the dual communication channels helped the affected community members to discuss and negotiate with the local government by cooperating as it helped to transfer the ideas and proposals of the community as well as giving feedback and support from the local government. The last important aspect was the financial resources. The guaranteed availability of financial resources in the form of the credit fund of the CDF to the affected community members encouraged them to participate in the project and ensured that the decision that was made by the community would be implemented

because the financial resources came from the community's own savings. It influenced the community participation in both the width and the depth as the owners of the financial resources were the community members themselves and the decision-making-power was in the hands of the community. The main relationships and influences of aspects within this model can be seen in the route in the following figure (Figure 40). This figure shows the relationships between the three variables in more detail focusing on some specific relationships between aspects as outlined in Figure 39. By forming this route, the main path of this relationship was illustrated starting from one important aspect that had influenced the others to have effects on community participation and in turn come to the outcomes of the project. The route started from the effective leadership which was an important aspect in local government capacity that in turn influenced three other aspects namely; goal/priority settings, financial resource and information exchange/communication. These three aspects were the main supporting aspects for the high level of community participation in the Viet Tri case. This high level of community participation in both width and depth together brought the high level of outcomes of the project in all four aspects of the two areas of content outcomes and process outcomes.

Figure 40: Route of relationships between local government capacity, community participation and outcomes of the project in Viet Tri



The outcomes of the project reflect the influences of community participation in the project with support from local government capacity. The high ranking content outcomes and process outcomes resulted from high levels of participation in width and depth, which were guaranteed by the secured financial resources and clear and transparent communication between the local government and community. In the case of Viet Tri, both aspects of the width and the depth of participation were important for

the outcomes. The depth of participation guaranteed the effectiveness of the solutions of the financial issues and the feasible and implementable spatial detail plan. Width of participation guaranteed the satisfactions and support for the implementation. There were also other important aspects which helped to reach this outcome, these were the support from national and international NGOs. As analyzed in chapter 5, the depth of participation influenced the width of participation in the Viet Tri housing improvement project. It helped to increase the attention of the community to the project and it influenced more people to be involved in the process. Besides, the high level of the depth of participation influenced the effectiveness of the solution. Therefore, it showed that the community participation reached a high level in width and depth of participation and resulted in the outcomes of the project having a high level of effectiveness and satisfaction. This result required the cooperation between the local government and the neighborhood communities.

b) Case of Vinh city.

Having a similar nature as the housing upgrading project in Viet Tri, the main financial resources in the Vinh project also came from the CDF at neighborhood level. The forming of a Steering Committee for the Community Housing Process showed the guarantee of the local government to support the project. The flexibility of the local government at all levels with the neighborhood community in making a spatial detail plan and rearranging land plots showed support of community participation. Especially with the government-community co-production activities and the provincial acceptance of the community made spatial detail plan that was approved helped to resolve stagnation in the implementation process. It showed that the co-production activities created advantageous conditions which in turn produced more benefits to the affected community members and positively influenced the width and depth of participation.

The high level of the depth and width of participation in the Vinh city case and financial scheme for this project ensured that all of the people in the community received benefits from the project. The results of the project were that the living conditions of the Huu Nghi neighborhood had been indeed improved. All households/families in the neighborhood residential area were involved in the project and they all had a feeling of responsibility for the implementation of the work.

Co-production meetings with clear and transparent communication between community members and local government helped to avoid obstacles and solve the conflicts between the community members. A clear and transparent communication system also brought satisfaction to the actors involved in the project.

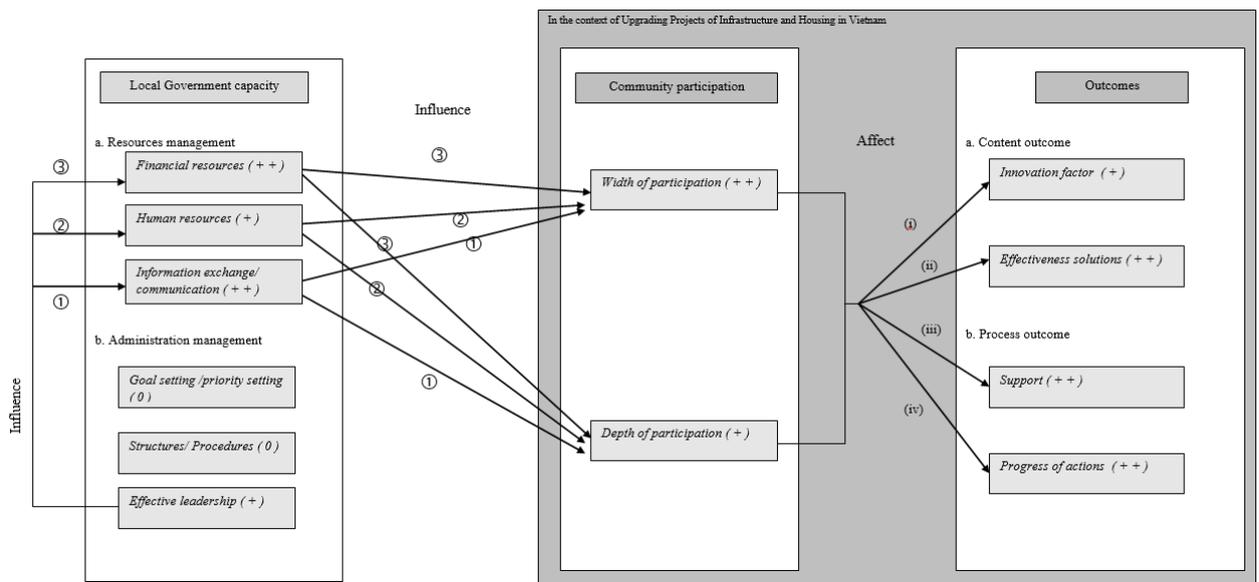
A summary of the levels of each sub-indicators of the three variables are shown in the table below:

Table 32: Levels of indicators of 3 variables in Vinh city

City	Local government capacity						Community participation		Outcomes			
	Resources management			Administration management			Width of participation	Depth of participation	Content Outcome		Process Outcome	
	Financial resource	Human resource	Information exchange	Goal/priority setting	Structure/ Procedures	Effective leadership			Innovation factor	Effective solution	Support	Progress of actions
Vinh	++	+	++	0	0	+	++	+	++	++	++	

In the above table, it can be seen that the aspects of financial resources and information exchange/communication were at a very high level. The very high levels of width of participation and the high levels of depth of participation were the result of support from local government capacity. In turn, the influence of a high level of community participation resulted in a high level of aspects of outcomes. The relationship between these three variables can be shown within the following figure

Figure 41: Relationships between local government capacity, community participation and outcomes of the project in Vinh city



In this relationship of community participation, local government capacity and outcomes of the project in the Vinh city case, it can be seen that there were three important aspects of local government capacity that directly affected the community

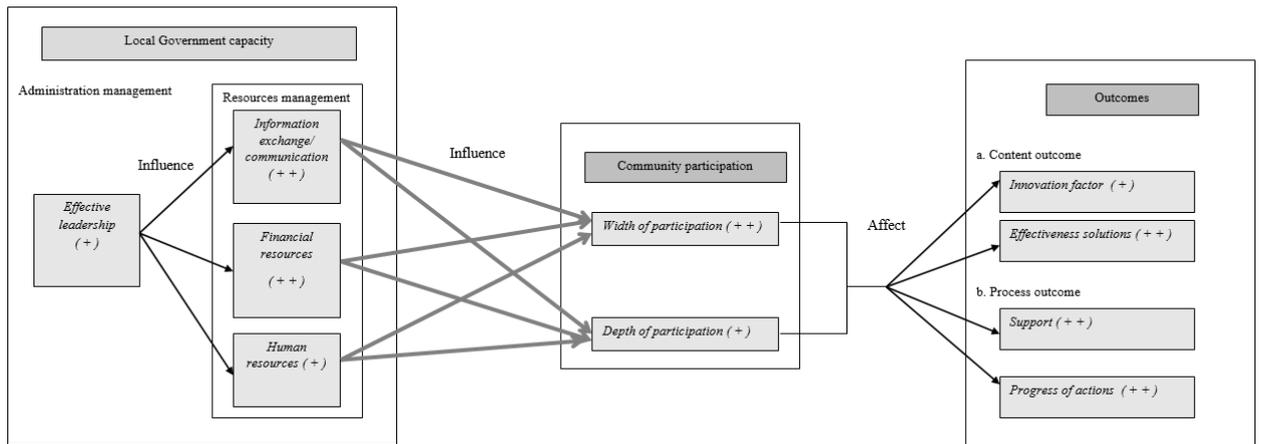
participation process. They were information exchange/communication, human resources and the financial resources aspects in the local government capacity variable. Similar to the housing improvement project in the Viet Tri case, effective leaders were always able to have an influence on the communication system. Moreover, effective leadership had direct effects on both the aspects of financial resources and human resources. In this project, the ideas and proposals of the community as well as feedback and support from the local government were transferred through dual, clear and transparent communication channels. A Steering Committee for the Community Housing Process which was a governmental-organized committee that supported the community housing processes and infrastructure upgrading projects in Vinh as mentioned in chapter 6 had been formed with the leaders of the CDF as well as the leader of the city People's committee to provide coordination for the projects activities which were related to governmental departments. The capacity of stakeholders from the project especially the community representatives and the community leaders had been strengthened with workshops and training which was provided by the NGOs. The attitude of the city leaders and involved actors was changed following the workshops. Therefore, it helped to create a foundation for the cooperation between the local government and the neighborhood community members. It had impacts on both the width and depth of participation.

Following the analysis in chapter 6, the clear and secured financial resources guaranteed that the Huu Nghi community members, who were involved in the housing improvement project in Vinh city, received the benefits of the upgrading process. It encouraged all the members in the community to be involved in the project as well as actively contributing to the final decision on spatial planning. The financial aspect influenced both the width and depth of participation in the project of Vinh city.

The main relationships and influences of aspects of this model have been depicted in a route in the following figure (*Figure 42*). In this figure, the clear and specific relationships between aspects in *Figure 41* have been focused upon to form a route of relationship. The starting point of the route is the effective leadership, as it was an important aspect in local government capacity that influenced three other important and high level aspects of information exchange/communication, financial resources and human resource. These three aspects which had a high level were the main

supporting aspects for the high level of community participation in both width and depth of the Vinh case. As a consequence of the high levels of community participation in the Vinh case, it resulted in high levels of outcomes of the project in all four aspects.

Figure 42: Route of relationships between local government capacity, community participation and outcomes of the project in the Vinh case



The results revealed that community participation influenced the outcomes of the project. The wide participation together with clear transparent communication helped to prevent and solve any conflicts during the negotiations. It also brought an increased amount of support from the involved actors and created more satisfaction. The outcomes of the project reflected the influence of community participation in the project with support from local government capacity.

The community participation in the housing improvement project in Vinh city resulted good outcomes with some positive characteristics such as

- Living conditions in the neighborhood had been dramatically upgraded without a financial grant from the state
- The detailed plan which was based on a consensus among the community members after discussions and negotiations had been prepared and implemented without any evictions

The housing improvement project was prepared and implemented with cooperation between the local government and the Huu Nghi neighborhood community members in solving all of the stagnations within the project. As analyzed in chapter 6, the high level of participation in both width and depth encouraged satisfaction and support from

all of the community members, NGOs and CSOs within the project. In this case, it showed again that the good outcomes of the housing improvement project resulted from cooperation between the local government and the affected neighborhood community at all of the project stages including preparation, design, implementation and monitoring activities.

c) Case of Can Tho city

Unlike the cases of Vinh and Viet Tri city, the upgrading project in Can Tho city was carried out to improve the infrastructure systems with financial support from World Bank. The infrastructure upgrading project was very important as the outcomes of the project directly affected the neighborhood community.

In the Can Tho case, the project was carried out with major funding from the World Bank. The local government guaranteed that they would ensure active community participation at every critical project stage namely; preparation, design and implementation as it was the project's prerequisite for funding. To comply with active community participation the local government made a new policy, especially for this, whereby the approval of any decision issued by government regarding this project was based on the consensus of the affected community members for the design option. Another example of how the local government was involved in active community participation was in the co-production activities between the local government and the neighborhood community members within the preparation process while adjusting and making the spatial detail plan for the neighborhood. The effective leadership of the local government leaders helped the affected communities and related departments to resolve any stagnation and conflicts during the preparation and design stage. The results of the implemented project in the Can Tho city case showed that community participation with support from local government at all levels influenced and changed some key rigid spatial planning regulations to meet the people's desires for better living conditions.

The high level of depth and width of participation in this project ensured that all of the people in the community gained benefit from the project. The project improved the living conditions of the neighborhood and almost all of the community members were satisfied with the outcomes of the project. However, the delayed communication in providing a thorough explanation to the community at the commencement of the

project in some cases and no specific regulations for the communities to be able to monitor the way their contributions were spent were some negative points regarding community satisfaction.

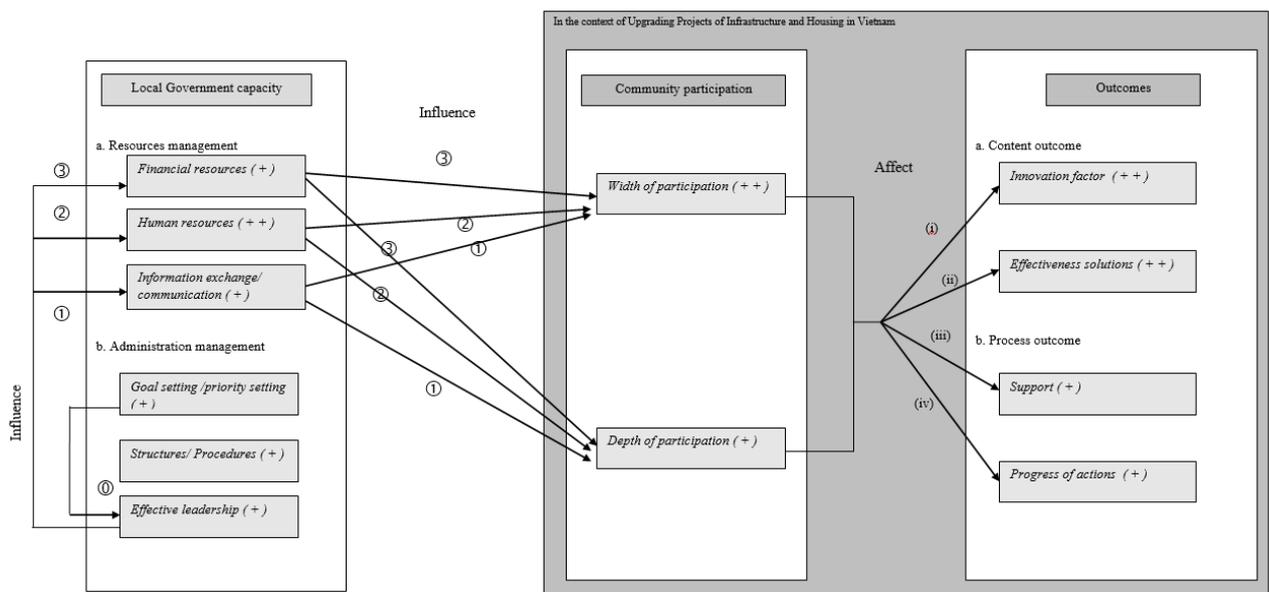
The summary of the levels of each sub-indicators of three variables are listed in the below table.

Table 33: Levels of indicators of 3 variables in Can Tho city

City	Local government capacity						Community participation		Outcomes			
	Resources management			Administration management			Width of participation	Depth of participation	Content Outcome		Process Outcome	
	Financial resource	Human resource	Information exchange	Goal/priority setting	Structure/Procedures	Effective leadership			Innovation factor	Effective solution	Support	Progress of actions
Can Tho	+	++	+	+	+	+	++	+	++	++	+	+

It can be seen from the table, that the aspects of local government capacity were a high level and they had supporting effects on the level of community participation. The high levels of width and depth due to the result of these effects brought a high level of outcomes of the project, especially in the innovation factor and the effective solutions aspects. The relationship between these three variables can be shown in the following figure:

Figure 43: Relationship of community participation in the infrastructure improvement project in the case of Can Tho city



In the case of the Can Tho project, the funding prerequisite of community participation in all stage of project made the city leaders work effectively to support community

participation. The priority settings for community participation influenced the local government leaders' attitude towards the community driven approach.

Similar to the case of Viet Tri and Vinh, the effective leaders in the Can Tho case influenced the communication channels. However, the actual leaders of the neighborhood community were less active than those in Viet Tri and Vinh city and therefore it influenced the depth of participation. The communication system which was not at the highest level influenced the depth of participation and therefore it lowered the satisfaction of the actors at the outcome.

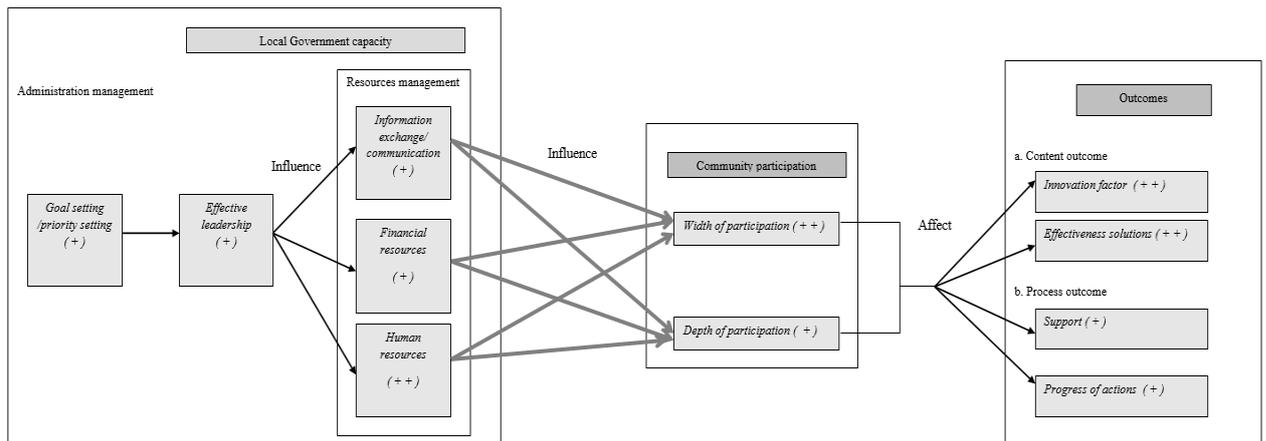
In this infrastructure upgrading project, the leaders influenced the human resources that support community participation. The formation of the PMU whose leader was the Vice Chairman of City People's Committee and the system of 'semi-official' cadres as well as the professional consultants were tools that had been used by the local government to support the community participation. All the activities during the project stages were carried out by the stakeholders with a priority principle of community participation and it positively influenced the width and depth of participation.

Following the analysis in chapter 7, the funding prerequisite from the World Bank had been channeled from the priority settings through the government leaders and communication channels to the affected community. Information about the clear and secured financial resources from the World Bank and state budget brought a beneficial guarantee to the community members who were involved in the project. The secured financial resources influenced the level of width and depth of participation and brought a high level of stakeholders' satisfaction and actors support in progress of action in the outcomes.

The main relationship and influences of aspects in this model can be recognized in a route which can be seen in the following figure. (*Figure 44*) In this figure, the route shows the main path including important aspects of local government capacity in its relationship with others and how it has effected community participation and results in the outcomes of the project. This route started from the priority policy of community participation which was the prerequisite for the project funding. It had, therefore, influence upon the leaders it forced local government leaders to act effectively in supporting community participation. The effect of effective leadership in turn

influenced three other aspects namely information exchange, financial resources and human resources. These aspects supported community participation and resulted in a high level of width and depth of participation. The high levels of community participation together with support from local government capacity ensured a high level of outcomes of the projects in all four aspects.

Figure 44: Route of relationships between local government capacity, community participation and outcomes of the project in the Can Tho case



It can be seen in the case of Can Tho that aspects of local government capacity influenced each other and then they were channeled through resource management in their impact on community participation. The results of the infrastructure improvement project shows that community participation influenced the outcomes of the project. The funding prerequisite of the project from World Bank affected the priorities of this project and changed the local government leaders' attitude towards community participation. The high level of human resources with a well trained staff to support community participation together with wide participation helped to bring the innovative content of the outcomes and results producing effective solutions. The commitment from the local government to support community participation guaranteed the implementation of participatory planning methods and influenced planning processes. With a commitment to support community participation, the local government at all levels and the affected community cooperated in the preparation and design stages in which the appropriate standards were applied. The selection of the option for approval was considered based on the communities' and local administration's willingness and ability to pay. This commitment helped develop an innovative spatial detail plan for the neighborhood as it prevented the affected

community from ideas and purpose imposition of the local government. It encouraged a high level of community participation in both depth and width to reach a mutual understanding and cooperation between affected communities and the local government in solving neighborhood issues and to have an improved infrastructure. The outcomes of this project showed that effective solutions can be reached with a high level of satisfaction from the involved actors when there is a commitment from the local government to support a high level of community participation and in which, interaction between citizens and government representatives was realized. Moreover, the good outcomes of the project were reached when the commitment was transferred into actual cooperation between the affected communities and the local government in finding solutions that were based on the stakeholder's capabilities.

d) Case of Nam Dinh city

Similar to the Can Tho case, the project in Nam Dinh city was carried out with major funding from an external source and the funding prerequisite was the local government's guarantee of active community participation during all critical project stages. In Nam Dinh city, the project was carried out in the low-income areas. The main purpose of the project in these neighborhoods was to improve the basic infrastructure which was incomplete and did not meet the people needs. Therefore, the outcomes of the infrastructure upgrading project were very important as it directly affected the neighborhood community.

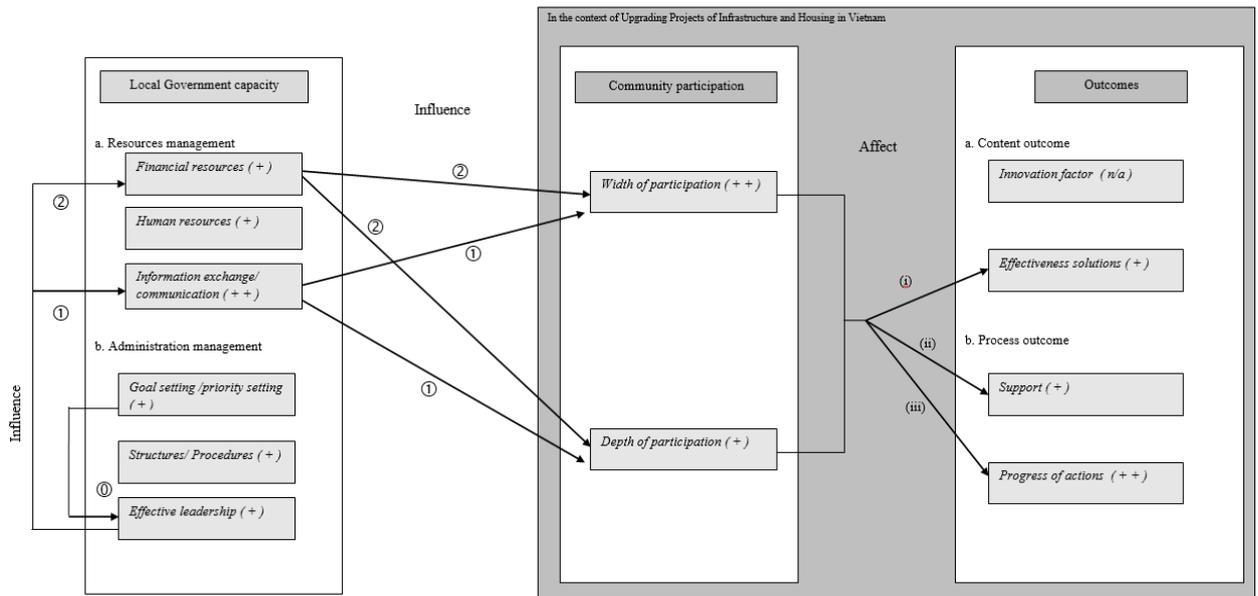
In the case of Nam Dinh, in order to get 100% consensus of the community in the project, the local government of Nam Dinh city had to commit to the solutions of the infrastructure system prepared by an independent consultant following the ideas and comments of the affected community. The solution was designed and selected based on the local government and the community's willingness and ability to pay. The actual participation of the affected community in the project at all critical project stages and the support from the Nam Dinh PMU, Steering Board of the Project at provincial level and the relevant departments in the discussions and negotiations with the community shows the co-production activities. The project showed positive improvement in the neighborhood living conditions and community members were satisfied that the project outcomes had met their needs.

A summary of the levels of each of the sub indicators of three variables can be found in the table below

Table 34: Levels of indicators of 3 variables in Nam Dinh city

City	Local government capacity						Community participation		Outcomes			
	Resources management			Administration management			Width of participation	Depth of participation	Content Outcome		Process Outcome	
	Financial resource	Human resource	Information exchange	Goal/priority setting	Structure/ Procedures	Effective leadership			Innovation factor	Effective solution	Support	Progress of actions
Nam Dinh	+	+	++	+	+	+	++	+	n/a	+	+	++

From the above table, it can be seen that the financial resources and the information exchange aspects had a very high level. It had an influence on the level of community participation and resulted in high levels in both width and depth. As a consequence, the outcomes of the project reached a high level in all three aspects. The relationship between these three variables can be shown in following figure *Figure 45: Relationships of community participation in the infrastructure improvement project in the Nam Dinh city case*



In the Nam Dinh case, which was similar to Can Tho city, the funding prerequisite of community participation at all stages of the project made the priority main orientation of the project a community driven approach. It affected the city leaders to change their leadership role towards effective ways to support the participation of the affected community. The solid foundation for successful community participation was based on the flexibility of the city leaders to adjust the regulations which were related to urban upgrading project issues. The flexibility was shown in the activities of forming relevant administrative bodies that helped to strengthen the administrative powers of

the PMU. The effective leadership showed at both municipal and provincial levels which had effects on the communication and financial issues and was channeled to the width and depth of participation. The community leaders and community volunteers were used as communication channels to transfer project information to the affected community members and also receive feedback. Besides the city website, direct communication at the city hall and PMU office formed a dual channel of communication in Nam Dinh project. The dual channel of communication was used to receive and give feedback of information and a mechanism to solve complaints which in turn gave satisfaction to the affected community members and encouraged them to participate in the project.

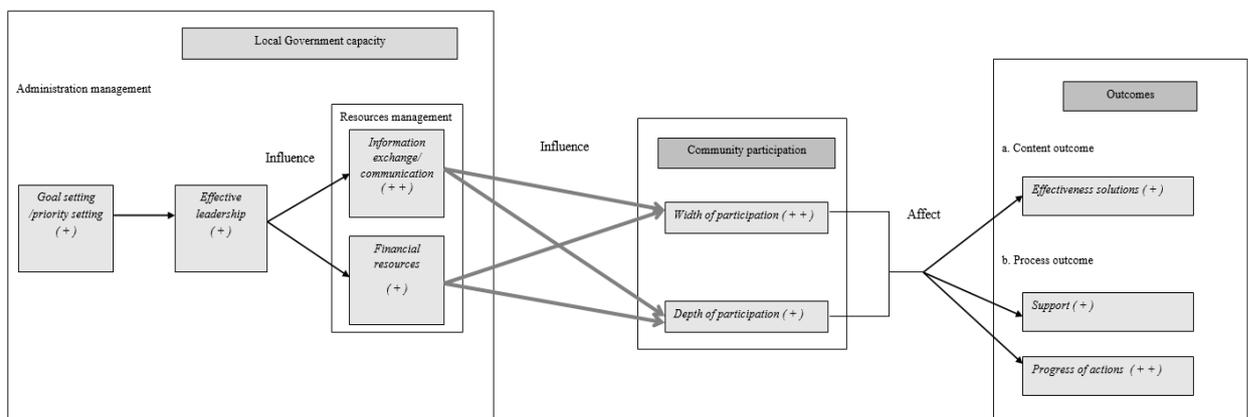
Similar to the Can Tho case, the clear and secured financial resources from the World Bank and the state budget guaranteed that the community members involved in the project would gain benefits from the project. The municipal and provincial government of Nam Dinh had to guarantee the financial resources for all activities in the project following the agreement signed by both the Nam Dinh government and the World Bank. The local government had used their power to setup a special approach to receive secured and enough funding for the project as discussed in chapter 8. This aspect together with the clear and dual communication aspects influenced the width and depth of participation as community participation was the basis principle.

The results in the Nam Dinh case showed that community participation influenced the outcomes of the project. The high levels of width and depth of participation together with the support from local government capacity resulted in the good outcomes of the project in Nam Dinh in both content outcomes and process outcomes. The high level of communication channels increased the satisfaction of the actors on the outcomes. Among the local government capacity aspects, information communication and financial resources were the most important factors for the width and the depth of participation in the Nam Dinh case. It was under the influence of effective leadership which followed the funding prerequisite and priority policy for community participation.

The main relationships and influential aspects in this model can be recognized in a route laid out in the following figure (*Figure 46*). In this figure, some specific relationships between aspects as outlined in *Figure 45* have been focused upon.

Similar to the case of Can Tho city, the aspect of priority settings for community participation in Nam Dinh city was the starting aspect in the route. It influenced the effective leadership aspect and then influenced the two most important aspects at a very high level which were the aspects of information exchange and financial resources. These two aspects were the main supporting aspects for the high level of community participation. These aspects affected the outcomes of the project in three other aspects namely; effective solutions, satisfaction of actors and progress of action for stagnation solving.

Figure 46: Route of relationships between local government capacity, community participation and the outcomes of the project in the Nam Dinh case



Similar to Can Tho city, the community participation model in the Nam Dinh case required that the local government should support community participation. It was due to the funding prerequisite of community participation that gave secured financial resources and a clear information exchange for the project implementation. It created a foundation that allowed affected community members to cooperate with the local government during all stages of the project. This cooperation between the local government and the affected community showed that the clear and transparent information in the project led to a sharing responsibility and willingness to contribute among the actors. The outcomes of this project in the Nam Dinh case showed that effective solutions could be reached with a high level of satisfaction from the involved actors and a high level of support from the stakeholders during the implementation process. It was the result of the actual high level of support from the local government in the cooperation process with the affected community to find solutions to improve the neighborhoods.

The multiple case studies in all four cities gave empirical evidences to partially answer the research questions that the community participation was related to the local government capacity, and each aspects of capacity were interrelated with each other. The discussion in the next section will provide a transcending pattern in which each important aspect has been re-emerged to form a general pattern that covers all cases in all four cities.

9.3 Finding and discussing case transcending patterns

In the four cases of improvement projects that were discussed in this dissertation, they all illustrated that an upgrading project is able to be implemented even in low-income neighborhoods with the affected community members' contribution and can result in good outcomes. The community participation in these projects required the support from the local government and the local government capacity aspects simultaneously interacted with each other to support the participation process of the community.

The local government capacity variable has some common aspects in all four cases that affected the community participation process differently in each of the four cities.

It can clearly be seen in the previous section, that the local government capacity aspects have interrelations with other indicators and that it affected the community participation and outcomes of the project. It showed in the four cases that the administration management aspects influenced the resource management aspects of the community participation. The resource management aspects directly affected the level of community participation in both the width and depth of participation. In the four cases, it was due to the effectiveness of the local government leaders who played an important role in the administration management aspect that affected the resource management. The issue of structure and procedures in the four cities had limited influences as it required a lot of time and effort to change. In the cases of Can Tho and Nam Dinh city it was changed to a limited extent with the formation of the project's special management unit that supported community participation. The indicators of the goal/priority settings and the policy for community participation and indicators for effective leadership had mutual influences upon each other when effective leadership influenced the goal/priority settings for community participation for example in the case of Viet Tri city, whereas the goal/priority settings for community participation had an effect on the leadership in the cases of Nam Dinh and Can Tho city. Effective

leadership influenced aspects of resources management in all four cases. It influenced the human resources aspect in the cases of Vinh and Can Tho city. Especially, the effective leadership had effects on the aspects of financial resources and information exchange and it was channeled in the width and depth of participation in all four cases of Nam Dinh, Can Tho, Vinh and Viet Tri city. It is presented in the following figure and it can be clearly seen that the important indicators that had a strong impact on the width and depth of participation were effective leadership, information exchange and the financial resources aspects in the local government capacity variable.

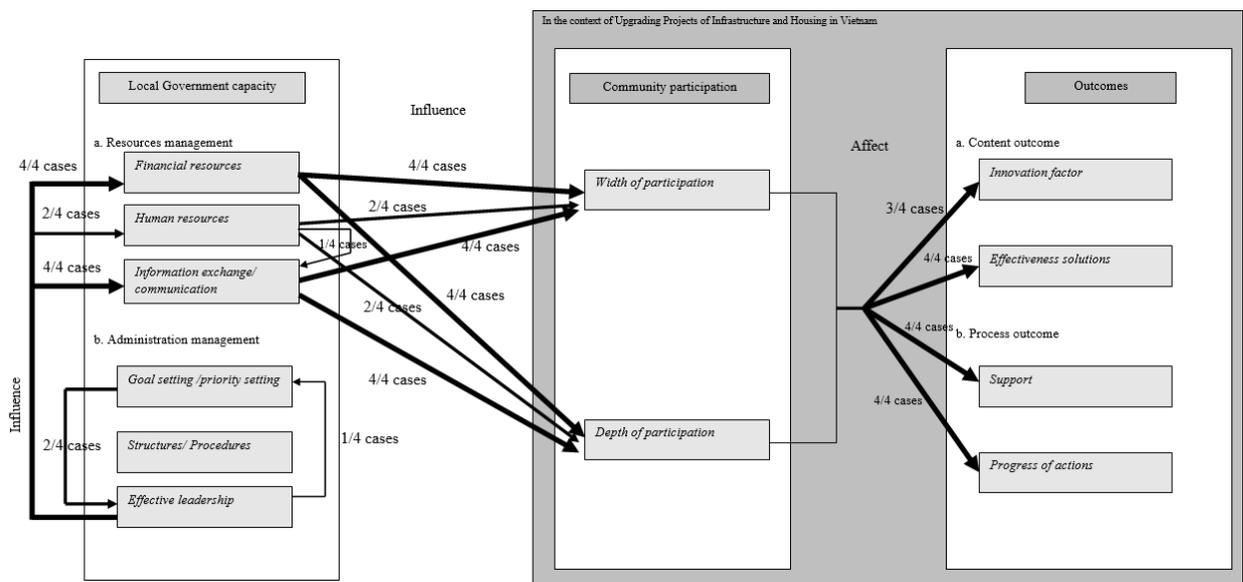


Figure 47: Transcending pattern of community participation in infrastructure and housing upgrading projects in the 4 cases of Nam Dinh, Viet Tri, Vinh and Can Tho

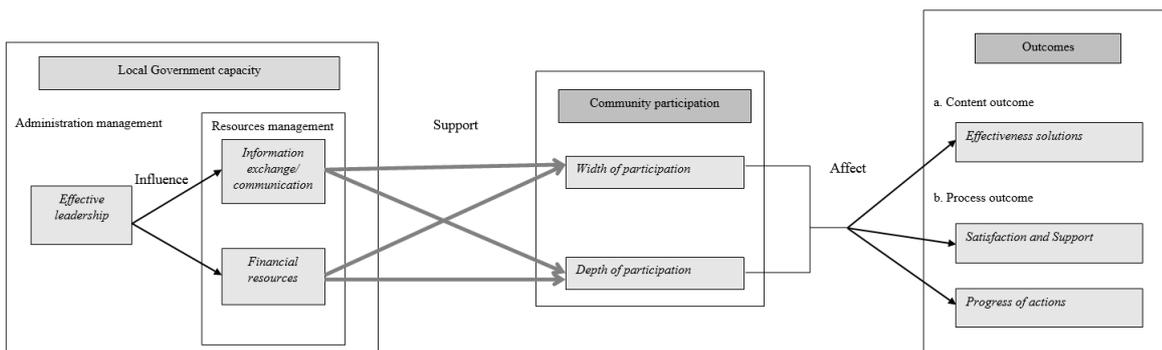
In all four cases, it has been shown that effective leadership had interrelations with other indicators of local government capacity and that affected community participation and the outcomes of the project. The four cases showed that community participation was supported greatly by the local and the municipal governments to achieve good outcomes. As can be seen from Figure 47, in local government capacity of urban upgrading projects, the administrative management aspects that were mainly due to effective leadership, were supportive in resources management; especially the financial resources and information/communication, that positively influenced community participation (in width and depth) and in turn positively influenced the outcomes. This transcending pattern of community participation in infrastructure and housing upgrading projects has shown the dominant routes that revealed the relationships between three variables that occurred and recurred in the four cases. The

route of relationship which occurred and recurred in four out of the four cases was considered as a ‘very strong’ pattern. If it occurs in three out of the four cases, it was considered as a ‘strong’ pattern and if it occurs in two out of the four cases, it was considered as a ‘moderate’ pattern. These routes are shown in the following sections.

a. Effective leadership – Communication/financial resources – community participation – Outcomes

This route occurred in all four cases when the local government leaders, mainly by their effective leadership, played important roles in administration management and guaranteed the coordination of relating departments to support participation activities. The government leader’s direction and vision on community participation had impacts on the city policy and more importantly, it influenced the way of communication to the affected community members and the guarantee of financial resources for the project. These two aspects of resource management in local government capacity positively influenced the level of width and depth of participation. The policy of fostering community participation in urban upgrading projects which was rooted from effective leadership influenced the width of participation and encouraged people to join. The changes in policy also had impacts on the depth of participation when it created a framework for the community to perform.

Figure 48: The ‘very strong’ pattern of community participation in upgrading projects in all four cases



The effectiveness of leadership had an influence on the communication of project information and dealing with problems and stagnations which were raised in the implementation process in the four cases.

The effective leaders always had an influence on the communication channel. It was only with the dual, transparent communication channels that helped the leaders work effectively. Through these communication channels, the project information was

transferred transparently from the project management board and the local government leaders to the affected community members. In addition, the community members' needed to be able to receive and give feedback about the project which in turn needed to be received and dealt with by the authorized institutions. During these communication processes, both the local government and the community used both formal and informal channels to transfer the information. And in an inverse position, the effective leaders were always eager for clear, transparent and a dual channel of communication that helped them with their work. In these projects, the information exchange mechanism strongly influenced the width and the depth of participation. This clear and dual communication channel helped people to express their desires to the government. It helps them to discuss and negotiate with the local government. When it was observed that it was an efficient channel of communication, more people were willing to participate in the project. Clear and transparent communication also helped to transfer ideas and proposals of the community as well as giving feedback and support from the local government. These dual and transparent communication channels ensured that the local government officials and community members were able to easily contact each other. Local government officials used both the formal procedures and informal communication channels to update information regarding the project progress and receive the community members' complaints and input. In this way, local government leaders solved the conflicts and stagnations in the project implementation process with amendments to policies and regulations together with directions on coordination among related departments to support the participation.

The informal way of communication and information exchange played an important role in creating a dual channel of communication. Using intermediaries to convey the information such as community leaders and mass organizations like the Women's Union and the Fatherland Front, the updated project information was able to be communicated proficiently to the communities and governments. Community members, members of local mass organizations and local government staff talked about the project during the face to face meetings. In cases of all four cities, the channels of communication were through mass organizations at local level, this was an effective means of connecting the community. Using these channels, information and orientation from the municipal government were transferred to the affected people and the feedback from community was received and disseminated to the local governments

and related departments. When the project was implemented, the community members were able to communicate easily with the local government staff and intermediaries with both their requests and complaints. In this way, the local government staff in the four cases of Vinh, Viet Tri, Can Tho and Nam Dinh did not have to use the formal procedures to update the project information. Communication and interaction between project stakeholders in this way had been enhanced. It helped to support the depth of participation of the community and encouraged more people to be involved in the project. Therefore, it had impacts on both the width and depth of participation.

The financial issues were crucial for the project implementation. Clear and transparent information about the project especially the financial issues had impacts on the decisions of the affected community members whether or not they would participate in the project. This aspect also influenced the depth of participation as the affected people who contributed to the projects had more responsibilities on decisions within the project process compared to a project that does not need people's financial contribution. Although in the four cases, a proportion of the financing came from international and domestic resources and they were also based on a loan scheme, the aspect of a financial resource guarantee gave encouragement to the affected community members to participate and contribute in the project as it assured them of the project implementation and they would receive benefits when being involved in it.

Comparing the four cases of Vinh, Viet Tri, Nam Dinh and Can Tho, it can be seen that in practice the fund for community participation activities is able to be varied. The local government often complained that community participation activities required a large amount of budget to organize meetings to collect information, demands or to consult with the affected people. However, the affected community members arranged many self-organized meetings to discuss the project, provide information and prepare the alternative options with the help of the local government staff. These meetings did not use any of the project budget and there was only one condition for those meetings that was that the project information and any communication to the affected communities would be clear and transparent. All of the four projects in all cases did not have any complaints about the lack of a financial budget for the community participation activities compared with other top-down and state budget provided projects.

The aspect of guaranteed financial resources affected the width of participation and the depth. The clear and dual communication provided enough project information to the affected community members which included the information about the guaranteed financial resources of the projects that encouraged more people in the neighborhood to be involved in the projects. Loan based and community participation based projects require an enormous budget such as the housing and infrastructure upgrading projects in these four cases, the more people that are involved and are able to contribute to a project, the more secure the financial resources are and vice versa.

The case of Viet Tri showed that the guaranteed financial resources together with a clear policy supporting the community to make decisions regarding financial credit regulations empowered the community to discuss, negotiate and make decisions on all project related issues. The local government simply accepted the decisions and legally approved them. In three of the four cases, the community had limited voices on the financial issues compared to the Viet Tri case and therefore, the depth of participation was considered lower. In the case of Viet Tri, the depth of participation was very high, it reached a co-deciding level and the administration leaders of Viet Tri city left the development and decision making of the policies to the affected community. The civil staff and the NGO played advisory roles and the local government simply accepted the outcomes. In the three other cases, the depth of participation had a high level they were also co-producing. The information exchange/ communication aspect including the financial resources aspect of the resources management all affected the width and depth of participation. Moreover, the width and depth of participation, in turn, positively influenced the outcomes of the projects.

In the four cases, three aspects of project outcomes reached a high level under the influences of community participation. They were robustness or effectiveness of the solution, satisfaction of the stakeholders/actors involved in the project and the support from the stakeholders/actors in the preparing, designing and implementing the project to solve and prevent stagnations and conflicts.

- Effectiveness of the solutions

The depth of participation had effects on the durability and robustness of the project as it guaranteed the implementation, monitoring and maintenance of the project. The high level of width of participation as well as the high level of depth of participation

together with support from local government capacity resulted in the implementation of the projects and directly solved problems in the neighborhood. With a high level of width of participation, the exact problems in the neighborhoods had been precisely touched upon. The involvement of affected community members from the early stage of defining problems resulted in a priority list and thus the project was steered in the right direction to find solutions based on actual resources. The effective and feasible solutions were chosen with a solid background of guaranteed financial resources which came from the ability-to-pay of the affected community members and commitments from the government leaders in the related policies. These feasible solutions could only be reached with a clear, dual and transparent communication in which information from all fields had been transferred and discussed openly.

In the cases of Vinh and Viet Tri, the financial issue for the housing improvement projects of the low-income neighborhoods was always the burden of the municipal government. At the preparation stage, clear, dual and transparent communication from the government to the affected community managed to involve the citizens in the discussion meetings. Based on the ability-to-pay of the affected community members, notwithstanding any financial support from the local government, the affected community members from the low-income neighborhoods overcame the funding problems by using their own savings and encouraged others to participate in a saving scheme network. In the case of Nam Dinh and Can Tho, the design of tertiary infrastructure upgrading was discussed and selected based on the ability to pay and willingness to pay of the affected community members in face-to-face community meetings with the local government and the PMU. The community members took advantage of the dual and transparent communication with the local government to discuss, negotiate and persuade the local government to support them regarding legalization activities related to housing and land issues. When taking a closer look at the situation in the four cases, it can be seen that the original initial top-down spatial plan prepared by the government could not be fully implemented due to the lack of budget for compensation and implementation. These initial government approved plans had not been prepared based on the actual demands of the affected people but from a planners' imagination of what the ideal situation should be for the neighborhood. More importantly, these plans had not been prepared based on the

actual ability to pay and willingness to pay of both the local government and the affected community members.

In Viet Tri as well as in Nam Dinh, Vinh and Can Tho city, the issue of governmental approval of the spatial detail plan based on community development and designed with the technical support from the local government staff in related departments guaranteed the durability and feasibility of the project as it was based on 100% consensus among the community members which was eventually reached after many meetings, discussions and negotiations. This solution avoided ‘forced relocation’ situations whereas in other development projects, ‘forced relocation’ situations cause much trouble for both households and the local government. Moreover, the high level of depth of participation gave the involved community members a feeling of responsibility and encouraged them to be actively self-organized to protect and maintain the project work even after implementation. The cases mentioned of the four cities that had successfully implemented projects and effective solutions showed that at the neighborhood level, the upgrading project was feasible and implementable when there was active involvement of affected community members from the stage of defining the problems, project preparation, implementation, monitoring and maintenance with the support of the local government.

- Support

The support and satisfaction of stakeholders in the processes of the project were rooted from a high level of width of participation and depth of participation. Moreover, as it showed in the four cases, a high level of community participation together with clear and transparent communication resulted in both the affected community and the local government were satisfied with the project. In the four cases, the affected community was able to express their ideas and their demands which helped the local government to define a correct direction to be able to support the project activities. Ability to be involved early in the project and high level of power in deciding their own options for their own neighborhood gave community members satisfaction. The community selected option was applied and it effectively solved the problems in the neighborhood. This result also brought a feeling of satisfaction to the community members. The local government leaders and staff members were also satisfied as the project was implemented and was supported by the community members. The

downgraded neighborhood had been improved fulfilled one of the tasks and obligations of the local government by ensuring a higher standard of the living environment for the local people within their administration controlled territory. This result also gave the local government satisfaction and it explained the support of local government in the project processes.

- Stagnation and conflict prevention

In traditional upgrading projects, the local government and cadres normally follow a top-down approach with designs from technical staff and professionals as they claim that most of community members have little or no knowledge and experience in preparing and implementing a design. But without the involvement of the affected community members at the defining problem stage, the demands and needs of the people are unable to be fully understood thus cannot be provided to the professionals and therefore, the design is not able to be implemented in many projects. In the four cases of Vinh, Viet Tri, Nam Dinh and Can Tho, the affected people were involved in the very early stages of the project with a clear and transparent conveying of information from the municipality. They did not make the designs by themselves but they provided ideas, opinions, needs and demands to the technical staff and those professionals helped the community to prepare the options. The local government indirectly controlled the design through the construction standards which were applied by the professionals. The whole project process of preparing and implementing had the cooperation of the two main stakeholders, the community and the local government. The wide participation of community members at all stages of the project and the face-to-face meetings with local government staff helped to find a way of solving the conflicts. Supporting this, the effectiveness leadership who provided changes of local policy and regulations and a clear and transparent communication system which included various means of approaching the government and giving feedback had managed to clear the stagnations in the project. It showed that a high level of the outcome aspects of the project was rooted in the high level of participation in both the width and depth together with the support from local government capacity.

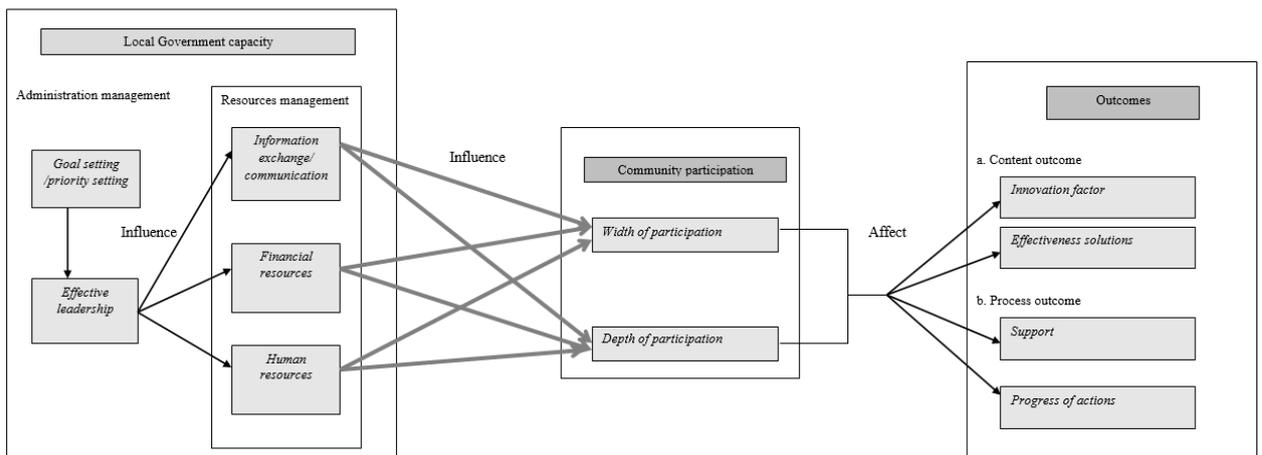
In addition to this ‘very strong’ pattern, as can be seen in the figure of transcending patterns, some cases but not all were characterized with some aspects that formed another route. This ‘moderate’ pattern has some indicators that complement the

aspects in the ‘very strong’ pattern but occurred and recurred in 2 or 3 out of the 4 cases but not all of them. This route explained the relationships of community participation variables with the local government capacity variable and in turn the outcomes of the projects. This route is Effective leadership (under the influence of policy/priority settings) – Resources Management – Community participation – Outcomes.

b. Effective leadership (under the influence of policy/priority settings) – Resources management – Community participation – Outcomes

This route occurred and recurred in two of the four cases, when local government leaders coordinated and directed effectively the project following the community participation orientation under the influence of policy/priority settings of community participation.

Figure 49: The ‘moderate’ pattern of community participation in upgrading projects



In the two cases of Nam Dinh and Can Tho city, effective leadership was under the influence of the goals and objectives of the project, which had the priority of community participation as a prerequisite for the project. The leaders of the municipal People’s Committee also issued local policies and regulations to support community participation activities in the projects.

In this route, the effective leadership also influenced the information exchange/communication and the financial resource aspects like the previous route. However, it had some additional characteristics with communication issues such as the learning effects with communication and the creation of new social norms to encourage the people to participate. The learning effects of communication were

visible in the case of Nam Dinh where the local government realized that the infrequent and one way communication system between the affected community and the local government caused unnecessary community complaints and a serious delay in the 1st phase of the project. The improvement of communication channels in the 2nd phase of project in Nam Dinh through community volunteers, community leaders, local authorities in providing correct and detailed information with explanations solved the problems in the 1st phase. Using high-tech communication channels through the local government website and public media to receive the complaints and be updated regarding the problem solving situations helped to increase the width and depth of participation among the community members. In the cases of Can Tho and Nam Dinh, the transparent and clear information exchange throughout each of the stages of the project including; preparation, implementation and monitoring created a new value and social norm that encouraged more people to be actively involved in the project.

Similar to the previous route, the effectiveness of the leadership also affected the financial resources aspect in the community participation projects. The financial issue is always crucial for a project implementation. Effective leaders had positive influences on the local regulations, policies and decisions to guarantee the financial resources for the project. In the cases of Vinh and Viet Tri, the financial resource came from the community savings to pay back the low interest loan provided by the international organization and the community made a decision on how to build their houses based on that fund. Figures from the project showed that 100% of the households in the network paid back the loan principal and interest and that guaranteed the effectiveness and sustainability of the solution. In the cases of Can Tho and Nam Dinh, the financial resources came from the community contribution together with a state owned budget and loan from World Bank and the community and the local government made a decision on how to upgrade the tertiary infrastructure within their neighborhood based on that fund. As analyzed in the previous section, all of the points mentioned had an effect on the width and depth of participation.

Especially, in this route, the issue of human resources was the aspect that was under the positive influence of effective leadership. In the two cases of Nam Dinh and Can Tho human resources supporting community participation were organized and trained. A special unit to support project activities and guarantee the local authorities commitments in supporting community participation was formed. Although it was not

an administrative body, it helped the local government at city level to manage the project and it coordinated all activities. It was formed and organized following the influence of effective leadership from the local government leaders and it was the result of the prerequisite from the external funding organization that made the policy/priority setting of community participation.

Similar to the dominant route, in this case, all three aspects of resources management together influenced the width and depth of participation. With support from local government capacity, the width and the depth of participation reached a high level and in turn, they positively influenced the outcomes. There is one new characteristic in the outcomes out of three other aspects that is the issue of the innovation factor. The issue of the innovation factor in the outcomes was varied because it required big changes and completely new content had to have been applied and implemented. There were only three cases that had information about the innovation content. The practical progress of implementing the project in these cases showed that the innovation content was not initially intended as part of the project goal settings. It all occurred and recurred in the projects as a result of effective leadership to support the community participation process and as a result of the co-production process between the local government and the affected community members within the project to find the solutions for the neighborhoods.

The strong and general pattern that emerged in all four cases showed that the co-production of politicians and administration staff and the affected community members in determining a problem solving agenda and searching for solutions together guaranteed a high level of width and depth of participation and led to effective, feasible and robust outcomes. In this pattern, the civil staff and the NGOs played advisory roles and the politicians were committed to these solutions and decisions that were made by the affected neighborhood community and the local government. However, the indicator of effective leadership plays a very important role in this pattern as it forms the solid backbone for other supportive aspects.

In the two cases of Can Tho and Nam Dinh as highlighted in the route that the goal, policy and priority setting aspects influenced the leadership and other aspects such as the information exchange communication aspect and financial resources aspect. The aspects of administration management were channeled through resources management

in its impact on community participation. Aspects of administration management influenced aspects of resources management especially the two important aspects of financial and information issues. As the case studies showed, under these influences and effects, the outcomes of these projects successfully fulfilled community needs and demands.

9.4 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the multiple case comparisons of four community participation projects in housing and tertiary infrastructure upgrading. It shows the fact that, there is a transcending pattern that expressed the relationships of local government capacity, community participation and the outcomes of the housing improvement and infrastructure upgrading projects in four cases. This pattern from the four cases was revealed in two patterns. The ‘very strong’ pattern that occurred and recurred in all four cases was Effective leadership – Communication/financial resources – Community participation – Outcomes. The other ‘moderate’ pattern was Effective leadership (under the influence of policy/priority settings) –Resources Management – Community participation – Outcomes and could be partially seen in four cases. These two routes showed that the transcending pattern of community participation projects in all four cases required the support from local government capacity to reach the good outcomes of the project.

The case studies in Vinh, Viet Tri, Nam Dinh and Can Tho give empirical evidence to answer the sub-research questions in chapter 1. The local government capacity has supported the community participation at a high level of all aspects especially with a very high level of communication and information exchange. The important aspects of financial resources and dual and transparent communication are rooted from a high level of effectiveness of leadership of municipal leaders. High ranking effectiveness solutions and satisfaction among the stakeholders resulted from a high level of participation in width and depth which was guaranteed by secured financial resources and a very high level of communication and information exchange.

These case studies have illustrated that the implementation of participatory processes required local government support to be able to reach the outcomes effectively. The local government developed mutual relationships with the affected communities. By involving the community in the decision making processes, the local government can

be enriched with knowledge, information and other forms of input including financial resources in the policy making and implementation processes. In this way, the co-production between the local government and the community was able to take place. It can be seen from the case studies that community participation in these projects meant that the governmental institutions developed strategies for co-production with the affected communities. To make this co-production work, several conditions needed to be taken into account like effective leadership, recurring formal and informal meetings, interaction between the local governments and community members, dual and transparent communication and secured financial resources. The issue of co-production in community participation will be further embedded and elaborated in the final chapter. As the case studies showed, the outcomes of the community participation project with support from local government capacity met the community desires. These findings in the case studies have implications that community participation needs to be supported by government actors to ensure good outcomes.

The next chapter will provide conclusions on suitable ways to engage and support community participation in Vietnam and recommends further research that is needed for the co-production approach based on community participation with support from local government capacity.

Chapter 10. Conclusion and Recommendation

10.1 Introduction

The previous chapter contained discussions and findings regarding the patterns emerging from four case studies in Vietnam where housing and infrastructure upgrading projects were carried out with community participation. These patterns showed the transcending trends of relationships between community participation, local government capacity and the outcomes of the projects. This chapter will provide an overall conclusion of this research, the scientific value of the research contribution and recommendations for projects in the practical context of Vietnam.

There are four major sections in this chapter. The first section focuses on analyzing the main patterns of community participation projects in the four cases, based on the previous chapters. The most important elements that had influenced the community participation process for the good outcomes of the upgrading project in all four cases will also be summarized. The second section will provide the overall findings that were elicited from the patterns of community participation with the involvement of the local government and the outcomes of the project respectively. This section will go beyond the cases finding transcending patterns to explicitly show to what extent community participation has affected the outcomes of the upgrading projects of infrastructure and housing (UPIH) in Vietnam with the precondition of local government capacity. Based on that, the third section will provide the added value of the community participation approach and give the recommendations for the practical UPIH projects in Vietnam. The last section will summarize with discussions and based on that, future research suggestions are provided.

The content presented in this chapter will answer the research sub-questions (What are the characteristics of community participation in UPIH in the four selected cities of Vietnam? What is the local government capacity in the four selected cities and how is it related to community participation in UPIH? and what were the outcomes of the UPIH in the four selected cities with community participation?). This section will answer the question focusing on the patterns of community participation in UPIH (To what extent does community participation affect the outcomes of the upgrading projects of infrastructure and housing in cities of Vietnam with the precondition of local government capacity?) and give recommendations for other similar cases (What

are the best ways to engage and support community participation in UPIH that have a potential to improve and produce a good outcome of the project in the case study areas, which can be disseminated and replicated in other similar cases?)

10.2 Community participation and its characteristics in upgrading projects of infrastructure and housing

The characteristics of community participation in UPIH in the four cases have been discussed in the previous chapters and can be summarized with the following answers of each sub-research questions.

a. Vietnamese context, regarding the Public Administration Reform

As mentioned in the previous chapters, given the progress of economic development since 1986 following the ‘Doi moi’ process, Vietnam has undergone deep changes in all facets of its economy, policy, and society. It has changed from a ‘top-down’ or subsidized economy to a ‘market-oriented’ economy. In line with these changes, the administration reform was also implemented in which people were encouraged to be involved more in the activities that affected their lives and living neighborhoods. As a result of economic development, the people’s living standards have also increased and the demand for upgrading projects on housing and infrastructure has been raised in many communities. However, the housing and infrastructure systems have not been developed simultaneously to address this increasing demand. The reason is because of the lack of a state budget for housing and infrastructure improvement. In this context, the government policy of ‘State and People work together’ (*Nhà nước và nhân dân cùng làm*) was applied in which the State mobilized the People’s resources for improvement and upgrading projects. In these projects, the affected community members were only informed about the project and the community was only able to give an opinion. Their role in the decision making was limited.

As discussed in chapter 4, one of the crucial obstacles that hampered the community participation approach in urban upgrading projects was the approach of the ‘top-down’ administrative system which has been applied for a long time. Wit (2007) expressed that the concept of community participation in many projects in Vietnam was understood and implemented in the form of mobilizing people’s involvement in the activities of fitting people into the development plans which were already decided upon by higher government officials. In these projects, the level of depth of

community participation was at the informing level and sometimes it reached the consulting level when the affected community was consulted with project information but there was no feedback mechanism and therefore the government officials did not commit to the results of these discussions. Most of the project had regulated that the involved community only has the decision power on the issue of making a contribution to policy and contribution levels within the community for the project budget. The affected people were informed about project information and governmental approval decisions of the project before the financial contribution. It showed that although there is a 2007 Ordinance¹³ on Grassroots Democracy in which the legal foundation to attract people to participate in the planning, implementing and monitoring processes was formed, the legal regulation and policy for encouraging people to actively participate in a project especially within their neighborhood was not strong enough. The question is, whether there is a reluctance of the local government to transfer some powers to the grassroots people or whether the people need to be changed to become more involved in the neighborhood projects. It is because the grassroots people are not yet well-organized to demand to be included in the participation (Fritzen, 2006), the provision of the project information and people's rights are inadequate and previous people's experiences are of a non participatory nature (Pairaudeau, 2000).

Richardson (2003) stated that most of the community based projects in Vietnam have not been initiated by the community themselves and many of these have been developed and run with the financial support or assistance from external sources. It also shows in the cases of the four cities that have been discussed in this dissertation. As mentioned above, the 'top-down' system had been applied in Vietnam for a long time. Fritzen (2000) also expressed that the 'top-down' approach and its effects had created a passive and dependent community. Although there is a policy on Grassroots Democracy which was the foundation for the participation of the community, the changes are very slow. It is because of the impediments from two sides namely the government and the community. The affected community is not used to 'participate' in the project as they were accustomed to have the local government or other

¹³ According to the legal documents system in Vietnam, Ordinance is a sub-law document. It was issued by the Standing Committee of the National Assembly. In the Vietnamese context, the ordinance was enacted for the purpose of adjusting basic social relations, which are important and new but not stable. These relations have no practical experience and no conditions to be adjusted by law or they do not have enough required conditions to be adjusted by law. Its field of adjustment is narrower than the laws'. (Hoang Van Tu (2005) *Position, role of laws and ordinances in Vietnam legal system*, State and Law Journal, Vol. 3/2005, pp 36 -43)

stakeholders take care of the project. They may not even know or understand about the project and thus, they accept the project unless it adversely affects their interests. Duong (2010) stated that almost all of the community participation projects have been carried out based on the ideas of project implementers or local authorities. These effects are rooted from the 'top-down' approach. It also makes the administrators reluctant to share the information and the decision making power. Fritzen (2000) also affirmed that it leads to corruption when the local leaders create a 'gray area' or non-transparent system of resource allocation as well as decision criteria. Therefore, a transparent process can prevent the concealment of project information and deliver the correct information to the community. In order to implement this process, the most important issue is changes in local government leaders. The applied Public Administration Reform (PAR)¹⁴ in Vietnam also effected changes of the government leaders as one of its tasks was applying clear and transparent administrative processes to fight against corruption.

As part of the sequence of applied PAR in Vietnam, the decentralization process has been applied in many cities and provinces. In this process, the National Master Program of Administrative Reform has been set up and implemented to solve the two problems in Vietnamese decentralization: (1) the resistance of powerful bureaucratic stakeholders to transferring control to the grassroots and (2) widening of capacity gaps between local governments especially at district and commune levels where officials have a lower required level of education and possess insufficient skills and inadequate financial resources to enforce the devolution power (Fritzen 2006). The implementation of this Master Program also required leading officials at various administrative levels to periodically and directly meet, talk with and solve the problems proposed by the people following the grassroots democracy regulations. It led to the changes of government leaders' attitude towards the community participation approach in urban projects. There were also many international sponsored projects in Vietnam which required community participation which was a prerequisite for the funding. These factors created an advantageous condition for community participation in Vietnam.

¹⁴ Public Administration Reform (PAR) in Vietnam is a political strategy by the ruling Vietnamese Communist party and state officials with the aim of institutionalizing and legitimizing the transition to the 'socialist-oriented market economy' through seeking to implement a 'rule by law' within a centralized framework and creating a dependable system of rule bound public administration (Painter 2003)

In summarizing, there are opposite factors against and in favor of participation in Vietnam. Against participation factors include the ‘top-down’ system in Vietnam, the custom of the affected community having the local government or implementers take care of the project, a non-transparent system of resource allocation as well as decision criteria due to corruption. The in favor of participation factors for community participation include changes of local government leaders following the PAR in Vietnam that fight against corruption, the transferring control and power to the grassroots in the National Master Program of Administrative Reform, a requirement of a clear and transparent system to provide correct information to the community and a prerequisite of community participation for funding from international sponsors. These interplay factors have created the conditions for some of the dynamics regarding community participation that this dissertation has investigated.

b. Characteristics of community participation in upgrading projects of infrastructure and housing

The PAR has been applied in Vietnam and it is officially perceived as one of the core elements of ‘*Đổi mới*’¹⁵ (Painter, 2005). It created policy changes in Vietnam and the issuance of the 2007 Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy was one of the key indicators showing its orientations. It guarantees the grassroots people’s rights to be informed, to be able to give opinions, to be able to make decisions to some extent and monitor the implementation of plans and projects. Although there have been many community participation projects which have been implemented in Vietnam, there has been no official research on community participation in urban upgrading projects in housing and infrastructure. This research focuses on community participation in urban housing and infrastructure upgrading projects in four cities of Vietnam as these projects directly affected the neighborhood community living conditions and community participation in upgrading projects have increasingly received much attention by the government and community members.

The urban upgrading projects with community participation with four cases in four cities in this research were carried out in the context of the PAR in Vietnam. The selection of the cities for this research was initially based on the results of The Viet

¹⁵ ‘*Đổi mới*’ is the name given to the economic reforms initiated in Vietnam in 1986 with the goal of creating a “socialist oriented market economy”, where the State plays a decisive role in the economy but private enterprises and cooperatives play a significant role in commodity production.

Nam Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI)¹⁶. These 4 selected cities were from four different provinces that were in the best performing groups¹⁷ on the dimension of community participation according to the 2012 PAPI results. The four cases of upgrading projects on urban development in four cities of Vinh, Viet Tri, Nam Dinh and Can Tho have a similarity in the initial stage. All four projects were not initiated by the community themselves. The ideas for the upgrading projects came from the city government with funding support from NGOs. However, these projects involved the affected community members from the very early preparation stages and throughout all of the stages of the project.

Inspired by Dahl's "precondition for a polyarchy", Berry et al., (1993, 55) formulated two dimensions of participation that are important for a system of strong participation. These are the width and depth of participation, which together determine the strength of participation. The community participation in the UPIH in the four selected cities of Vietnam had some similar characteristics in the width and depth of participation as follows.

❖ **Width of participation**

The width of participation in all four projects in all four cases was at a very high level due to the policy for community involvement in these projects from the municipal governments. Because of the Vietnamese culture characteristics, the family (or household) is the basic unit for all community activities. Quang et.al (2002) stated that high power distance characteristic can be seen regularly in the daily life of the Vietnamese people from family to organizations. In the family (or household), the children have to obey their parents' orders. The personal opinions and ideas relating to the house or living environment upgrading have always been discussed and agreed within the family before being presented to the community. Therefore, the community participation activities which have been implemented in Vietnam are normally based on the involvement of a number of families (or households). Another characteristic of Vietnamese culture is that a normal family (or household) in Vietnam is comprised of

¹⁶ The PAPI is a joint collaboration between the Centre for Community Support Development Studies (CECODES) under the Viet Nam Union of Science and Technology Associations (VUSTA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Viet Nam since 2009. The philosophy behind PAPI's innovative policy monitoring approach is that citizens are seen as "end-users of public administrative services" capable of assessing governance and public administration in their localities. The PAPI results are grounded in the everyday experiences of 13,642 citizens, who were selected randomly in order to provide a representative sample of the different demographic groups across the country

¹⁷ In each dimension, provinces are broken into 4 groups: best performing (75th percentile), high average (from 50th to 75th), low average (from 25th to 50th) and poor performing group (25th percentile)

two generations. Many households have three generations of one family (household) under one roof and thus, there is a variety of ages, education levels and occupations in each family. The more families (households) that are involved in the project, the wider the participation is. In these projects, by analyzing that they would receive more benefits by being involved in the project, most of the family discussed and agreed to participate in the project. The benefits gained from the projects in other households who had participated, such as the chance to have a land use right certificate and improvements made to the house with better living conditions inspired other households to join the process. It increased the level of the width of participation.

In the four projects, using direct and indirect communication channels, especially through community leaders and mass organization such as the Women's Union and the Fatherland Front, almost all households received project information. Their involvement was based upon their own decision but most of the households participated as they understood that the upgrading project had direct effects on their living conditions and that their participation would guarantee benefits from the project. The information from the local government especially clear and transparent communication and the financial guarantees encouraged people to participate. The issue that brought a high level of participation in these projects was the requirement of 100% consensus among the affected community for the project implementation. The policy that was issued by the local government was aimed to satisfy and support the neighborhood community in the implementation, maintenance and using phases of the project. Because all four projects were fully or partially based on a financial contribution from the affected community, most of the affected households participated in the project in order to give their opinions on their personal funded project. These projects in all four cases were the fields of housing and tertiary¹⁸ infrastructure, hence, it has strongly affected each household. As a consequence, most of the affected households actively participated in the project when there were clear regulations and policies regarding supporting the community participation from the local government. The analysis from the four cases revealed the following factors which made the width of participation reach such a high level:

¹⁸ Infrastructure system in Vietnam has been classified in 3 levels: (1) Main system to the region, (2) Connected and reconciled system within the urban areas and (3) Distribution system to each households. Tertiary infrastructure is part of the level 3 system.

- The upgrading project strongly affected people's living conditions
- Clear and transparent information of the project was transferred to the community
- Affected community members understood that their interests would be guaranteed if they actively participated in the project
- Local government actual supported the community participation with regulation, policy and actual activities

Moreover, the participation in these projects included many types of stakeholders. The international and national NGOs such as the World Bank (WB), Association of Cities in Vietnam (ACVN), Asian Coalition for Community Action (ACCA) and SELAVIP¹⁹ actively participated in the roles of technical and management advisors. The Vietnamese mass organizations such as the Women's Union, Fatherland Front, Youth Union, and Veteran Association participated as supporting actors in the conveying of information. The technical staff of related departments from the local government participated in the project, not in the role of administrative staff but in the role of technical and legal advisors for the affected community members within the community meetings. All of these factors helped to achieve a very high level of participation in these projects in the four cities cases.

❖ **Depth of participation**

In these four cases, the depth of participation was at a high level in Vinh, Can Tho and Nam Dinh city and a very high level in Viet Tri city. In the Viet Tri case, although the project was not initiated by the community, the affected community had been involved in the project from the very early stages of preparation. In this case, the local government leaders in the municipal People's Committee left the development and decision making of selecting proposals including the projects financial policy issues to the affected community, and the staff from the technical departments within the local government acted in advisory roles. The local government leaders accepted the communities' selection and administratively approved it. The implementation, maintenance and monitoring were implemented at all stages by the community members. It is considered as 'co-decide' in Edelenbos' participation scale (Edelenbos,

¹⁹ SELAVIP is an international private foundation that supports housing projects for very poor families

2000). In the other three cases, the affected community were also involved in all stages of the project. In these projects, the affected community together with the local government, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and consultants searched for appropriate solutions regarding the upgrading activities. The needs and desires of the affected community were the most important factors to be considered in preparing options. The requirements from local government were also taken into critical consideration when discussing the options. The city government was committed to the solutions selected by both the affected community and the local authorities. The local government leaders accept and legally approve it. It is considered as 'co-produce' in Edelenbos' participation scale (Edelenbos, 2000).

In all four projects, the process which attracted the most interest to the affected people was the preparation of the spatial detail plan for their neighborhood. Learning from experiences from other un-implemented 'top-down' prepared spatial detail plans, the local government leaders only provided the framework for the spatial detail plan preparation following the current legal documents. In the process, local government leaders and project management units agreed that the affected community played a central role and cooperated with the related department staff in the municipal government. The consultants and NGOs provided the technical and managerial support. In some cases, the local government had been convinced by the community to adjust the 'very strict' regulations on spatial planning to make it suitable for the local conditions of development. The local government leaders were convinced by the results of the co-production in preparing spatial detail planning between the affected community and the related department staff of the municipal government. It can be seen in these projects that the depth of participation reached a high level due to:

- Affected community had been provided with the project information and there was an encouraging participation policy from the local government at the very early stages of the project so they knew their power in the participation process
- The local policy supported community participation and thus made a close cooperation between the affected community and the local authorities
- Affected community, community leaders and local authorities closely cooperated in providing information regarding the needs and desires and discussed the solutions.

- Local government created a condition for the affected community in the project whereby they were the central actors, in which the community had the power to decide whether the project would be implemented or not, and the government was committed to that decision

It is clear from the analysis of the four cases that due to all of these factors the projects had a very high level of participation and in all of the four cities cases most of these factors come from the support of local government capacity in the community participation approach.

c. Local government capacity and its relation to the community participation in four cases

As discussed in chapter 2, the concept of local government capacity is a meaningful one (Gargan, 1981; Foster-Fishman et al, 2001) as it relates to the emergent combination of attributes that enables a governance system to work (Morgan, 2006). According to Ingraham et al (2003) and Bowman and Kearney (2012) the government capacity refers to the government's ability to control, develop and direct its physical, financial, information and human resource and the ability to respond effectively to change, make decisions efficiently and manage conflicts. Inspired from the research of Burgess (1975) and Gargan (1981), local government capacity can be determined by capability in three general areas: Policy management, resource management and program management. Synthesizing scholars' concepts of local government capacity, the concept of local government capacity in this dissertation has been defined by two key dimensions that were also focused upon by most of the authors namely: Resources management and administration management (cf. Burgess, 1975; Gargan, 1981; Foster-Fishman et al., 2001). Resource management relates to the recruitment and selection of the right people to do the job, their roles and responsibilities and the mobilization and allocation of financial and informational resources to implement the work (Foster-Fishman et al., 2001) the communication and the learning orientation (Edelenbos, 2005). Administration management refers to the ability to set goals and priorities, structures and procedures and effective leadership (Foster-Fishman et al., 2001)

The local government capacity in the four selected cities will be presented in two groups of capacity aspects: Administration management and resource management

❖ Administration management

Effective leadership

In the four case study cities, the leader of the People's Committee at municipal level played a very important role. His/her active involvement in the project guaranteed coordination between the related government departments that supported participation activities. The effective leadership influenced the goal/priority settings and policies for community participation as in the case of Viet Tri. In the Nam Dinh and Can Tho cases, the effectiveness of the leadership was the result of the projects goals and objectives, in which the funding prerequisite for the project was community participation. In a complementary effect, the municipal local government leaders also issued a local supporting policy and regulations for community participation activities in the project. Their correct direction and vision regarding community participation had strong impacts on local policy, priority and goal settings for project implementation. This issue supports Mead's (1986) argument that the elements of government capacity must be dynamic and depends on a government leaders' choice about the appropriate change in the context of each local government. There are also many scholars who agreed and advocated that effective leadership improves the results of management (e.g., Moore, 1995; Rainey, 1997). The effectiveness of leadership had an influence on the communication of the project information and dealing with problems and stagnations that occurred in the implementation process like the cases of Viet Tri, Vinh, Can Tho and Nam Dinh. The effectiveness of the leadership also affected the financial resources aspect in community participation projects. This issue will be mentioned in the next sections.

Goals/priority settings and policy for community participation

The goals/priority settings and policies for community participation in the four cases also played important roles. The local regulations and policies to support community participation were positively influenced by effective leaders. Two projects out of four in these case studies had priority settings on community participation as a prerequisite for project funding and implementation. The other two projects had community participation as a main approach for the project. This direction showed changes in the local government leaders' attitude either due to the pressure of the funding organizations or by themselves towards a community driven approach. As a

consequence of this, the local government leaders issued many regulations and policies at a local level. These regulations, decisions and policies created favorable conditions for the community to participate, such as Guidelines and Regulations for community participation in the project of Viet Tri case or the Decision in Can Tho and Nam Dinh city which regulated the mechanism for supporting the affected neighborhood community in a participatory project. The policy of supporting community participation in urban upgrading projects influenced the width of participation and encouraged more people to be involved in the project. The community participation supporting policy also had impacts on the depth of participation as it paved the way for the community to act.

Administrative structure and procedures for community participation

The fact, all four cases in this research showed that although there were structures and procedures which were organized for community participation they only were applicable during the project implementation. The biggest problem was that the organized unit supporting the community participation in these projects had no administrative power, only the government had the power to mobilize and coordinate human resources, financial resources and information from departments under its control in its administrative hierarchy. In all four cases, the local government and community cooperated to organize a management unit for the community participation project such as the Project Management Unit (PMU) in Nam Dinh and Can Tho or the Community Development Fund (CDF) management board in Viet Tri and Vinh city. The leaders of these units were also the administrative leaders of the municipal People's Committee. These units played a key role in the system as the advisory unit for the municipal leaders in receiving opinions and feedback from the community to the government and vice versa. They also played a role as a guidance unit for community decisions and a coordination unit for the stakeholders' to help cooperation in the project. The local government leaders organized related department officials together with the project management staff to participate in the community meetings and help so that the affected community members acted and made decisions following legal regulations. Due to the effects of effective leaderships of the municipal leaders and priority settings and local policy changes in supporting community participation, there were changes in structure and procedures for community participation in these projects. Having no administrative power the management units for community

participation used an ‘indirect’ method to acquire administrative power through taking advantages of the PMU leader’s power and his/her legal administrative position in the People’s Committee to make the appropriate changes in the procedures to support the participation activities as well as to coordinate all administrative levels for the project. The leader of the management unit was also one of local government leaders. The management unit and its leaders did not have administrative powers but the leaders of the management units were able to use his/her legal powers in the position of the People’s Committee and therefore he/she was able to coordinate the related departments under his/her administrative control to be of support in the participation process of the community. It worked well within the rigid ‘top-down’ administrative system in Vietnam but in order to change the whole structure, it needs time and, more importantly, more powerful legal regulations.

❖ **Resources management**

Communication and information exchange

Communication and information exchange played an important role in all four cases. The clear and dual communication channels in which the information was given from the government and the feedback was received from the affected community helped the people to express their needs and desires to the government. The dual communication system also helped them to discuss and negotiate with the local government. The communication channels used by both the local government officials and the affected community were formal procedures and informal communication channels. The informal channels include the direct and indirect contact through the mass organizations such as the Women’s Union, Veteran Association and project-volunteers. In the cases of Vinh, Viet Tri and Can Tho, the channel of communication through the mass organizations at the local level especially the Women’s Union and Fatherland Front were effective means of connecting the community. Using these channels, information and orientation from municipal government were transferred to the affected people and feedback from community was received and relayed to the PMU and the local governments. It was important to broadcast current up to date information regarding the project progress and receive the community members’ complaints. Moreover, in these projects, the dual communication channels were used

by the affected community to convince the city government to adjust the regulations and policies to achieve an effective implementation of the project.

It showed in the four cases that the dual, transparent communication channels helped the local government leaders to work effectively. The changes in leadership towards the effectiveness had initially affected the communication system. The leaders also needed a clear, transparent and dual channel of communication to produce effective work. The information exchange mechanism and communication with information provision and feedback in these four cases strongly influenced the width and depth of participation of the affected community. Using high-tech communication channels like the local government website and public media to receive the complaints and give updates regarding solving any problems helped to increase the width and depth of participation within the community. In these two cases, the local government and management unit took full advantage of Information Technology (IT) as one of the means of communication and receiving feedback from the local people. In the implementation of the PAR, the 'one-stop' shop model in administration was applied based on the advantages of a computer networking system and intranet.

The learning effects from communication were visible in case of Nam Dinh where the infrequent and one-way communication path caused complaints from the community and a serious delay in the 1st phase of project which was adjusted and changed into a transparent and dual communication method in the 2nd phase of the project. The improvement of communication channels the in 2nd phase of project in Nam Dinh as discussed in previous chapters solved the problems and stagnations in the 1st phase and brought satisfaction to the community. In the cases of Can Tho and Nam Dinh, the transparent and clear information exchange throughout every stage of the project from preparation, implementation and monitoring created a new value and social norm that encouraged more people to be actively involved in the project

Financial resources

Financial resource is always a vital issue for project implementation. All four projects in this research are similar in that they all received financial support from external organizations in addition to a financial contribution from the affected community themselves. The funding organizations always had the decision power and in these projects, the decision power had been shared in a co-production approach between the

local government and the affected community members. This approach will be further discussed in the next section.

In all four cases, the majority of the financial resources were based on a loan scheme. However, having guaranteed additional financial resources encouraged the community members to participate and contribute their own funds as they were assured that the project would be implemented and thus they would benefit when and if they were involved in it. Through clear and transparent communication, information about the project especially the financial issues had impacts on the affected community members decision to participate in the project.

As described and discussed in previous chapters, in the cases of Vinh and Viet Tri, the financial resource came from the community savings to pay back a low interest loan which was provided by the international organization and in the cases of Can Tho and Nam Dinh, the financial resource came from community contribution together with a state owned budget and a loan from the World Bank. The communities financial contribution aspect also influenced the depth of participation as the affected people who contributed to the projects had more responsibilities regarding their decisions within the project process compared to other projects that do not have the people's financial contribution.

In all four cases, the community had the power to make decisions on how to implement the project based on that fund. There were slight differences between these cases as the community in Vinh and Viet Tri had full power to select the upgrading options but in Nam Dinh and Can Tho, the community cooperated with the local government to make decisions on the selection of tertiary infrastructure upgrading options based on that fund. In the four cases of Vinh, Viet Tri, Nam Dinh and Can Tho, community participation did not use any of the project budget for the neighborhood meetings and consultations. These meetings were not costly as the neighborhood community members volunteered to participate when they understood that they were involved for their own interest. It has been clearly shown that the aspect of financial resource strongly affected the width of participation and the depth of participation.

Human resources

The human resources that were used to support community participation in all four cases were at an adequate level. There were no official training courses in the field of community participation for local government staff in these cities. Municipal leaders and department staff gained knowledge in this field through seminars, experience exchange tours to other cities in Vietnam and abroad and especially through “learning by doing” activities within the local projects.

Despite the fact that there was not enough officially trained staff with community participation skills in the local government, except in Vinh city, there were many advocates in the community who had knowledge and experience in this area. They were willing to exchange and share experiences with the community but the only problem was that there was no network for such effective resource.

Other human resources that were exploited for the community participation projects in these cases, were the well-trained staff and experts from national and international NGOs such as the World Bank, ACCA, SELAVIP, ACVN and the volunteers. They played advisory and trainers roles for the community members as well as the government leaders. These resources really helped to strengthen capacity for all stakeholders including municipal leaders in the People’s Committee, community leaders and members and technical staff from relevant city departments.

The practical evidence from the four cases emphasizes Gargan’s argument (1981: 651-652) that “local government capacity should not be viewed exclusively from a management perspective ..., a local government is its ability to do what it wants to do”. According to Gargan, local government capacity is a function of the interaction, which includes the resources which are available to solve problems that are faced by the specific local government. Mead (1996) mentioned that the level of management capacity is a key element of success in governance. Andrews and Boyne (2010), Honadle (1981) Burgess (1975) expressed that each element of government capacity such as financial resources, human resources, information technology, policy, program and leadership has an important part to play to reach a high performance of the outcomes. Many scholars mention the importance of elements of government capacity in the performance of the outcomes, like Hou (2007) arguments regarding financial issues, Selden and Jacobson (2007) arguments on human resources, Ling (2002) ideas on strong Information Technology and Bryman (1992) and Shackleton (1995) mention

good leadership. Yet, there has been no empirical research regarding the combined effects of local government capacity elements on the outcomes of the community participation projects. The analysis of local government capacity in these four cases has opened a ‘black box’ of important factors of local government capacity and it has showed that government capacity is an important variable and its elements interact with each other. The influence of local government capacity elements with community participation will be presented in the results of project outcomes of the four cases in next section.

d. Outcomes of the projects in four cases

The UPIH in four selected cities had been implemented successfully and most of the end users were satisfied with the project outcomes. In order to make it more clear, the characteristics of the outcomes of the UPIH in the four cases will be presented addressing two areas namely; content outcomes and process outcomes.

❖ Content outcomes

Innovation factor

The community participation concept is not new in Vietnam. However, the idea of community participation was widely understood by many administrative government officials as fitting the community’s resources (human and financial resources) into the government approved plans and activities. Although there was not enough information from the Nam Dinh city case, the innovation content regarding the outcomes of these projects in the three other cases can be seen in the two areas of new agreements and new detailed planning. They were prepared and implemented by the affected community and were accepted and committed to by the local government.

- New agreements

The agreements especially on financial issues had been prepared by the affected neighborhood community members, which allowed the households to upgrade their own house with a small amount from their own savings every month. It created a revolving fund within the neighborhood community with community decided regulations about interest rates, the minimum amount of contribution and paying back progress. In the project of housing and infrastructure upgrading, the regulations on the contribution rate that was prepared by the community as discussed in previous

chapters brought a complete new and effective solution to solve the problem of a lack of budget for improvement activities.

- **New detailed planning**

In Vietnam, detailed planning was prepared by professional institutions following the local government idea in a 'top down' approach. In these four cases, the local government created a framework for the community to prepare their own detailed plan with the support from staff from the city department relating to urban planning. They were provided with spatial planning standards and regulations and with the support of technical staff, the community members were able to prepare detailed plans for their neighborhood based on their personal desires and needs. This was a completely new detailed plan which was totally different from the ordinary and contemporary plan which had been prepared by the government. The new plan was implemented with no occurrences of forced eviction and relocation. Moreover, in the case of Can Tho city, after the new detailed plan was prepared by the community and was implemented, it became the basis for the new detailed plan of the city in the form of the 'pre-approved' part. This result is practically very new in Vietnamese urban planning. It can be considered that the community participation results managed to change the planning regulation. Other cases in Vinh and Viet Tri, from discussions with the affected community members regarding the preparation stage of the detailed plan for the neighborhood, the municipal government sent requests to the provincial government and convinced them to change their rigid standards in planning regulations for the whole province, so this facilitated two of the two provinces where the projects were being carried out. The new planning regulations and standards were approved and it contains completely new content within the participation processes.

Effective solution

In all four cases of this research, the solutions that were prepared by both the affected communities and the local government had been implemented. The solutions actually solved the problems within these neighborhoods and improved the living conditions of the community members. The implemented solution were both effective and durable as it met the community desires and needs and, in addition, it solved the neighborhoods problems of lacking a detailed plan and having an unimplemented detailed plan.

The effectiveness and robustness of the solutions were presented in the successful implementation of the joint government community prepared detailed plan, in which a 100% consensus from the community about the plan had been reached before it was approved and implemented. This solution avoided any forced relocations whereas in the other ‘top-down’ planning projects, this situation causes much trouble for both households and the local government. Therefore, the solutions in these project were at the very high level of effectiveness.

❖ **Process outcomes**

Support

As mentioned above, the effective solutions in these projects reached a very high level. Thus, it brought a high level of satisfaction to the stakeholders. The high level of satisfaction and support from the stakeholders did not only come from the outcomes of the project but also from other aspects of the project such as dual, clear and transparent of communication, community supporting policy and priority, a financial resource guarantee and due to effective leaderships from the municipal leaders.

The high levels of satisfaction and support from actors showed in the numbers of community meetings as well as the high proportion of community members who participated in these meetings. With the support from the local government staff, experts from NGOs and CSOs, the community members were confident in their abilities to solve their problems based on their needs and desires rather than relying on externals. In the cases of Can Tho and Nam Dinh, the satisfaction of the community would have reached a higher level if community were able to monitor the project expenses as unfortunately there were no specific regulations on this issue. Some households among the affected community who contributed to the project queried this issue.

Progress of action for prevention of stagnation and conflict

The stagnation in the upgrading projects in these four cases was mainly caused by the rigid regulations related to planning issues. The planning regulations were legally binding, thus the community prepared detailed plan had to follow certain regulations. Some of the regulations such as the requirement of a minimum size for each land plot or the minimum width of the neighborhood alleys caused problems for the community

in preparing the adjusted detailed plan because it needed a relocation area or required a large part from various household's land plot to be contributed. In order to reach a community consensus of 100% for the project to be implemented, the jointly prepared solution by both the municipal staff and the community needed to be approved of by the provincial government. With support from the local government at district and ward level, this option was submitted to the provincial level government and they agreed to the changes as this solution helped to fulfill the people's needs and followed the projects principle. The effective leadership and flexibility of the provincial government to agree to adjust the policy helped to solve the stagnation. Normally, in the implementation of a top down detailed plan, there was always conflict between the affected community and the government especially in forced relocation situations. In these four cases, the detailed plan was prepared by both the community and the local government through discussions, negotiations and meetings. Therefore, all conflicts regarding the planning issues had been solved before the final selection of the option for approval.

Another stagnation in upgrading projects is often caused by the lack of budget for the implementation of a project. However, in all four examples this stagnation was prevented and solved due to a government comprehensive solution which included arranging financial resources from the provincial budget, and providing a policy that encouraged the community members to spend their own money on their own properties which were guaranteed by the government. The flexibility of policy direction and the effective leadership at both provincial and district levels helped to minimize the conflicts and helped the project be implemented effectively.

10.3 Relationship of community participation and the outcomes with precondition of local government capacity

The relationship between community participation and the outcomes of the UPIH in four cities cases have been discussed in the previous chapters. The analysis showed that these projects have outcomes that have a high level in both the content and process aspects. These results were rooted in the support of local government capacity in the community participation activities and simultaneously, local government capacity aspects interacted with each other to support the community participation.

The four cases reflect the fact that using a community participation approach in the context of countries like Vietnam has its own characteristics and that a community participation approach does not necessarily need to be initiated by the community. The key for success of this approach in Vietnam is that the affected community was given enough information regarding the project through a clear and transparent communication system in which they were also able to send and receive feedback. Moreover, the community was given a decisive role in the discussions and negotiations with the local government and the other stakeholders about the project options. Finally, in this approach, the local government supported the community in participating and cooperating with the affected community and was committed to the final decisions that were made by both the government and the community. This co-production orientation of a community participation approach will be discussed further in the next sections.

The relationship between community participation, local government capacity and the outcomes of the UPIH in the four cases had been performed in two major transcending patterns as seen in *These two* patterns including the empirical evidence have given the answer to the main research question of this research that the good outcomes of the UPIH project in cities of Vietnam require a high level of community participation and collaboration with the fundamental support of local government capacity. This answer emphasizes the arguments of Cuthill and Fien (2005) that the community needs support from the local government to be able to participate effectively. It also elaborates the findings of Finsterbusch and Van Winckin (1989), Wade (1987), Khwaja (2001), Kats and Sara (1997) and Isham and Kähkönen (1999) that projects with participatory elements increase the overall effectiveness and sustainability of the projects. It also showed that the affected community members actually support the project activities more if they actively participate and cooperate with the local government as a counterpart and are actively involved in the development process. In the four cases, it showed that participation can only work at a high level if the affected community members are involved co-productively at all stages of the process including the commencement of the project, setting the priorities and goals, following the community members needs and demands, preparing and designing the project, selecting solutions, contributing resources and implementing and monitoring the projects. The high level of the width and depth of participation are the fundamental

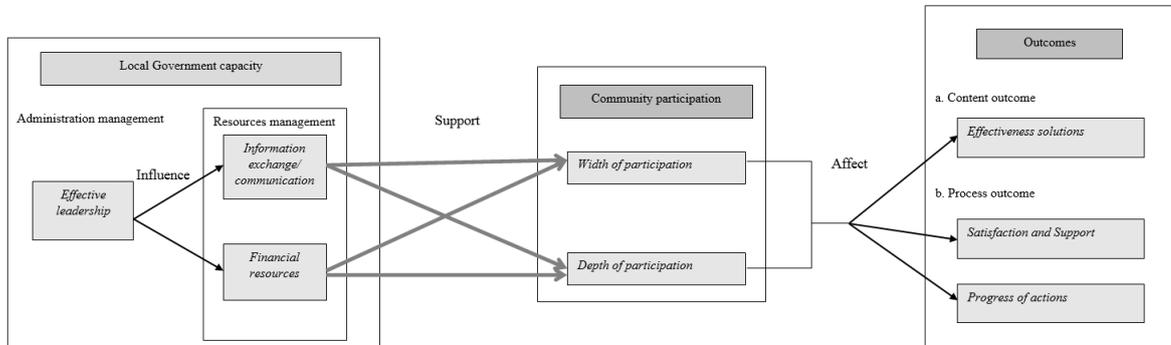
factors for a high level of effective solutions of the project, a high level of satisfaction and support from stakeholders and a high level of progress of action for the prevention of stagnations and conflicts.

Figure 50. These transcending patterns of community participation in infrastructure and housing upgrading projects shows the dominant routes that revealed the relationships between three variables that occurred and recurred in all four cases. The route of relationship which occurs and recurs in four out of four cases will be considered as a very strong pattern. If it occurs in two out of four cases, it will be considered as a moderate pattern.

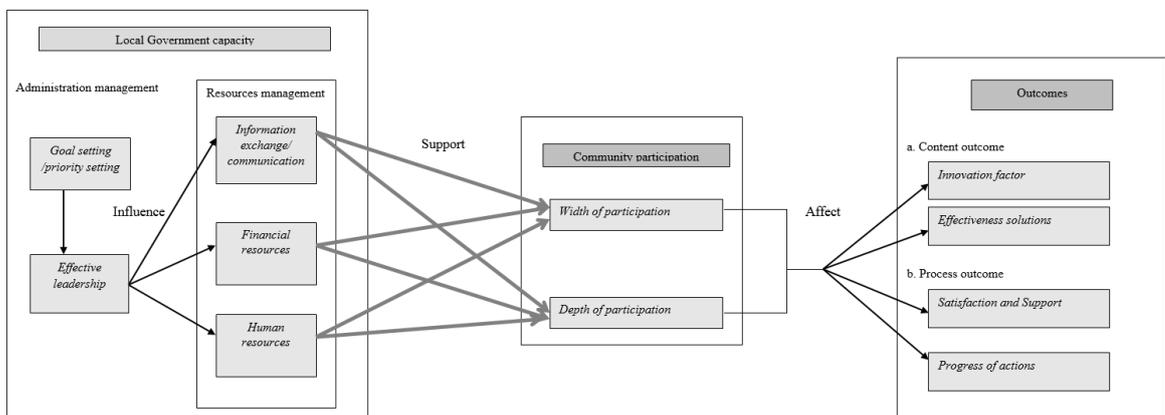
These two patterns including the empirical evidence have given the answer to the main research question of this research that the good outcomes of the UPIH project in cities of Vietnam require a high level of community participation and collaboration with the fundamental support of local government capacity. This answer emphasizes the arguments of Cuthill and Fien (2005) that the community needs support from the local government to be able to participate effectively. It also elaborates the findings of Finsterbusch and Van Winckin (1989), Wade (1987), Khwaja (2001), Kats and Sara (1997) and Isham and Kähkönen (1999) that projects with participatory elements increase the overall effectiveness and sustainability of the projects. It also showed that the affected community members actually support the project activities more if they actively participate and cooperate with the local government as a counterpart and are actively involved in the development process. In the four cases, it showed that participation can only work at a high level if the affected community members are involved co-productively at all stages of the process including the commencement of the project, setting the priorities and goals, following the community members needs and demands, preparing and designing the project, selecting solutions, contributing resources and implementing and monitoring the projects. The high level of the width and depth of participation are the fundamental factors for a high level of effective solutions of the project, a high level of satisfaction and support from stakeholders and a high level of progress of action for the prevention of stagnations and conflicts.

Figure 50: Two transcending patterns of community participation in upgrading projects in all four cases in Vietnam

1. The very strong pattern of community participation in upgrading projects



2. The moderate pattern of community participation in upgrading projects



In Vietnam, most of the community based projects have not been initiated by the community themselves, thus community participation requires support from the local government for its activities.

It has been shown that the support of local government institutions in the participation process is not only to provide supporting policies but also to be involved in the actual activities. It commences with effective leadership producing appropriate strategies and coordination. The local government institutions have to work with the affected community during meetings and through direct and in-direct communication channels on the basis of a clear and transparent manner. The local government and the community have to be partners in a co-production process for problem solving. As Lowndes and Skelcher (1998, p. 314) mentioned in many countries, local authorities have been active in establishing collaborative relationships with voluntary

organizations and community associations in the fields of urban and rural regeneration. By involving the community in the decision making processes, the local government has been augmented with the needed information and other input and concurrently needs to reduce any conflicts within the community during the implementation process. This is one of the important factors that gives the actors' satisfaction and supports the project outcomes.

There are two aspects of local government capacity that are influenced by effective leadership and have strong effects on the width and depth of participation, namely the communication/information exchange and financial resources. These two aspects are crucial in the decision of whether the community members will participate in a project. Clear and transparent communication with a good feedback mechanism will encourage more people to participate and it creates conditions for people to enhance their involvement in the decision making process. Guaranteed financial resources especially with community contributions will encourage more people to be involved and bring more power to the people in the decision making processes.

This analysis has enabled the researcher to identify the linkage between the community and the local government in a co-production way in which the local government capacity supports community participation to produce good outcomes of the project. These findings lead to recommendations for other projects in Vietnam following such participation approaches.

10.4 Research contributions and recommendations for practical projects in Vietnam

a. Research contributions

As analyzed in the previous sections, this research has underlined arguments from many scholars that the community needs support from the local government to be able to participate effectively and projects with a community participation factor increases the robustness and effectiveness of such projects. The four cases in Vietnam have shown that *The community participation and outcomes of urban housing and infrastructure upgrading projects are positively related with support from local government capacity.*

In a country like Vietnam, the effectiveness of leadership is one of the most important factors that affect the successfulness of the implemented project. The proper match between effective leaders and management styles will influence the successful level of a project. According to Schleh (1977: 10), management style is “The adhesive that binds diverse operations and functions together. It is the philosophy or set of principles by which you capitalize on the abilities of your people. It is not a procedure on ‘how to do,’ but is the management framework for doing. A management style is a way of life operating throughout the organization”. Khandwalla (1995b: 48) defined management style as the distinctive way in which the leader of an organization makes decisions and discharges various functions, including goal settings, formulation and implementation of a strategy, all basic management activities and dealing with key stakeholders. Quang et al (2002) argued that management styles are profoundly influenced by the social cultures in which organizations operate and that reflects the values and norms of a culture. In Hofstede’s terms (1980), the Vietnamese culture can be described as high power distance, high collectivism and high context (Swierczek, 1994, Quang, 1997; Ralston et al., 1999). Quang et al (2002) stated that high power distance characteristics can be seen regularly in the daily life of the Vietnamese from family to organizations. In the family, children have to obey their parents’ orders. In organizations, there is a clear junior-superior relationship. Collectivism is characterized by close social frameworks and self- functioning communities. Under the influence of this culture, the leadership that brought positive effects is very important for the community activities.

The cases of the four cities had a common issue of receiving assistance in the form of external support from international donors and government. According to Thuy (2005), in many cases in Vietnam, when the support budget is no longer available, the project ceases to function. The situation in all four cases discussed in this dissertation showed the contrary as these projects still worked well even when the external support budget ends. In many projects with external financial support, the beneficiaries just receive the support without any contribution. The approach in the four cases was different as the financial support was not for free. It required people to contribute together with a budget from the state producing a win-win situation as in Nam Dinh and Can Tho. Support could be provided in the form of a loan that needs to be paid back like in the Vinh and Viet Tri cases. These approaches made people more responsible in their decisions that were suitable taking into account the ability to pay.

Moreover, when contributing to the project, people were more responsible with the monitoring and maintenance of the work after it had been implemented. In the community meetings, the word of mouth pressure from the other community members also encouraged any reluctant members to participate in the project. In these cases, even low-income neighborhood members also actively participated and contributed money to the projects due to clear policies and transparent communication. Which is contrary to Irvin and Stansbury's (2004) statement that the disadvantage of community participation is that it is costly and it contains a smaller budget to be able to implement the actual project. Effective leadership, clear policy and transparent communication can create a good basis for community contribution in the implementation of a budget.

Fritzen (2000) concluded that one of the problems of the participation processes in Vietnam is the lack of information. Corruption leads to hiding information and vice versa. The administrators are reluctant to share information. This raised suspicion among community members with regard to the local government's willingness to take action to upgrade the neighborhood living environment. Therefore, people were not interested in taking part in the participation process. It can be seen in the 1st phase of the project in Nam Dinh when the information of the project was disseminated to the affected people only once and many households did not agree with the approved plan which had been developed by the government using a top down approach. Dual channels of communication and transparent project information which took place in the four cases in this dissertation have encouraged the participation process. The lessons learned in the 1st phase of the project in Nam Dinh resulted in changes in the PMU and the municipal People's Committee leaders. The dual channels of communication were established with frequent transfer of project information to the affected community members by various means of communication. It showed how to encourage people to participate at all stages of the project. The situation in the other three cases confirmed that the information exchange mechanism strongly influenced the width and depth of participation and clear and transparent communication led to conflict prevention and a high level of satisfaction from the actors. As analyzed in the previous sections, the effective and transparent information communication resulted from the effectiveness of leadership and clear goals and priority policies to support community participation.

The findings in this research have implications that the participation of the community in these projects if it is supported by the government actors results in good outcomes. Government actors who are actively involved and support and participate in community gatherings, are able to change the local policies and regulations, provide clear and transparent information, capacity and knowledge and encourage community participation will result in good outcomes for a project.

In many developing countries, the community participation approach has been mentioned in the scholarly debate with the concepts of 'self-help' or 'self-organizing' community in which the community members can achieve the outcomes by themselves with their own ideas, resources, service delivery, maintenance and monitoring. Self organization, according to Klijn and Snellen (2009) and Boons et al. (2009), refers to the limits imposed on the steering capacity of a single actor by the autonomy of other actors and their ability to behave and organize as they choose. In the urban housing and infrastructure upgrading projects, the improvement activities relate to many urban setting policies and regulations in spatial, social economic fields because it relates to the detailed planning. Therefore, the self-organizing in community participation approach will face difficulties in urban housing and infrastructure upgrading projects.

In developing countries, the foreign donors play important role in providing technical and financial assistance to the upgrading projects and many of them are community driven projects. They may also have influences on the leaders to make the directions and policies which have bias towards supporting community participation. But for long term, the most important issue is that the changes of attitude of both community and local government on how they can work in community driven projects.

As mentioned earlier, within the particular social, economic and political context of Vietnam where the 'top-down' approach is changing together with PAR, most of the community based projects have not been initiated by the community themselves but from the ideas of external organizations, project implementers or local authorities (Duong, 2010, Richardson, 2003). In Vietnam where government led planning approach is very strong with the 'top-down' approach, the community participation in these projects requires the interaction between the affected community and the local government. In this interaction, both the community and the local government work

together, contribute resources and achieve the outcomes. In this context, where the opportunities for self-organization of upgrading urban projects may be limited, community participation requires support from the local government for its activities, and in this way, a process of co-production took place. Local government actors and community members were actively involved in all stages of the project. The local government supported the community gatherings and provided information, resources, capacity and knowledge to bring the participation of the community to reach positive outcomes. According to Bovaird (2007), in recent years, policy making and management in urban issues is no longer seen as a purely top-down process but rather as a negotiation among many interacting stakeholders. He argues that users and other members of the community are playing a large role in shaping decisions and outcomes. The traditional conceptions of public service planning and management that were reserved for professionals and managers are now outdated and need to be revised.

Bovaird (2007: 846) suggested that the traditional public administration and service providers have to be more responsive to the needs of users and the community. In this approach, “the service users and their community can – and often should – be part of service planning and delivery”. In this way, co-production takes place. Parrado et al (2013: 86) mentioned that community members’ co-production of public services; “has become an important topic in the field of public administration, especially in light of the fiscal pressures currently facing many governments around the world”. There are many authors that have realized the potential of co-production from the late 1970s (Brudney and England, 1983; Lovelock and Young, 1979; Parks, et al., 1981; Percy, 1984; Sharp, 1980 ; Warren, et al., 1982; Whitaker, 1980; Zeleny, 1978). Co-production has been seen in many fields of urban development such as planning, designing, managing, delivering, monitoring and evaluation activities. Bovaird (2007: 847) provides his definition on co-production as; “the provision of services through regular, long-term relationships between professionalized service providers (in any sector) and service users or other members of the community, where all parties make substantial resource contributions.”

These case studies in my research have illustrated that the implementation of participatory processes required local government support to be able to reach the outcomes effectively. It showed in the cases that the local government developed a mutual relationship with the affected communities, in which the administration

officials and professionals trusted the decision of the neighborhood communities rather than dictating them using a top-down approach and the neighborhood community members trusted the advice and support from the administration officials and professionals. The four cases in Vietnam have shown that the local government culture has been gradually changing in accordance with the current development in many countries, following the argument of Bovaird and Loeffler (2013) that it has shifted from 'public services *for* the public' towards 'public services *by* the public'. These are the first instances of a phenomenon which is still in its early phases of shifting in Vietnam. These scholars also argued that this movement provided the improved outcomes as the involvement of users gave them a chance to influence the outcomes which were prioritized in the process. In literature, several scholars such as Brandsen and Pestoff (2006) Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff (2012) had also mentioned the active participation of community members enabling co-production. Pestoff (2004) and Vamstad (2004) mentioned 'co-production' as the organized involvement of citizens in the production process of their own welfare services. It is considered that an active community participation is one characteristic of co-production. However, I want to reserve the term of 'co-production' to describe the interaction between the local government and the affected community in the whole process. It is the mutual relationship between actors and partners. By involving the community in the decision making process, citizens and pressure groups can enrich the policy making process by providing knowledge, information and other forms of input that would otherwise be difficult for 'deskbound' policy makers and administrators to have at their disposal (Lopez Cerezo et al., 1996; Fischer, 2000; Enserink and Monnikhof, 2003). In this process, the local government had transferred some decision making power from the professionals to the community. Moreover, this situation formed the co-production between the community and the local government in the form of a community driven approach. In these four cases, following the types of co-production (Voorberg et al, 2015), the community members were involved in the project as the co-designers and co-implementers. The outcomes of the projects in the four cases emphasized that in co-production studies where objectives were mentioned, these co-productions were often related to efficiency and effectiveness. (Voorberg et al, 2015). It also re-confirms the argument from Voorberg et al, (2015) that if concrete outcomes of the studies are reported, they mostly refer to an increase in the effectiveness.

In addition, with this finding in the co-production relationship in these projects, the analysis of the projects in the four cases also expressed the relationship among aspects of local government capacity itself. Many scholars such as Foster-Fishman, et al (2001), Gargan (1981), and Burgess (1975) have mentioned and defined the aspects of local government capacity. They have argued that these aspects of local government capacity are important in the participatory projects. However, they did not draw lines of relationships among these aspects. The analysis of the four cases in this research showed that these aspects have interacted and influenced each other. As mentioned in the previous section, many scholars mentioned the importance of elements of government capacity to the performance of the outcomes like Hou (2007), Selden and Jacobson (2007), Ling (2002) Bryman (1992) and Shackleton (1995). The analysis of local government capacity in these four cases has opened the 'black-box' of important factors for local government capacity and showed that its important elements also interact with each other. There are the influence effects from aspects of the administrative management group to the aspects of the resources management group. The elements of administrative management group include effective leadership, goal/priority settings and policy and the administrative structure/procedures. The resources management group includes Financial resources, human resources and communication and information exchange. Inspired from the four cases analyzed, the most important element in the administrative management was the effective leadership whereas the most important elements in resources management were the communication and information exchange factors and financial resources. The mechanism starts from an effective leadership which is the ability to develop well-functioning internal and external relations (Foster-Fishman, et al., 2001). According to Andrews and Boyne (2010), effective leadership is associated with high performance. This aspect plays an important role and influences the other aspects such as communication and information exchange, financial and human resources. Edelenbos (2005) has emphasized the coordination between government and community in the participatory project needs communication and learning orientation to find out the right approach which is suitable in the context of participation. The evidence from the four (4) cases proved it to be clear and transparent communication with feedback for learning and adjustment which is essential for a successful participatory approach.

From all these findings in the community participation patterns, it is clear to see that there are three important aspects in the local government capacity that positively affect the level of community participation, namely the effective leadership, communication/information exchange and financial resources. The effective leaders from the local government are not only seen to control, plan and inspect the overall running of the office, but the leadership roles are to motivate and inspire other staff members and people, to foster positive attitudes at work, and to create a sense of contribution and importance with and among their employees (Hogan et al, 1994). The changes of leadership towards effectiveness follow the changes of a leaders' attitude towards a community participation approach, the improved, clear and transparent communication together with the guarantee of financial resources are recommended as solutions to raising the level of the width and depth of participation that ensure the effectiveness and satisfaction on the outcomes. The interaction and frequent communication, recurring meetings between local government and community must be undertaken to create a co-production process. In this process, the local government will fully support community participation, any stagnation and conflicts should have been avoided, prevented or solved.

From all the above analysis, the research has reached two important findings which are as follows:

- Local government capacity comprises of many elements that play an important role in supporting community participation and these elements interact with each other to influence the community participation.
- Co-production takes place when the community participation in urban upgrading projects needs the support from local government to improve the outcomes and this co-production between the local government and the community are often related to the efficiency, satisfaction and effectiveness of the project

From the analysis and findings, regarding the practical context in Vietnam, there are some recommendations and suggestions for community participation approach in Vietnam in order to reach effective and efficient outcomes.

b. Recommendations for practical projects in Vietnam

The existing situation of community participation in urban upgrading projects in Vietnam has showed that it needs the support from local government capacity for the good outcomes. However, regarding the practical context of Vietnam with the changes of public administration mechanism following the PAR, the analysis shows that the laws and policies supporting community participation are not strong enough. There is only the 2007 Ordinance on Grassroots Democracy which is the legal foundation to attract people to participate in the planning, implementing and monitoring processes. It is considered as a sub law document and its field of adjustment is narrower than the laws' (Tu, 2005). The national government is strongly supportive to the PAR and grassroots democratization through the Master Program of the PAR that mentions the implementation of a grassroots democracy regulation is one of the ways that the government can 'renovate' itself. But the issue is that there are no strong regulations regarding the mechanism and structure for local government to support the participation of the community members. Therefore, the management units for community participation of projects within the four cases have to use an indirect way to approach administrative power through taking advantage of the PMU leader's power in his/her legal administrative position in the People's Committee to make the changes in procedures to support the participation activities as well as to coordinate all administrative levels of the project. If there is a stronger regulation or a law that can regulate the mechanism and structure for community participation and especially is able to provides the affected community with more decisive power regarding issues related to their living neighborhood with a clear role of support from the local government, the pattern of community participation in this research can be applied in other projects. This helps to make the affected communities become the co-designers and co-implementers with the local government in a co-production process.

Changing a policy, law and administrative structure is a time consuming process. As analyzed in this thesis, the most important element in the administration management of the local government capacity is the effective leadership. In the context of Vietnam, where the administrative process is very 'top-down', the role of the local government leaders is very important in supporting community participation. Their changed attitude towards the co-production approach between the community and the government will lead to positive effects in supporting community participation and the improved outcomes. Hence, before the nationwide stronger policies and laws to

support community participation have been made, the local government leaders can use the co-production approach to gain effective and efficient outcomes of urban upgrading projects as well as community satisfaction. In addition, if at local level public participation shows beneficial effects then at national level the adoption of a supportive legal framework is more likely.

From the analysis of the four cases, it is suggested that the local government leaders should create the conditions for the affected communities to contribute their resources, skills and knowledge, to actively participate in all stages of the urban upgrading project together with the support from related local departments' staff members. The conditions are as follows:

- It is essential that the local government leaders support the community participation approach by issuing local policy/priority settings that provide decisive power to the affected community together with a financial contribution.
- Local government leaders coordinate local departments making community participation a priority.
- Communication and information exchange between the local government and the community should be carried out with a clear and transparent system which include feedback mechanisms.
- Regular meetings and consultations between the local government at province and district levels, consultants, related department staff should be organized during preparation, planning/ design and decision making and continue throughout the implementation process so that both the local government and the community share responsibilities for these activities.
- Training or provision of participation support should be organized and supplied by the local government in collaboration with professional agencies such as research institutes or NGOs.
- The implementation and maintenance should be in the hands of the local government and local neighborhood community members.

These conditions provide the basis for creating a feasible approach to implementing the community participation in urban upgrading projects that will also ensure long

term effectiveness and efficiency as well as gain the satisfaction from the community members. It is also noted that, when stronger policies and laws supporting the community participation have been issued and come into effect, this co-production model has been strongly supported and worked well.

10.5 Discussion and future research

Much attention has been given to community participation in relation to local government capacity within the literature (Cuthill, 2003b, 2001; Gaventa, 2001; Blaxter, 2003; Wallis and Dollery, 2002). This can be seen in local governance processes (Lowndes, Pratchett and Stoker, 2001; Cuthill, 2005). Others have observed it in urban regeneration and local service delivery processes (Foley and Martin, 2000). This research considered community participation in the process of designing, implementing and monitoring the housing and infrastructure improvement projects. Based on the literature, two characteristics of community participation have been distinguished: the width and the depth of participation. What this book has researched and focused on was the level of community participation and its relation to local government capacity for community participation through qualitative research.

Although the research has shown some interesting results, it also had some limitations. The research was carried out in only four cities in a single country (Vietnam) and within a specific area of urban housing and infrastructure upgrading. The number of projects that were researched in each city was only one project and it was impossible to interview all of the involved actors. It is believed that a relevant number of stakeholders and people who were involved in each project were interviewed. Therefore, one should be careful in generalizing the findings.

Despite these limitations, interesting insights from the research have been deduced. The important conclusion is that: community participation and outcomes of urban housing and infrastructure upgrading projects are positively related with the support from local government capacity. Cuthill and Fien (2005) argue that the community needs support from the local government to be able to participate effectively. On the other hand, government needs to develop new and fundamentally different ways of thinking and working for the effective collaboration in implementation of participatory processes. Finsterbusch and Van Wincklin (1989), Wade (1987), Khwaja (2001), Katz and Sara (1997), Isham and Kähkönen (1999) argued that projects with participatory

elements increase the effectiveness and robustness of the projects. This research underlines this. In all four cases, Vinh, Nam Dinh, Can Tho and Viet Tri provided evidence for this argument. However, other authors mention the relationship between community participation and local government capacity but they do not put a great deal of stress on the aspects that have important effects to this relationship. The research findings reveal the fact that there are some important aspects for the enhancement of the level of community participation. They are effective leadership, a secure financial resource aspect and transparent and effective communication/information exchange. Moreover, from the patterns of community participation in urban upgrading projects, it leads to the findings that participation needs to be greatly supported by government actors like in these four cases studies and in this way, a process of co-production between local government and the affected community is able to take place.

Community participation is closely related to social capital at community level. The concept of social capital has been approached from various viewpoints, depending on the field and the author. According to Putnam, social capital is defined as features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions (Putnam, 1993) or as features of social life (networks, norms and trust) that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives (Putnam, 1995). But these elements interact with each other, making social mechanisms work better. Without trust among its members, commonality cannot be built, and without participation, the common goal cannot be set up. Likewise, trust promotes participation, as the commonality feeds the common goal. Participation tends to strengthen networks among its members. In this context, social capital is geared to a circular causation process for economic, social and cultural development at all levels. In brief, social capital makes democracy work better (Putnam, 1993). This is why a very different result can depend on social capital even with the same investment of economic capital. In addition, social capital does work better at community level, where every member can identify who is who in daily life. Ritchey-Vance (1996) argues that forming social capital can be used to maintain the involvement of the community over time. Besides, Brown & Ashman (1996: 1477) show the role of social capital in supporting future problem solving. Brown & Ashman (1996) have found that the existence of social capital was positively

associated with the success of the projects. Other scholars have argued that the existence of social capital contributes to a project's effectiveness so that it is important to build social capital. Social capital is the condition for the community participation as it enables participants to act together more effectively and it influences both the width and depth of participation. Therefore, how this relationship occurs in urban upgrading projects in Vietnam needs to be further investigated. Thus, further research challenges lie in the examination of social capital with community participation of urban upgrading projects in Vietnam. Moreover, its influence on the co-production process also needs to be further investigated in the research.

Taking these conclusions into account, what should be on the agenda for possible future research? The first suggestion is to further extend this research to other grade-I²⁰ cities like Hai Phong, Da Nang, Quy Nhon, Hue and Da Lat in Vietnam. The results of a broader research can develop a more comprehensive picture of community participation in urban upgrading projects in Vietnam.

Secondly, following this study, research on co-production between the local government and the community in urban upgrading projects can be developed into a new approach for community participation in Vietnam. As stated above, most of the community based projects in Vietnam are government led projects with community involvement. The research on co-production in urban upgrading projects can develop into an approach with mutual interaction between the local government and the community at all phases of the project.

Thirdly, it is important to understand under what conditions of social capital, community participation and the co-production process can be linked to more effective and efficient outcomes. Vietnam is a country with a transition economy that has remarkably changed under the influence of globalization. As a consequence, communities have been considerably influenced in terms of changes in culture, income and lifestyle. Such changes have also contributed to a number of economic, social and cultural problems in many cities. Thus, the research findings presented in this book should be useful for future research on community participation and co-production that

²⁰ Cities in Vietnam are founded under the Decisions of the Prime Minister. There are four (4) types of cities in the classification: Special-grade city, grade-I, grade-II and grade-III city. The classification is based on the population size, the social-economic influence to the nation or region and level of infrastructure synchronization.

can be built upon, in the context of social capital variables and the changing aspects of economy, lifestyle and culture.

In conclusion, this research has added significant depth to the understanding of community participation in urban upgrading projects in Vietnam. Through the analysis, it has explored the patterns of community participation and potential solutions that are appropriate to a particular social context in Vietnam and which can be disseminated and replicated in other similar social conditions. This research has both enriched and developed the existing knowledge on community participation in Vietnam by adding new findings and relevant knowledge on the issue of community driven approach.

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Annex 1.

Interview questions in the fieldwork

No	Items	Questions
1.	<i>Community participation</i>	
	<i>Width of participation</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the types of participant participated in the project? 2. Are the relevant people involved in the project? 3. What are the grounds of community participated in the project? 4. To what extent the different participants (including citizens) are taken seriously? 5. What are the reasons for participants to participate in the project? What are the motivations? 6. To what extent the cooperation in the project is included in the job responsibilities of the participants?
	<i>Depth of participation</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the level of community involvement in the project? 2. To what extent in the project the community can make decision? 3. What are the types of support community received from government, NGOs or beyond government to reach that level of participation? 4. What is the level of discretion given to the participants?
	<i>Relationship between all parties</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do participants cooperate with the implementation process or do they counteract it? How is the process? 2. How are the various participants convinced of the usefulness of the measures? Do they support them? 3. To what extent the executors agree on the objectives? 4. How is the clarity concerning the range of duties and qualifications for executors? 5. How can the different participants cooperate sufficiently? 6. How can the cooperation structure in project be described? 7. Are there any irreconcilable conflicting interests? How can parties resolve it? 8. How are the relations between the different participants practicable?

No	Items	Questions
2.	<i>Local Government capacity settings</i>	
a.	Resources management	
	<i>Financial resources</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can they mobilize the financial resources? 2. What is the way to allocate the financial resources? 3. Is there sufficient financial resources? 4. What is the monitoring structure for financial resources? 5. Which organization controls the financial resources? 6. Are other resources available? How can they mobilize it?
	<i>Human resources</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the improvements in employee recruitment standards? 2. Are there sufficient personnel? 3. How are the personnel improved skills to implement the new program? 4. How can staff adapt to new program and structure?
	<i>Communication</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are the relevant participants aware of the existence of this project? 2. Is there clear communication about the role that different participants can play? How is it organized? 3. Is there clear communication about the extent to which citizens' input will be put to use? How is it formed? 4. Is there sufficient communication concerning the results that have been achieved after or during the project? How is it communicated? 5. How do they set up the communication way? 6. Is there any mechanism to respond to the feedback? How is it formed? 7. How are they organized the mechanism for adapting to shifting contextual conditions and dialoguing about problems? 8. How has the record keeping system been organized?
b.	Administration management	
	<i>Policy involvement</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the conditions for projects? 2. Is the local authority willing to hand over influence? How did they do? 3. What is the legal framework for project? 2. Does the process work out transparently? What is the legal framework supporting it?

No	Items	Questions
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Do the citizens maintain their autonomy or is the project smothered? To what extent the citizens maintain their autonomy in the project? 4. How does the local authority support the project? 5. Is there a clear and consistent justification for policy measures? How does it work?
	<i>Goal setting/Priority setting</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How have the goal and priority been setting in the decision making process? 2. How have the differences in project interest of stakeholders been reconcile? 3. How is continuity of the project ensured?
	<i>Structures/ Procedures</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you think that the organization has effective procedure and structure? How is it organized? 2. How have the staff and member roles and responsibilities been clearly distinct? 3. To what extent the PAR has impacted on the structure and procedure to improve community participation? 4. Are structural resources provided for a follow-up of the project? How has it been organized?
	<i>Effective leadership</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do the representatives have the effective leadership skills? What are they? 2. How do representatives gain cooperation and technical skills? 3. How did the leaders do in supporting the community participation activities? 4. What were the results of these supporting activities from leaders?
3.	Outcomes	
	Content Outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the contribution to the project of the stakeholders? 2. What is the impact of the involvement of stakeholders in the project result? 3. Do you think that in general the involved actors have delivered a recognizable contribution to the development of the results? How did they contribute? 4. What are the new ideas, new policies and new organizational form of implementating project? 5. What are the new contents in the result of the implemented project? 6. Have the goals and objectives of the project been fulfilled? 7. Is the financial budget consistent with the plan? 8. Did the project follow the timeline? 9. Do you think that the developed solutions are durable solutions for the future?

No	Items	Questions
	Process Outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you think that the involved actors have contributed substantially to the project? How did they contribute? 2. Do you think that the actors have satisfied with the result of the project? How did they express and react to the project? 3. Do you think that conflicts and differences of opinion have been solved adequately during the project? How has it been solved? 4. In what way the major stagnations have been avoided or resolved in the project? 5. Do you think that the involved actors had frequently contact with each other during the project? How did they do? 6. Do you think that the involved actors have made use of the existing different perspectives and insights in a adequate way with regard to solutions and problems in the project?