

Eviction of the Past: A Development Analysis of Forced Displacement-Resettlement

in Thu Thiem Ward, Ho Chi Minh City

By
Walter Ross Grant

A Thesis Submitted to
Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in
Honours International Development Studies

April, 2014, Halifax, Nova Scotia

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Approved: Dr. Rylan Higgins
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Approved: Dr. Anthony H. O'Malley
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Date: April 25, 2014

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Abstract

The globe is rapidly urbanizing and over 1 billion people live in slums. These communities are characterized by their vulnerability to sudden economic shocks and other factors such as the environment. Around the world slums are viewed as an undesirable element of the urban landscape. Recently slum clearing has become more common and as a result forced displacement-resettlement has also increased in frequency. Vulnerable slum populations moved from their homes will experience a significant drop in their already low standard of living unless these resettlement programs are carried out in such a way that adequately works to prevent this. In Thu Thiem Ward the Ho Chi Minh City government is displacing 15 thousand households to make way for a “New Urban Zone”. This urban development represents modernity and progress to the Ho Chi Minh City authorities. In examining examples of forced displacement-resettlement from around the global south a profile of what successful displacement-resettlement looks like was constructed. This profile was used to discuss what the Ho Chi Minh City government did wrong with the displacement-resettlement process in Thu Thiem. Essentially good planning, active participation from the population to be resettled and adequate investment is the required elements of a successful displacement-resettlement program. The Ho Chi Minh City government failed to address all of these elements and as a result much of the displaced population’s poverty has been exacerbated. More research and increased support from the international community is needed to prevent more cases like Thu Thiem from happening in the future.

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Chapter One: Introduction

At its broadest point this thesis will explore the topic of urbanization and development in the developing world. Currently approximately 50% of the world's population live in cities. By 2100 scholars estimate that 85% of humans will live in cities; this is the largest human migration in history and will be the last of its size (Saunders, 2010). The countries most affected by this migration, which will see the largest populations move from rural to urban in both sheer numbers and as a percentage of population, are the Less Developed Countries (LDCs) (Satterwaite, 2009).

This migration is happening at a rapid pace. Many LDCs are already facing the impacts of increased urbanization which is evident in the growing issue of slums. These settlements, which are often illegally built, are home to crime, disease and unsafe living conditions. They are primarily characterized by the vulnerability of their inhabitants to sudden economic and environmental shocks. Attempts to make life in slums better, or eliminate them all together, have had mixed effects but slums remain a major issue in LDCs today suggesting that a solid solution has yet to be implemented or devised. Though slums often exhibit the aforementioned conditions it is important to remember that they are the homes of humans and that their livelihood, however fragile, is tied to that space. Slums are one of the biggest and most obvious problems that manifest as a consequence of urbanization but there are more issues that come along with this migration. To reiterate, these issues will be discussed at the broadest point of the thesis and include a general overview of why this migration is taking place, the urban bias that many countries experience and the issue of slums.

If cities are to be the homes of humans it is important that issues caused by urbanization are addressed. This problem is perhaps the most pressing issue in development studies today simply because of the sheer number of people that it involves. When you consider that the world's population is moving from 50% to 85% urbanized in less than 90 years and then factor in population growth you may begin to understand the true scope of this migration. A large migration will create large problems which will likely require large, ambitious solutions.

This thesis will focus on the issues caused by the development problematic of forced displacement in urban areas of LDCs. In particular this will focus on the effects of forced displacement on low income communities and slums. This section will identify the downsides of forced displacement, and how they can be mitigated. It will ask if there can be “good” forced displacement-resettlement or if it is in inherently bad practice.

In the case of slums forced displacement is often used as part of “slum upgrading”. Slum dwellers can be relocated to new homes that are no longer in areas ridden with disease and crime to better living standards. Services like water treatment and sanitation can be provided to communities when the space needed is freed by the eviction of some households. The success of these attempts at improving the livelihoods of the forcefully displaced residents hinges on how they are resettled. If the resettlement aspect is carried out with both good intentions and a well-structured and supported plan to improve the livelihoods of the displaced then these plans have the potential to be a success for the resettled population.

The main focus of this thesis is forced displacement in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) is the center of economic production and power in Vietnam. In general, since formal policy reform in 1986 under the name *Doi Moi*, or “renovation”,

market liberalization has led to rapid growth throughout the country. Vietnam's annual GDP growth rate reached a high point of 8% in 2007 before settling to its current 5%. The rapid growth of the economy attracted numerous foreign investors leading some to begin calling Vietnam the fifth Asian Tiger Economy. As a result of this growth, among other reasons that will be discussed in this thesis, the government of Vietnam began to engage the country in a massive modernization project.

In Ho Chi Minh City this modernization manifests itself in the form of urban renewal and includes projects like highways, bridges, neighbourhood reorganization and upgrading, single structure developments and entire New Urban Zones (NUZs). These developments require large amounts of space and some have demanded the eviction of urban residents to free this space. One of these projects, located in Thu Thiem Ward of District 2, is known as "The Thu Thiem New Urban Zone". Its plans first began in 2001 with the first phase consisting of planning to displace and resettle some 15'000 households.

The NUZ in Thu Thiem is the premier example of the HCMC government's political will to "modernize". The forced displacement of these persons is what Harms (2012) calls "spatial cleansing" -a way for the authorities to move what they see as obstacles, the residents, to modernity and beauty. The HCMC government has a certain definition of modernity that is guiding their development efforts in the NUZ and elsewhere in the city. Newspapers in Vietnam say that the Thu Thiem NUZ will be as modern as Singapore and Hong Kong. The NUZ will consist of neatly order pathways and transportation networks, tall gleaming office towers and condominiums and the latest shops and cafés. Thu Thiem is to be the epicenter of "modern Vietnam". I will argue that this "modernization" project is not a legitimate reason for the eviction of Thu Thiem's residents and that the current

resettlement regime has failed because it does not protect their livelihood and quality of life. Though the NUZ plans might sound carefully planned the reality in HCMC is a mix of ordered and disordered urban restructuring. On the one hand the government produced a detailed “Master Plan” used to guide the development of the NUZ in a very structured way; on the other hand the displacement-resettlement process has been chaotic and unstructured .

So far the resettlement process has encountered many delays and issues. The resettled are often undercompensated for their land with some residents receive only a fraction of what their land is worth. Residents often complain that it is hard to integrate into the new community they occupy. The resettlement apartments that some residents have chosen to relocate to do not accommodate their lifestyle and are often too expensive for them to afford. Lastly, but certainly of no little importance, is the loss of culture. Traditional meeting places and temples (*Dinh*), Buddhist Pagodas and Christian Churches are examples of lost buildings while the community that once existed in Thu Thiem and its unique culture now essentially ceases to exist. These losses are tangible and easier to measure while some losses, like the loss of place and space will be more difficult to recognize.

As mentioned earlier though there can be positive examples of forced displacement-resettlement. In District 4 of HCMC, a district known around the city for being home to mainly low income residents, a “slum upgrading” project was undertaken that had positive benefits for the community it took place in. This example, along with overviews of a few others, will be used to demonstrate better ways to displace, resettle and improve the livelihoods of residents in a particular urban area. It will demonstrate that not all forced displacement and resettlement must have a negative impact on those

that are displaced and what steps need to be taken in HCMC to have a successful development program.

My methodology will consist mainly of a qualitative, specifically ethnographic, approach to the planning and implementation of displacement-resettlement and its effects on displaced, low income families and individuals. Modernization is the main reason for the forced displacement-resettlement project, therefore I will critically examine this motivation and argue that it is not a legitimate reason for displacement. In order to properly understand the effects of displacement an emphasis on the human experience will be made throughout this thesis.

As an undergraduate unable to conduct my own research this will most often translate into a use of ethnographic sources that will provide data on the human experience of displacement-resettlement. Therefore, the method of data collection will fall under that of secondary sources. I did not have the opportunity to conduct research for this project myself despite spending a combined 6 months in HCMC during the summers of 2012 and 2013. My time there is useful for this thesis though as it provides me with a strong understanding of the city and its inhabitants and it provides me with motivation to take on this project. I spent an afternoon in Thu Thiem, drinking coffee on what was once the home of the woman serving me. She had been evicted from Thu Thiem but had to come back because she could not afford to live elsewhere in the city. I used data from the HCMC government on their plans to “modernize” Thu Thiem and also data from scholars writing about various issues in HCMC to verify the data that the government sources illustrate. I collected data on the effects on displaced residents after they have been resettled. I also collected case studies, NGO reports, government reports, international

organization reports and newspaper articles about both the Thu Thiem project and the District 4 example.

This thesis follows a structured layout which begins with the literature review. In this section I will discuss the current scholarly debate surrounding the three structural levels of my thesis. This section is intended to give the reader a glance of the “Landscape of Debate” among the issues discussed in this thesis. The next section is the Empirical Data section. This will use data collected from a variety of sources, some of which are mentioned above, to try and empirically prove the arguments in this thesis as best as is possible with the resources and sources that I have. The next section, the Discussion section, will analyze the data from the empirical section as well as the arguments made in the literature review to best teach the “lessons” of the research. It will attempt to suggest who is “right” and “wrong” in the literature review, what the lessons are for development and what is “truly the case” in relation to my research. Finally, the conclusion and recommendations section will close the thesis off by summarizing the findings of the thesis, outlining its contribution to development studies and making recommendations on what should be done in relation to the forced displacement-resettlement problematic in HCMC.

Before proceeding I would like to clarify my thoughts on the use of the terms “Less developed countries”, “developing world”, “developed world” and any similar terms used throughout this thesis. For the purposes of this thesis I will be using the United Nations Human Development Index to define “developing country” (See UNHDI, 2012). The use of these terms is necessary in order to prevent discussion in the thesis becoming too abstract and to maintain a consistent definition; however I have reservations over the very existence of the terms. These terms assume that “developed countries” (Canada,

Western Europe, USA, etc) are the model of development that “less developed countries” (“The Global South”) should be pursuing. It suggests that “developed” countries are superior to “less developed” countries and even they have finished developing. Not only do “developed” countries have their own issues that they must address but they are not necessarily the model through which other societies should strive to mimic. These terms are also politically loaded in that they tend to support neo-colonial assertions of western dominance over the rest of the world. Again, I will use these terms to keep things simple but acknowledge that the use of said terms is problematic.

The research question of this thesis is:

What are the development outcomes of forced displacement-resettlement in Thu Thiem ward of Ho Chi Minh City?

I will be arguing that the development outcomes of forced displacement-resettlement in Thu Thiem ward, Ho Chi Minh City are: a negative impact on the livelihoods and quality of life of those forcefully evicted. I will also argue that successful displacement-resettlement requires extensive planning, participation from the population to be displaced and adequate investment and funding to carry out the goals of the resettlement.

I will argue that the Ho Chi Minh City government failed to do any of these things.

The Thesis statement of this thesis is:

The Vietnamese government has failed to create a human-centered resettlement program that adequately protected the livelihood of displaced persons in Thu Thiem ward during the displacement-resettlement process.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Urbanization and Urban Bias in the Developing World

It is estimated that by the end of this century 85% of humans will live in cities; this migration from rural to urban is the largest human migration in history and is the last of such size (Saunders, 2010). Again, the greatest increase in urbanization will take place in developing countries. This migration has already begun to fundamentally change how humans live which includes, but is not limited to, how cities are formed, shaped, changed and managed. Urbanization is one of the most pressing challenges that our world faces in this century. Challenges caused by the transition of hundreds of millions of Chinese from their rural peasant livelihoods to modern urbanites, to the seemingly endless slums of Mumbai, to the twisted chaos of the transportation system in Karachi are just a few examples of issues caused by urbanization.

When rural residents in developing countries move to cities they mostly do so seeking a better life through employment; the economy of the city is what draws them in (Satterwaite, 2009). National governments are challenged by international and national migration as they are unable to control it, making migration a central policy issue (Castles and Miller, 2003). Economies have increasingly become centered on urban areas; partly because of the movement of labour pools through capitalist markets and partly because of policy directed at centering economies on urban areas (Jones and Corbridge, 2009; Robbins, 2005). Manufacturing jobs are concentrated in urban areas to keep producing the goods that will grow the export oriented economy. The finances of most countries and the global economy are managed within the urban spaces of the world.

Under this system most farmers are no longer able to afford producing food simply for subsistence and as a result must choose to either produce cash crops or relocate to the

city. The city grows. Investment is centered on cities and as time and space are shortened by communication and transportation innovation the ease of conducting business from city to city only gets faster. The city swells to the bursting point. This organization of the economy into “world cities” has largely directed attention away from rural areas (Jones and Corbridge, 2009).

Spending by developing countries on healthcare, education and infrastructure in rural areas has been consistently decreasing over time combined with “urban forms of teaching” which Lipton says are banking, finance and business which all encourage the growth of the city (Lipton, 1977). This lack of investment can be attributed largely due to policy change; much of which is because of conditions on loans given by the World Bank and as part of its poverty reduction strategies (Lipton, 1977; Peet, 2009). Due to this lack of investment in their communities rural farmers have been made to take drastic measures in the past to attempt to secure their livelihoods by withholding crops in an attempt to raise food prices (Jones and Corbridge, 2009).

This example, even though only one of many, demonstrates that there is still strong interaction between cities and rural areas. The city is dependent on the rural area for food production and for supplying labour while the rural area depends on the flow of manufactured goods and on urban dwellers purchasing food (Lynch, 2009).

Balancing this relationship between urban and rural was first addressed by policy in the Soviet Union in the 1920’s (Pugh, 1996). Later similar policy decisions by developing countries would be made as they decided to head down the path of modernity, which they often saw as being defined by a typical western model of development; infrastructure was centered on cities as developing countries practiced import-substitution industrialization and protectionist policies so they could grow an export-oriented economy (Pugh, 1996;

Jones and Corbridge, 2009). During this time policies were formulated that acted against farmers and rural dwellers as the city became the primary economic unit; agriculture was the way of the past (Lipton, 1977). This policy was sometimes created by the need to meet conditions set by loans and Structural Adjustment Programs given to developing countries by the World Bank or IMF (Peet, 2009).

The rapid growth of cities in the developing world has led to the creation of transitional urban areas on the periphery of the main city (Saunders, 2010). Saunders says that these areas, sometimes called arrival cities or slums, are places where new city dwellers coming from rural areas with hopes for supporting their family financially through employment in the city and eventually moving to the city center; they can offer new opportunities in the form of employment and can be the gateway to an improved economic life (Saunders, 2010). Slums sometimes start as towns on the edge of a city but because of rapid growth become a part of the city; joined both physically on the ground and by the social interactions between both spaces (Davis, 2006).

Since 1970 the growth of slums has increased faster than overall urbanization in the developing world as people move to cities seeking an improvement in their lives often building informal settlements on the periphery of cities (Davis, 2006). These settlements often don't have access to basic services like sanitation, water or electricity and are not a desirable place to live, nor do they necessarily offer a pathway to a better life (Bolay, 2006; Doshi, 2013; Castiglioni et al., 2010 and Davis, 2006). In most cases slum dwellers do not own their land rather they pay rents to landowners, criminals or corrupt politicians to prevent eviction despite often having no access to services (Davis, 2006). Typically eviction does take place though and the slums destroyed as cities attempt to modernize or beautify. Bolay (2006) argues that this displacement is detrimental to the slum dwellers as

they are then forced to resettle elsewhere and become responsible for their own livelihoods in very precarious and unknown circumstances, which exasperates their already high levels of poverty.

Though the majority of slums are located in the developing world it is worth mentioning that Europe and North America are home to some slums and various forms of low income communities. Along the border of Mexico, and in some other far southern areas of the state, 400 thousand Texans and Mexican migrants live in “Colonias” (Texas Secretary of State, 2014). Colonias can be found in most of the USA-Mexico border states but most are in Texas numbering at over 2,294 communities (Texas Secretary of State, 2014). Colonias formed in the 1950’s when Mexican immigrants to the United States could not afford to pay for land within incorporated communities; they were offered dry, agriculturally useless land by landowners and often have no legal claim to their homes (Texas Secretary of State, 2014). Colonias are perhaps the most well documented slums in North America but large cities such as New York, Los Angeles and Houston have large, low income neighbourhoods that have living conditions comparable to some slums. Canada’s treatment of its native reserves are routinely criticized by the United Nations and their conditions are often far below Canadian living standards (UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2013). The argument could be made that these communities, like slums in the developing world, represent a failure of the state to provide adequate housing for its inhabitants. The difference is that developing countries often lack the resources to address the issue while the United States and Canada have no such excuse. This topic will not be explored any further but those interested may see Colonias, 2014; UNHABITAT, 2013 and UN Human Rights, 2013.

I will argue that additional research into the issues caused by urbanization is needed. I will also argue that slums, as fragile human settlements, are vulnerable to economic and environmental changes in their lives that can have very powerful effects on their lives. The urban center is complex and eviction and resettlement for “slum upgrading”, “slum eradicating” or even “social housing initiatives” can be devastating to the resettled residents if a holistic approach is not taken and the mutual needs of all parties are not considered.

Forced Displacement-Resettlement in the Developing World

Internally displaced persons (IDPs) in urban areas do not have the same support from international organizations and NGOs that other kinds of displaced persons have (Crisp, 2012; Lee, 2006). IDPs displaced by modernization projects or “slum upgrading” in urban areas are receiving almost no attention at all (Crisp, 2012; Lee, 2006).

IDPs are not well defined, there is no established system of assistance or protection and no single organization has jurisdiction over their wellbeing (Cohen, 2006). Lee (2006) asserts that if a legal definition is reached on refugees than displaced persons could be assisted in their time of need. Urban dwellers that are displaced by development projects are identified as being perhaps the most misunderstood and least cared for groups of IDPs (Lee, 2006). Crisp (2012) says that many NGOs and resource centers that usually provide support to IDPs often struggle with providing care to them within urban centers meaning that urban based IDPs are often the least cared for. NGO’s who deal with IDPs often don’t even consider those displaced in areas to be part of their mandate. Urban IDPs receive less attention from the UNHCR because they are not in camps like refugees typically are and the UNHCR faced criticism when it tried to work more closely with

IDPs because it was supposed to focus solely refugees (Crisp, Morris and Refstie, 2012; Mugguh, 2003). Crisp (2012) also argues that urban IDPs are also more exposed to risk of malnourishment because they don't have access to food in the same ways that rural based IDPs might as they are nearer to food production, this is another reason to classify them as refugees. This demonstrates that forced displacement in urban areas is recognized as an important issue that must to be addressed.

It will be the argument of this thesis that IDPs created by forced displacement-resettlement projects in urban areas, lacking support from International Organizations, are the responsibility of their government. Specifically governments must choose to either design and carry out a human-centred resettlement scheme or ask for assistance in carrying out one that already exists, such as the World Bank or OECD Resettlement Policies. This especially applies to the empirical focus of this thesis in Ho Chi Minh City as the Vietnamese government is capable of producing or adhering to such a policy. However, some scholars do argue that forced displacement can be justifiable in certain cases.

Picciotto (2001) says that resettlement for building or modernization projects is justifiable as a development project because the overall positive effects on local communities and national economies will outweigh the negatives of the move. Picciotto, addressing displacement by World Bank funded dam projects, says that there is no evidence that any dam building project has unnecessarily resettled anyone; resettlement, however unpalatable, is a necessary part of development (Picciotto et. al 2001). Picciotto admits that there have been issues caused by World Bank resettlement programs in the past but these moves were necessary and their projects are a success of development (Picciotto et. al 2001). World Bank resettlement projects are one of the examples used

most often by opponents of its policy to outline the issues with resettlement. Weist (1995) disagrees with Picciotto and says “people, involuntarily moved due to construction of development projects, undergo grief, cultural involution and fundamental restructuring of their lives (Weist 1995).”

In other than urban contexts, for example the resettlement of native populations in the case of dams, the displacement reduces the amount of land available for agriculture, familial ties are threatened, traditional culture is threatened and a great amount of traumatic stress is endured by the resettled (Weist, 1995). Weist (1995) does say that there are positives. The resettled often gain access to certain comforts like running water, heating and services like education but Weist (1995) contends that these benefits do not stack up against the negatives. Resettlement can often leave governments picking up the tab for the repercussions caused as a result of the program. When native populations are moved from their traditional homes where they have lived for often hundreds or even thousands of years the loss of agricultural space and hunting areas forces them into a wage-earning economy which shifts them from independent subsistence living to complete dependency (Weist, 1995). While these examples of dams and resettlement may at first glance seem irrelevant to urbanization I argue that they are not. The dams are usually built to supply electricity or transportation benefits to urban areas, the displaced are often resettled to urban areas and the issues caused by resettlement in these cases can be easily compared to issues in an urban setting. In fact, The Urban Resource Center (2001) says that one of the biggest downsides of forced resettlement is the creation of slums.

When they are relocated, urban resettled persons are separated from their means of livelihood which means they must travel long distances, often using expensive forms of

transportation to get to work. The length of time it takes to travel to the place of employment reduces the time spent with the family meaning mothers may not be present to care for children and the cost of travel puts a financial burden on the family (Urban Resource Center, 2001). The move from one place to another only places more burden on local governments as they must improve transportation networks, try to create jobs for the slum dwellers and manage the slums as well (Urban Resource Center, 2001). Sundal (2010) agrees saying that “forceful resettlement” leads to the creation of low-income areas and slums when the government does not assist the resettled or recognize their need to live in a certain area. According to Sundal, slums are created by a lack of government support to low income residents or when the government does not recognize their legal right to live in a certain area (Sundal, 2010).

It is common for development projects to occur in the low income neighbourhoods of cities. These “slums” are often considered to be valuable pieces of land ready for real estate and commercial development by planning authorities and governments; their inhabitants are frequently considered disposable and that they should be moved to make way for these plans according to those interested in using the land.

Slum upgrading or full-fledged slum clearing has intensified in recent years (Doshi, 2013). Slums are seen as environmental hazards, occupation of central and valuable urban spaces by the poor and as places to be bought for real estate development by the rich and elites (Baviskar, 2003; Fernandes, 2006; and Doshi, 2013). In Mumbai a government orchestrated “neo-liberal plan” known as the “Slum Rehabilitation Scheme” removed slum dwellers from their homes to make way for new developments (Doshi, 2013). The housing market was liberalized giving new “transferable development rights” to building developers. The developers were supposed to provide compensation in the form of new

homes to slum dwellers in exchange for the new rights but instead either moved the dwellers outside of the city to be disconnected from their social and economic networks or claimed that the dwellers did not have official residency status therefore disqualifying them from compensation (Doshi, 2013). Doshi (2013) and Harvey (2008) assert that the market cannot be used to allocate housing to the poor and that forced evictions for “slum upgrading” projects such as the one in Mumbai violate fundamental human rights. Shin (2008) says that the market can be used to allocate housing to low income residents once they have been evicted but government policy must be explicit in defining who is to be compensated and what exactly they are to be compensated. Property owners and developers can work together to upgrade slums, make a profit and provide housing for those evicted so long as they are properly directed on how to do so (Shin, 2008). While Shin is optimistic that his market based strategy with government policy regulation will be a “win-win approach” for everyone it seems doubtful that this is effective at allocating housing to the poor when the land is essentially given to the developers and the stakeholders are interested in turning a profit. The private sector cannot be used to provide poor urban dwellers with improved housing because it is not meant to; the private sector is profit driven and is therefore incapable of meaningful development (Harvey, 2003). Slum upgrading can be beneficial to resettled residents in improving their living conditions but it does not alleviate poverty, the benefits are usually unevenly distributed and the evicted are often still separated from their social and economic networks (Rakodi, 1988). According to certain scholars if “slum upgrading” was to have meaningful, positive impacts on evicted residents the projects would need to be carried out by governments and not the private sector, and international NGOs and other groups would need to participate to ensure proper handling of the evictions and new structures and the

issues of the evicted would need to be prioritized above all else (Doshi, 2013; Fernandes, 2006; Rakodi, 1988; Baviskar, 2003).

This thesis will argue that, while most often resettlement results in negative impacts on the resettled, a question emerges from the issue of resettlement which is whether or not the benefits of the resettlement will outweigh the disadvantages. To properly assess this, the human consequences of resettlement must be carefully examined. Positives of resettlement may include access to certain comforts like running water and electricity as well as access to education and more for the resettled. Whether these positives having a meaningful impact depends on policy being focused on and in favour of the people that it will resettle. This thesis also supports the idea that policy to supply housing to poor or illegal residents using the free market is ineffective at doing so and should not be a strategy for “slum upgrading”; it only serves to further marginalize the poor and powerless. The issues already discussed are the broad issues surrounding development, urbanization, the consequences of forced displacement and the resettlement that follows. This thesis will be focused on these issues as they pertain to a specific city in Vietnam- Ho Chi Minh City. Before this empirical focus can be explored some broad issues within the country must be identified first.

Forced Displacement-Resettlement in Thu Thiem Ward, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Gaps in education, services and income earned between rural and urban areas are the main drivers for rural-urban migration in Vietnam (UNFPA, 2010). The household residency program (*Ho Khau*) makes it a risky choice to move from ones official place of residence because doing so makes a resident “unofficial” (Karis, 2013). When a resident is unofficial they have no support from the state for services or housing and they can be

evicted if the land they are on is reclaimed by the government (Karis, 2013). This is the reality that unofficial residents in Vietnamese cities face; they have reduced rights when it comes to residency if they choose to live “unofficially” (Karis, 2013). *Ho Khau* will be discussed in detail below.

Currently HCMC is engaged in a massive modernization project. Many parts of the city are being razed and recreated in the vision of post-colonial planners within the government, private corporations and foreign architects (Harms, 2012). These projects require large areas of space. In order to find the space and accomplish the goal of reaching modernity as defined by the HCMC authorities many low-income neighbourhoods and informal settlements are being forcefully resettled to the edges of the city. The motivations for this modernization project are in the visions of the city planners and government for what is “modern” (Harms, 2012; Stumpf, 2012; Castiglioni et al., 2010). This project will mostly benefit the middle and upper class in Ho Chi Minh City, as well as the government (Stumpf, 2012). It offers services and employment opportunities that are not accessible to low income individuals (Stumpf, 2012).

The reasons for large scale forced displacement in HCMC currently exist as a result of the political determination to reshape the city into a “modern” city based on the conception of modernity held by city officials and planners (Harms, 2012 and 2013; Castiglioni, Dewaele and Vinh, 2010). In 2005 the Vietnamese National Government approved “The Ho Chi Minh City Master Plan 2010-2025” which “aims to manage urban growth in an orderly manner, while increasing the quality of life for the residents of Ho Chi Minh City (Phuong, 2007)”. This “urban renovation towards modern civilization (Phuong, 2007)” strives to order the city according to post-colonial definitions of modernity and beauty; it sometimes takes into account protecting the cultural value of old

buildings and waterways but avoids mentioning the poor and disadvantaged all together. Projects like the redesigning of a canal, the “improvement” of a low income neighbourhood or the complete razing (*giải tỏa trang*) of entire an entire ward to make way for a “New Urban Zone” are all “representative of the public authority’s ambition to modernize the image of the city- a modernization which they see as synonymous with improvement and rehabilitation... (Castiglioni et. al, 2010, p. 125)”. The center piece to this modernization project is a “New Urban Zone” to be located in Thu Thiem ward of District 2; this project is not a legitimate excuse to displace official or non-official residents because it does not benefit them. If the project is being built for the use of middle and upper class individuals than it excludes the lower class, like the population of Thu Thiem.

This modernization project does not offer legitimate reasons to forcefully evict thousands of people from their homes. If the evictions were for the benefit of the people being evicted it might be legitimate but they are being evicted to allow these visions to come to life via tall skyscrapers, lush organized gardens and paths and upscale amenities where the evicted Saigonese once lived.

Smaller scale forced displacement does occur as well in Ho Chi Minh City but the reasons for these small displacements have been diverse in nature than that of Thu Thiem, meaning they do not always just benefit the rich and elite as Thu Thiem does but might have positive effects for the residents where they are taking place.

Some of these smaller projects can be like the large scale ones designed to fit a certain definition of modernity and beauty; in some cases when resettlement has occurred in HCMC the resettled are told that their new homes must conform to only one building regulation: it must look “nice” (Gunnepiek and Mosselman, 1995). In this way even after

they have been resettled the displaced are still directly affected by the modernization plans. Other projects are for practical reasons like improving the water treatment facility in a neighbourhood or clearing out old, dangerous buildings for new, safer lodgings; this practice, as discussed earlier, is referred to as “Slum Upgrading”. These reasons for resettlement may be acceptable reasons to renovate an area but how well the resettlement is carried out is still a potential issue. In the past there have been mixed results in this area. In these cases the outcomes for the resettled residents depends on their residency status. “Slum upgrading” projects in HCMC have actually done quite well in the past. A slum upgrading project in District 4 in the 1990’s upgraded a large community and it benefited the entire population (Gunnewiek and Mosselman, 1995). However, currently residents of HCMC displaced for various reasons are not getting adequate compensation for the homes they are displaced from which forces them into other low income areas.

“*Ho Khau*” (household) is the name of the household registry system in Vietnam used to define permanent residence in a given district or area of Vietnam. In Vietnam the *Ho Khau* residency system is still in use to attempt to prevent movement from rural to urban areas and to keep labour pools from being unevenly dispersed (Luong, 2003). It was developed by the French during their colonial occupation of Vietnam. After Reunification it was never fully functional in the way that the Vietnamese government had hoped though it did have a part in the relocation of about 8 million workers from 1976 to 1989 when the communists were organizing pools of labour in the country (Luong, 2003).

To summarize *Ho Khau*, each Vietnamese household is given a certificate by their local government that defines where they officially live. Residents are given government social service access based on their status- if they are an “official resident” they have

access to all government services while if they are “unofficial” they have access to none (Karis, 2013; Luong, 2003) In urban areas of Vietnam there are three main administrative areas; the first is the entire city, the second are districts and the smallest region are wards of which there may be several within any given district. Residents may move to a new home within the ward that they officially live in and still retain their official status, but once they leave that region they may become “unofficial”. The system has 4 different levels of classification: K1 is an official resident; K2 is an official resident that lives in the district they are supposed to live in but in a ward other than their own, they retain access to all services; K3 residents are unofficial but because they have remained in one place for a number of years they may have access to certain services, however their land tenure is unsecure; finally K4 residents are short term unofficial residents who have access to no government services of any kind, they rely on informal ways of getting access to utilities and they have no legal right to their land (Castiglioni et al., 2010).

The Vietnamese government reports that while housing may be inadequate and short on hand in many urban centers, rural-urban migrants still enjoy a better living situation than they would have if they had stayed in the rural area (Central Population, 2009). Often because they are not legal residents K3 and K4 residents must find homes in low income areas and informal settlements (Harms 2012, Gunnewiek and Mosselman 1995, Castiglioni et al. 2010). In these areas basic services like running water, sanitation and electricity are sometimes not offered (Castiglioni, Dewaele and Vinh, 2010; Harms, 2012 and 2013; Karis, 2013).. If they hold K3 or K4 status they must buy these services off of the informal market which may be an unreliable source of the services and sometimes costs may be many times higher than the state provided utilities (Castiglioni et al 2010, Hardy 2001).

In the case of forced resettlement the registry system acts as a way for developers, property owners and various levels of governments to skip-out on paying compensation to resettled persons. Harms (2012) and Castiglioni et al. (2010) note that the household registry system is one of the reasons that non-official residents receive inadequate compensation for their land or dwelling when they are evicted by modernization projects. As the dwellers are illegally living on land there is no legal necessity for proper compensation (Castiglioni, Dewaele and Vinh 2010).

Within these low-income communities the local micro-economies of each ward (*phuong*) and even each street are closely intertwined by the economic and social lives of its inhabitants (Harms 2012; Franck Castiglioni et al. 2010). Motorcycle taxis, laundry services, noodle shops and more economic activities are all closely intertwined because neighbours, families and friends in the area all use them. Neighbours may look after children in a form of community based childcare and jobs are often located nearby. It is likely that women are particularly affected because they are more dependent on these community based relationships as they are less likely to have employment away from their home. This interconnectedness is shattered when residents are resettled because their employment, social networks and other economic activities are relocated along with them (Castiglioni et. al 2010, Lio Ruo Xuan, 2012). It is not common for there to be pre-determined resettlement communities or plans produced to take all members of a resettled community to other areas of the city; instead they are most often forced to look for their own new place of residency (Lio Ruo Xuan, 2012). Thu Thiem, however, does have a planned resettlement area.

As already stated, there is consensus that many people in HCMC are being resettled without adequate compensation and that the household registration system is one factor to

blame for this (Harms, 2012; Castiglioni et. Al 2010; Gunnewiek and Mosselman, 1995). Hardy (2001) offers a different stance saying that, in the reform era, the registration system can be consistently negotiated and this has been the case since the demise of the command economy. Vietnamese are free to move around their country and seek employment or residency where they like with little effect to their lives; only minimal connections with local authorities is required to avoid issues related to the residency status (Hardy, 2001). This is true in the sense that the Ho Khau does not function in the way that the Vietnamese government intends for it to but also downplays how Ho Khau can still be a powerful mechanism in certain cases. Seeing as there is growing literature on the issue of forced resettlement in Ho Chi Minh City, and other areas of Vietnam, and that unofficial residents are not being compensated for their forced resettlement, it seems that the household system can have profound effects on Vietnamese lives when the powerful need it to function in their favour.

Speaking about the interconnectedness in Vietnamese communities Harms (2013) offers a somewhat different view of the potential effects of resettlement than he has offered in the past. A motorbike repairman with debt “whose livelihood depends on being able to capture customers from the roadside in front of his home will be in a vulnerable position” but “the man who makes his fortune as a money lender” making deals in cafes and who has excess time is less affected by spacial relocation (Harms, 2013). Regardless of the debate on the reason for eviction and its effects the fact remains that resettled residents in HCMC are being undercompensated. The under compensation ranges from one half to 1/12th of the land value being compensated to evicted residents (Castiglioni, Dewaele and Vinh, 2010). When a poor family in HCMC is given this level of compensation it only serves to exacerbate their poverty.

As you may recall my research question is:

What are the development outcomes of forced displacement-resettlement in Thu Thiem ward of Ho Chi Minh City?

This thesis will be arguing that the development outcomes of forced resettlement in Ho Chi Minh City are weighted against the resettled residents. I will join Harms (2012, 2013), Gunnewiek and Mosselman (1995) and Castiglioni et. al (2010) in saying that the displacement-resettlement program in Thu Thiem has not been carried out with the wellbeing of the displaced persons as its priority. I will argue that this separation of communities in HCMC as a result of forced resettlement has negative impacts on the socio-economic lives of the resettled. This thesis will also contend that the origin of these problems is the political will to modernize the city which is not a legitimate reason to forcefully displace even one person from their home. The modern city that HCMC city planners foresee is one that will have to sweep aside many low-income residents before it can have its “modern” new urban zones.

Chapter Three: Empirical Research

Urbanization and Urban Bias in the Developing World

This section will begin with exploring why urbanization is happening at such fast pace in the developing world. It will follow by asking if an urban bias exists in the developing world and what the implications are of this. The relationship between urbanization and urban bias will be explored to understand what socio-economic groups migrate to cities and why. It will then discuss the issue of slums and what they mean within the context of urbanization, and what displacement-resettlement means for slums. It will then explore forced displacement-resettlement in the developing world so as to understand the causes and effects of forced displacement-resettlement. This section will be used to understand why forced displacement is happening and what can be done to make displacement as good as possible for the population to be displaced. Lastly, it will explore forced displacement-resettlement in Thu Thiem, Ho Chi Minh City to show what the development outcomes, or lessons, are of that particular program. My methodology has limits in that my research relies on secondary sources. I did not conduct my own research for this project. The scope of my research is also rather small, focusing mainly on the effects of forced displacement-resettlement on the people being displaced. Many more groups or entities could be affected by the process in Thu Thiem and a study including a wider range of affected groups could advance knowledge on displacement-resettlement in Vietnam more than mine will.

Humans are now in a period that could be described as “The Great Human Migration”. As already mentioned this migration is taking place from rural to urban. It is estimated that between 2011 and 2050 the world’s urban population will increase by 72%,

an overall increase of more than 2.7 billion (UNDESA, 2012). During this time urban populations in less developed countries will grow the most seeing an increase in more than 2.4 billion persons (UNDESA, 2012). The rural populations of most developing countries will begin to drop from 3.1 billion in 2021 and will plateau at about 2.9 billion by 2050 (UNDESA, 2012; UNHABITAT, 2013). This means approximately 90% of rural-urban migration will take place in developing countries. Taking into account all developing countries it is evident that not all of this migration is in the form of families and individuals actually leaving the countryside for the city.

Presently, according to the United Nations, 60% of urban growth is natural growth, 20% is from “reclassification” (the redrawing of city boundaries) and the remaining 20% is human migration (UNHABITAT, 2013). It is estimated that in 2009, for the first time ever, more humans lived in cities than in rural areas (UNDESA, 2012). No matter the source of their migration the urban space is quickly becoming the primary home of humans. While urbanization might seem spontaneous it is actually largely the result of decision making and resource allocation. This section of data will provide evidence that supports what some may call “urban bias” which is the theory that urban areas in developing countries are more prosperous than rural areas. This data will be used to suggest that urban bias is one of the main reasons for rural-urban migration.

In 1977 Michael Lipton published his famous work “Why Poor People Stay Poor: Urban Bias in World Development” which described a bias that existed in favour of the development of urban areas in developing countries. Lipton followed an already strong camp of literature discussing inequality between the rural and urban spaces in developing countries (see Lewis, 1954; Singer, 1950 and Prebisch, 1950). Lipton says that the populations of most developing countries are dependent on agriculture as their means of

supporting their livelihood (Lipton, 1977). Many developing countries have shifted their economies away from agriculture in the years since Lipton made these assertions though many still remain highly dependent on agriculture ranging from 75% of the population working in agriculture in East Africa to about 12% in South America (UNCTAD, 2012). Even though large portions of the population of many developing countries are still working in agriculture their contribution to the economy of their countries is usually proportionately lower, and nowhere near equitable when compared to other “more productive” outputs, ranging between 7% and 19% of overall GNI (UNCTAD, 2012). The central reason that urban bias exists is because the global economic system is based in cities (Friedmann, 1986; Surborg, 2011).

The majority of capital movement and human movement are between large cities around the world (GaWC, 2014; Friedmann 1986; Surborg, 2011). Human movement is distinct from migration as it mostly refers to business travel and tourism. The economic, political and social lives of many people in the developing world are heavily influenced by the institutions based in cities and the people who run them (Surborg, 2011). Labour, in terms of both its financial and productive value, is heavily based in cities (Friedmann 1986; Surborg, 2011). Cities are seen as modern and also as the space through which to reach modernity in many developing countries; agriculture is used in the initial stages of modernization but cities are the centers of long term economic success (Pugh, 1996). Investment and policy attention in developing countries is focused on the “urban interests” of the political and economic elite which usually reside in the city; resources are focused on “less productive and equitable things” like luxury housing, large real estate ventures or extravagant food versus “more productive things” like factories or modes of production, food aid, and education (Lipton, 1977). In developing countries cities are the

central focus for economic, cultural and social development because local elites focus policy on urban development, the city is often seen as progressive and modern and using cities as basing points for capital and growth was first used in the developed world as is being emulated by the developing world (Lipton, 1977; Castles, 2003; Jones and Corbridge, 2009).

In addition to the points above Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) in the developing world likely contributed to the divide between rural and urban. After World War Two and continuing to present day the World Bank and IMF attached strict conditionality to many of the loans they gave to developing countries (Peet, 2009). Among other things these conditions required developing countries to liberalize their economy by reinforcing private property rights, privatizing public entities and generally making foreign investment easier (Peet, 2009). Recalling the literature by Lipton, Castles and Jones and Corbridge, it is evident that, in effect, this sped up the process of centering the global economy on cities. SAPs, in some ways, required developing countries to organize their economies like the rich countries, which meant having currency exchanges, central banks and real estate firms, all of which are based out of cities. The World Bank continues to encourage the growth of cities as a development model, as part of an export oriented economy (World Bank, 2012).

One obvious counter argument to this theory of urban bias is to point out the resources that went into the Green Revolution which focused on rural farmers above its other aspects. The Green Revolution was a series of initiatives carried out by several institutions, most notably the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), in an attempt to increase agricultural production in developing countries to stop starvation and

malnutrition (Koppel and Oasa, 1987). The revolution was successful in slowing starvation and many crops in the developing world, especially wheat, corn and M8 “Miracle Rice”, saw dramatic increases in production (Koppel and Oasa 1987; Hanzell, 2009). Between 1967 and 1982 in Central Asia alone cereal production grew at 3.57% per year; between 1970 and 1995 in the same area cereal production effectively doubled (Hanzell, 2009; World Bank 2014). While the Green Revolution was mainly a series of technology and information transfers it required a supporting economic and policy regime to operate. In adopting this policy regime many developing countries began to spend many times what they did prior to the Revolution on agriculture (Koppel and Oasa 1987; Hanzell, 2009; Breisinger, et al. 2011).

Aside from its success of increased food production in the developing world there is much debate over the socio-economic impacts of the Green Revolution. It is possible that the Green Revolution favoured large farms over smaller ones, resulted in serious environmental degradation, lowered wages and led to increased urbanization as some farmers left agriculture to move to the city (Hanzell, 2009; Ut and Kajisa, 2006; Koppel and Oasa, 1987). In Vietnam in particular the Green revolution led to increased urbanization because the number of farms decreased as smaller farms were absorbed into larger ones; production increased until 2000 and then began to drop off (Ut and Kajisa, 2006). In the developing world expenditures towards agriculture hit their high point in 1985 and have declined since and in almost all developing countries agriculture is decreasing as a share of GDP or has stagnated (Hanzell, 2009; World Bank, 2014). The Green Revolution changed how rural commodity production and global markets interact often leading to drastic drops in household incomes in rural areas (Koppel and Oasa, 1987).

While the Green Revolution did increase food production there is no convincing evidence that it had long term, equitable poverty reduction benefits (Hanzell, 2009; Breisinger, et al., 2011; Koppel and Oasa 1987; Ut and Kajisa, 2006). There is also no convincing evidence to suggest that it was able to halt rural-urban migration or that it altered the flow of global capital from cities to rural areas in any meaningful way. For these reasons the Green Revolution is not evidence that there is an absence of an urban bias, at best it is evidence to suggest that organizations involved in development recognize the disparity between rural and urban in the developing world and act to try and reduce this divide. The World Bank initiated its part in the Green Revolution in part because it saw export oriented agriculture (“cash crops”) as a path to development (World Bank, 2014). This urban bias may be one of the reasons that migration takes place from rural-urban.

Urban bias is useful for explaining macro sized events such as the GDP of a city or its production of goods relative to the countryside. Perhaps urban bias is also useful for describing how the city is perceived to be more prosperous than rural life. That being said the urban bias described above mostly ignores individuals and may paint a picture of the city as a utopia full of vibrant economic activity and surplus goods. As the UN HABITAT said: “The poor do not automatically benefit from good ‘macroeconomic statistics’, compared to the non-poor, particularly in terms of the corresponding improvements in the quality and coverage of public services (p. 28, UN HABITAT, 2003)”. In other words it is deceiving in that it may suggest that urban living is more prosperous than rural life in developing countries. As the data on slums will show urban life is not necessarily above rural life in terms of the quality of life that it offers for most urbanites. Slums are the messy, often chaotic element of urbanization in the developing world that shows that life

in the urban spaces of the developing world is indeed not a utopia. This data will be used to show that life in slums is difficult and precarious in the sense that events like an illness can have negative effects on the economic stability of a family. This economic vulnerability will later be discussed in the section on forced displacement-resettlement to demonstrate that evictions from slums can be very harmful to the livelihoods of slum dwellers.

UN HABITAT defines a slum as:

“...a group of individuals living under the same roof in an urban area that lack one or more of the following:

1. Durable housing that protects against extreme climate conditions.
2. Sufficient living space which means not more than three people sharing the same room.
3. Easy access to safe water in sufficient amounts at an affordable price.
4. Access to adequate sanitation in the form of a private or public toilet shared by a reasonable number of people.
5. Security of tenure that prevents forced evictions.” (UN HABITAT, 2006, P.1)

The largest single slum in the world is in Mexico City at more than 4 million inhabitants as of 2006 (Davis, 2006). On the one hand Davis (2006) shows that China has the highest slum population in number at over 193.8 million while on the other hand 99.5 percent of Ethiopia’s and Chad’s urban population live in slums with Afghanistan not far behind at 98.4 percent of the urban population (UN HABITAT, 2003). Approximately 78.2 percent of urbanites in the least developed countries live in slums while 43 percent of urbanites in the less developed countries live in slums; these numbers represent about

1.3 billion people (UNHABITAT, 2013). It is estimated that this number will climb to 2 billion slum dwellers by 2033 if no strong action is taken to slow the growth of slums (UNHABITAT, 2013; UNESA 2012). Many slums ranging in population from a few hundred to millions can be found in cities like Mumbai, Sao Paulo, Delhi, Jakarta, Kolkata, Rio de Janeiro and Tehran (Davis, 2006). Some slums are entire cities, legally and socio-economically separated from the “core city” it might be adjacent to, that serve as cheap points of production in the global commodity market (Saunders, 2010). In other words slums serve functions in urban spaces, such as providing low cost labour and absorbing migrant populations (UN HABITAT, 2003; Saunders, 2010; Kelly, 1995).

While the typical image of a slum reveals rusty sheet metal roofs, walls of tarpaulin and supplies native to the surrounding area in reality slums around the world are very diverse (Davis, 2006). Some slums in former colonies may occupy former mansions; a house that once held a single family may now hold dozens of individuals (Davis, 2006). Some slums are small settlements on the top of buildings, others occupy unfinished apartment complexes and there have even been “floating slums”- boats that form small villages or towns (Davis, 2006). Though slums are often seen as representing poverty and the worst conditions for humans to live in they are actually centers of intense entrepreneurialism and economic activity (Roy, 2011). Slums can be home to terrible living conditions and this fact cannot be ignored because of potential business activity, but it is important to remember that slums are occupied by humans that are capable of creating their own destinies and that valuable lessons can be learned from slums (Roy, 2011). This being said life in slums can be fragile when it comes to economic vulnerability and tenure and some scholars would say that this insecure tenure is a key component of slums (Kelly, 1995).

It is difficult to gather figures on the exact nature of poverty in slums as many countries do not produce reliable data on them (Davis, 2006; UN HABITAT, 2003 and 2006). They choose either to deny the existence of slums in their countries or they lack the resources necessary to capture the needed data. Despite the lack of concrete data two generalizations can be made about the vulnerability of slum dwellers based off the various studies available which are: that many slum dwellers live below the poverty line (\$1.25 USD daily, as defined by the UN) and that because of this their ability to adapt to sudden changes or economic shocks is limited (Davis, 2006; Huchzermeyer, 2008; Kantor and Nair, 2005; UN HABITAT 2003, 2006 and 2013; Kelly, 1995). The tenuous living situation in slums also exists because of several additional reasons. First, slums are often seen as an undesirable element in the city and are often cleared for space, second many slum dwellers pay unofficial rents to corrupt politicians or landowners to stay on the land they are on illegally, third some slum dwellers in certain countries lack the legal status to actually live in a certain area of the country or city they are in (see: Ho Khau), fourth cities have mostly cash based economies which means that slum dwellers depend on some form of employment to maintain an income and fifth slums are not well protected from weather and natural disasters (Baviskar, 2003; Davis, 2006; Huchzermeyer, 2008; UN HABITAT, 2003). Taking this into account something as common as an illness in the family could require one income making member of the family to stay at home and care for the ill rather than working; if healthcare is not available this could have profoundly negative effects on the family's economic stability (Kantor and Nair, 2005; Huchzermeyer, 2008). If slum dwellers are vulnerable to shocks than the potential "shock" of displacement must be examined. In other words this section

will present data on the effects of forced displacement-resettlement in urban areas of developing countries.

Forced Displacement-Resettlement in the Developing World

It is estimated that each year approximately 10 million persons around the world are forcefully displaced by various development projects (McDonald, Webber and Yuefang, 2008). Displaced persons in urban areas of developing countries, sometimes called IDPs, face a unique situation in that there is little international support for them (Muggah, 2003). Unlike IDPs displaced by conflict or natural disasters, there is no consensus over who is responsible for their wellbeing and no international organizations prioritize the needs of urban IDPs in their agendas (Muggah, 2003). The status of urban IDPs in the international arena, remains ambiguous (Muggah, 2003). For these reasons low income and slum dwelling persons in urban areas of developing countries receive little or no support for “shocks” caused by forced displacement.

For example, in 1961 the Bangladesh government displaced 90’000 individuals, in order to create the Kaptai Hydro dam (Zaman, 1996). At the time Bangladesh had no resettlement policy in place and so the resettlement process was carried out in an improvised fashion. As a result the outcomes for the resettled were mixed. Some received adequate compensation and were able to comfortably relocate while others did not receive adequate compensation or follow-up from government officials and as a result, at the very least, experienced a loss of income and economic security (Zaman, 1996). The lack of policy resulted in a lack of focus from the government, little manpower was dedicated to the resettlement process and only “blanket” compensation was given; any cases needing special attention or additional compensation were not given these opportunities (Zaman,

1996). A lack of policy frame work and implementation, coupled with a lack of administrative and political will, or ability, to carry out a proper resettlement program resulted in negative effects in these case (Zaman, 1996).

Another case of resettlement failure comes from Mumbai. In 2001 the Mumbai government, in partnership with the World Bank, began a massive overhaul of certain transportation networks within the city. In order to complete the desired project 20'000 households were displaced and a resettlement program was initiated (Modi, 2011). While Mumbai did have a resettlement policy created the problem was now both its implementation and the scope of the policy. First, the policy sought mainly to address low income homes, it was designed around compensating squatters and did not focus on private property owners or businesses (Modi, 2011). The low income squatters saw mixed success as most were relocated to housing that had running water and toilets; for some this was a huge improvement in living standards as having running water and adequate sanitation is considered a luxury in this slum, but for others it meant returning to the slum as the property taxes charged on the resettlement housing was too high for many of them to pay (Modi, 2011). Middle income households fared worse as they were given the same compensation to move as the squatters (in dollar value) but usually had to find their own housing (Modi, 2011). Small business owners had mostly success as they were relocated nearby to their original locations, many reported an increase in income, but larger businesses were treated the same as small businesses and did not receive adequate compensation to relocate, their income suffered as a result (Modi, 2011). The blanket policies failed to address the unique needs of each of the relocated households and businesses, basic socio-economic surveys were carried out but their data was seemingly ignored. This arbitrary categorization of households and businesses led to a loss of

income for many of the resettled. Later, after the World Bank conducted follow-up surveys, most of the households and businesses in the medium income category reported that they deemed the resettlement a failure as they had lost business and connections to their old neighbourhood. In contrast some of the lower income residents declared their resettlement a success because they had been moved to a new home with running water and sanitation (Modi, 2011). This example again shows that a human centered approach that is focused on the livelihoods of all the displaced persons with careful consultation is needed to mitigate or eliminate the effects of displacement-resettlement. Compensation alone is not enough to adequately resettle any population because of the unique nature of every household to be displaced.

An interesting case from China shows that displacement-resettlement of low income communities can be used as a development project in itself with the goal to improve the living conditions of the displaced. Seeing that displacement-resettlement leads to loss of land, jobs, homes, food insecurity and access to community China's resettlement policy for the Three Gorges Dam Project attempts to go beyond just compensation (McDonald, Webber and Yuefang, 2008). After The Three Gorges Dam Project displaced millions of Chinese from their homes beginning in the early 2000's Webber and his team conducted surveys and in-depth interviews in the affected urban areas to determine if the resettlement regime used for this project actually improved the lives of the displaced.

Two areas were compared to see what effects Resettlement with Development (RwD) would have using post resettlement income and "social feelings" as the areas to measure (McDonald, Webber and Yuefang, 2008). Both are districts within Hubei province, the first area, Badong, did not have RwD policy applied to its resettlement while the second area, Zigui, used RwD (McDonald, Webber and Yuefang, 2008). In Zigui the government

coordinated resources from the private and public sector to heavily invest in the resettlement sites; schools, factories, universities and hospitals were all built for the resettled (McDonald, Webber and Yuefang, 2008). Many levels of government were involved and money from other Chinese cities and provincial governments was donated to the effort (McDonald, Webber and Yuefang, 2008). In addition to the infrastructure developed the private institutions were encouraged to employ the displaced and government investment in areas like food security was strong (McDonald, Webber and Yuefang, 2008). Richer provinces and areas of China, such as Beijing, were required to pitch in money to the province as it was a poorer region, this money would be used by the local governments for infrastructure development throughout the resettlement process (McDonald, Webber and Yuefang, 2008). The government also ensured that resettled residents were consulted on the move from their old home to their new one (McDonald, Webber and Yuefang, 2008). The result was that most households reported an increase in income, or at least stable finances and most also reported being happy with their resettlement (McDonald, Webber and Yuefang, 2008). In Badong province RWD was not applied and exactly the opposite took place; incomes dropped and most resettled were not happy with their relocation (McDonald, Webber and Yuefang, 2008).

This example demonstrates that displacement-resettlement can result in increased living standards and happiness for those resettled. Along with the other examples provided it shows that resettlement requires a human centered policy implementation, that it must include surveys and interviews including follow-up practices and that compensation alone is not enough to properly resettle a population. In the empirical focus of this thesis it will be evident that, in Thu Thiem, resettlement has not been carried out according to these principles.

Forced Displacement-Resettlement in Thu Thiem Ward, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Like much of the developing world Vietnam is urbanizing. As of April 2009, 30% of Vietnam's population lived in cities, with an annual urbanization rate of about 3%, or about 2 million persons per year (Central Population, 2009). Its total population was 85'789'573 in 2009 of which roughly 25 million were urbanites and 60 million were living in rural areas and its overall annual population growth was 1.2% (Central Population, 2009). Assuming Vietnam's growth rate of about 1.2% has held relatively steady since it is reasonable to predict that the population stands at about 91 million as of early 2014. Ho Chi Minh City had a population of 7.1 million in 2009 (Central Population, 2009). Assuming the city's projected growth rate of about 250 thousand people per year is accurate Ho Chi Minh City should now have about 8.3 million residents in the urban core. It is estimated that the greater metropolitan area of Ho Chi Minh City is home to 18-20 million people (Central Population, 2009). However, as with many developing countries, it is difficult to know if this population figure is accurate. "Unofficial" residents may not be included in this figure and some low-income neighbourhoods or slums may also be excluded. It is difficult to estimate these "unknown" populations but they are likely significant in size.

Since the end of the Vietnam-American war in 1975 Vietnam has undergone economic reforms that have had profound changes on its society. The 1986 Party Congress is most often credited as leading the way towards market liberalization, and it certainly was the most prominent policy change to do so, but in fact changes to Vietnam's economy had already been happening for some time (Gainsborough, 2010; Luong 2003). The name of the policy that Congress devised is most commonly referred to as Doi Moi

(renovation). In the 1980's Vietnam's leadership realized that their version of a planned economy was not functioning and they decided to begin by allowing farmers to sell on the free market (Luong, 2003). Vietnam's government had a unique approach to a centrally planned economy that differed from China's or the Soviet Union's mostly in that it did not have as many strict controls on production and trade (Gainsborough, 2010). Still, farmers and citizens of the country engaged in economic activities outside of the planned economy and the 1986 changes are seen by some scholars to be mostly an official acknowledgement of changes already in motion rather than a radical reform by the government (Fforde, 2009; Luong, 2003; Gainsborough, 2010).

After the 1986 reforms more liberalization by the government over the 1980's and 90's essentially made Vietnam a free market capitalist economy. In 1993 the French President, Francois Mitterrand, visited Vietnam, the first western leader to do so since the end of the war; this was followed by the United States lifting its trade embargo on Vietnam in 1995, effectively opening its economy to the world (Gainsborough, 2010). GDP growth in Vietnam averaged 7.6% through the 1990's, it dipped to about 5% in 1997 and surged to 8% again in 2000 (Fforde, 2009). Foreign investment in Vietnam averages \$14 billion USD a year with total foreign investments between 1986 and 2012 being valued at \$210 billion USD (Vietnam Foreign Investment Agency, 2013). Ho Chi Minh City itself takes a large portion of this investment currently valued at about \$4 billion USD per year for a total of \$32 billion invested since 1986 (Vietnam Foreign Investment Agency, 2013).

Vietnam's economic changes have set the stage for the empirical focus of this thesis; without Doi moi there would be no Thu Thiem New Urban Zone (Khu đô thị mới Thủ Thiêm). Thu Thiem is a Ward within District 2 of Ho Chi Minh City. District 2 covers an

area of 50 square kilometres and, in 2010, had a population of 140 thousand (Ho Chi Minh City Government, 2010). Thu Thiem Ward covers about 7 square kilometers of District 2 (Vietnam Ministry of Natural Resources, 2009). Thu Thiem has been chosen to be a “New Urban Zone (NUZ)”. It is being razed and entirely redesigned to become the modern center of the city and it is said that it will be as modern as Shanghai and Singapore (Ho Chi Minh City Government, 2010; Thanh Nien News, 2013). In order to make room for this large scale development about 15’000 households, or 60’000 people, are to be displaced, and resettled, from Thu Thiem (Harms, 2012). The effects of this displacement-resettlement on the population of Thu Thiem are the main focus of this thesis. There are two main purposes for the construction of the Thu Thiem NUZ: The first, and most important, is prestige; the second is attracting foreign investment.

Vietnam’s economic growth has become somewhat dependant on foreign investment and Thu Thiem is to be on leading edge of bringing capital into Vietnam. As the Thu Thiem NUZ website explains: “[the] government of Ho Chi Minh City is rolling out its red carpet for foreign investors to come to cooperate with the city (Thu Thiem Planning and Investment Committee, 2014).”

Most of the land in Thu Thiem, approximately one third, will be dedicated to transportation networks and a central square (Thu Thiem Planning and Investment Committee, 2014). The East-West highway runs through the center of Thu Thiem and will be connected to many wide avenues and boulevards which are to converge on a central square; the square will be lined with office buildings and “luxury apartments” with shops, cafes and other amenities lining the ground floor areas (Thu Thiem Planning and Investment Committee, 2014). Several bridges, for both pedestrian and motor traffic, are to connect Thu Thiem to Ho Chi Minh City’s District 1, which is the current financial

center of the city (Thu Thiem Planning and Investment Committee, 2014). A 6 lane tunnel, which is part of the East-West Highway, is already completed (Thu Thiem Planning and Investment Committee, 2014). The plan was fully initiated in 2007 and calls for investment have been going out since. The government has not been successful at collecting the desired investment however as the resettlement process has been mired with problems and investors are hesitant to jump into a project with public attention on the resettlement process (Harms, 2013; Tuoi Tre News, 2013). The Planning and Investment committee divides the total area of the NUZ into 8 zones, each having a separate purpose and its own unique personality; so far construction has begun only in one zone as of the summer of 2013 (Thu Thiem Planning and Investment Committee, 2014). It is difficult to determine the exact population of Thu Thiem at this time because of the nature of the flow of residents. The government plans to evict 15'000 households of which 6'400 were reported moved in 2009 (Ho Chi Minh City Government, 2010). No exact figures on progress of the eviction process are available from 2014, the latest estimates are from 2012, but it is likely nearly completed as the landscape of the area resembles that of a war or disaster zone (see annex). Most buildings are heaps of brick and rubble and the population appears to be only on the dozens (Harms, 2013; Stumpf, 2012). The situation is further complicated because some street vendors and former residents occasionally illegally move back into the ward, squatting or otherwise “unofficially living” (Stumpf, 2012).

According to Harms (2012), an anthropologist that has conducted ethnographic research in Ho Chi Minh City for more than a decade, before the eviction process began Thu Thiem was an urban community that was very diverse in nature (Harms, 2012). It was occupied mainly by migrant workers and families that worked in agriculture (Harms,

2012; Diaz, 2002). There was also a large population that relied on fishing (Diaz, 2002). In 2002 25% of Thu Thiem lived on \$50-\$60 per month, 12% on \$15-25 a month and 4% lived on \$15 or less per month (Diaz, 2002). This would mean that as of 2002 16% of Thu Thiem's population was living below Vietnam's poverty line with another 25% or so being classified as low income. Many of the families that lived in Thu Thiem had lived there for generations and held ancestral land. Some lived on urban designated space, others on areas designated for agriculture. Thu Thiem was essentially physically disconnected from much of Ho Chi Minh City, except for a small ferry, until 2011 when District 2 was linked to the financial center of Ho Chi Minh City (District 1) by an underwater tunnel underneath the Saigon River (Thu Thiem Planning and Investment Committee, 2014). The tunnel was paid for entirely by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and constructed by Japanese contractors; JICA also invested in much of the East-West highway that runs from the western side of Ho Chi Minh City into Thu Thiem (JICA, 2010). In addition to the tunnel and the highway JICA is also involved in the Thu Thiem NUZ, but exactly how far their commitment will go is yet to be seen (JICA, 2010). In general this semi-isolation made Thu Thiem a fairly low income community. Harms does note, however, that there were wealthy individuals in Thu Thiem as well and some of them will actually benefit from the NUZ by selling off parcels of land in Thu Thiem piece by piece as compensation rates for the resettlement program rise (Harms, 2013). Residents in Thu Thiem relied on its street level economy just as many Vietnamese urban communities do. Noodle stalls, motorcycle taxis and repair services, women with shoulder baskets of food, drink carts, smoky charcoal fires cooking various meats, neighbourhood child care, gambling, handymen and other economic activities

were an important part of Thu Thiem's economy (Harms, 2012; 2013). The NUZ and its displacement-resettlement process will end Thu Thiem's unique economy.

Much like how Vietnam's population as a whole tends to view agriculture and rural areas as "underdeveloped" and "the past" Thu Thiem was no different (Harms, 2011; Luong, 2003). According to the vision that the Ho Chi Minh City Government and its planners and hold the Thu Thiem described above was "old", "ugly" and "not modern"- it represents the past (Thu Thiem Planning And Investment Committee, 2014). Certain residents of Thu Thiem and other areas of Ho Chi Minh City echo these sentiments (Harms, 2012, 2013; Stumpf, 2012) The displacement-resettlement process in Thu Thiem is not just an eviction of thousands of households, it is an eviction of the past. Thu Thiem's vision dictates that the past of disordered urban chaos is to be replaced with ordered, sleek modernity; the poor, slow residents of the past are to be replaced by the educated, fast walking urbanites of modernity.

The Prestige of Thu Thiem is one of the leading drivers for its creation. Vietnamese society has begun to accept certain definitions of modern that reject former ways of life in the country. For example, in some areas of Ho Chi Minh City public spaces are being "reclaimed" by the government from street vendors and roadside cafés to allow private businesses to build cafés that have their customers sitting inside, away from the street (Harms, 2009). Residents of Ho Chi Minh City say that the old ways of sitting on the street and drinking coffee are seen as "uncivilized" and "unhygienic" while sitting inside a café is seen as "modern" (Harms, 2009). These beliefs are heavily influenced by government crackdowns that aim to clear out street level activity and reinforce private property rights because that is what is "modern", and it lines up with the interests of the Vietnamese state (Harms, 2009). The government of Ho Chi Minh City has been trying to

eliminate slums and low income communities for some time now because they are vowed as unattractive (Loan, 2012). The Vietnamese press can often reinforce these ideas as well, one news report called street vendors a “social evil”- a term that is usually reserved for prostitutes, drug users and criminals (Dung, 2012). Essentially, the government is able to use ideas of modernity and civility as a way to intensify the divide between public space and private in Vietnam and in doing so “aligns the interests of propertied elites with the socialist state’s governing agenda (Harms, 2009, p. 186)”. Similarly, residents being displaced from Thu Thiem interviewed by Harms have said they think the NUZ will be “beautiful” and “modern”. Even after being displaced from their ancestral home their conceptions of modernity and beauty are so strong that the displaced residents are often only concerned with minor details of their eviction like a slightly higher compensation rate or having their property measured properly down to the last square meter; they actually support the displacement-resettlement process as a whole (Harms, 2012). One soon to be evicted resident went as far to call low income homes in Thu Thiem “rat nests” and reported that he was happy they were being razed (Harms, 2012). The NUZ enjoys support from much of Ho Chi Minh City’s population.

The government and planners themselves hold grandiose visions for Thu Thiem calling the project the next “Shanghai” or “Singapore” (Thu Thiem Planning and Investment Committee, 2014). A video explaining the project describes it as “modern harmony” and eloquently explains all of the sections of the project and their purposes: a central square designed to hold 2 million people for festivals and events, a 300-meter high watch tower, highways and carefully planned boulevards decorated with mangrove trees, luxury condos and apartments, office space and lots of retail (Thu Thiem Planning and Investment, 2007). Vietnamese news agency Tuoi Tre introduced the NUZ plans for one

of the first time describing it as a “new, modern transportation and financial center for Vietnam (Tuoi Tre News, 2006)”. In 2005 the Thu Thiem Investment and Planning Committee hired Sasaki and Associates, an architectural and urban design firm based out of Boston and Shanghai, to design the NUZ (World Landscape Architect, 2011). Sasaki’s interviewed and consulted with “stakeholders” and “the government” but does not mention interviewing any residents from Thu Thiem. Their “Thu Thiem Master Plan” was approved by Vietnam’s Prime Minister, Nguyen Tan Dung, in 2011. It calls Thu Thiem a “dynamic, new urban center” that will act as “the façade of Ho Chi Minh City” and will be “pedestrian focused” and “modern” (World Landscape Architect, 2011). In addition to the NUZ itself the highways already constructed that are running through Thu Thiem were all designed in line with the “Ho Chi Minh City Master Plan” and also represent “modern”, “civilized transportation” and are designed to work in harmony with the rest of the project (Phuong, 2007). The plans for Thu Thiem focus on its perceived modernity and its beauty but there is little mention anywhere in the plans of what is to be done with the displaced population of Thu Thiem. Luckily, the displacement-resettlement process has not gone unnoticed and there are several sources, including academic and journalistic, that begin to shed light on the process.

Before a discussion the displacement-resettlement process in Thu Thiem it would be beneficial to give a brief overview of how displacement resettlement typically works in Vietnam. Though Vietnam’s economy has shifted to that of a more-or-less free market model the state still retains official ownership of all land in the country (Gainsborough, 2003; Kim, 2011). Land in Vietnam cannot be privately owned, only land use rights can be given (Gainsborough, 2003; Kim, 2011; Luong, 2003). The State is responsible for housing in Vietnam and is legally required to offer housing to all Vietnamese, however

this is becoming rare in practice (Gunnewiek and Mosselman, 1995). Until 2004 Vietnamese residents being resettled anywhere in the country were offered two forms of compensation: cash for their land or a new home to live in (Kim, 2011). Political and social pressure usually accelerated the process and most residents could not resist displacement (Kim, 2011).

Recent changes to the laws surrounding displacement-resettlement have greatly decentralized the responsibility and decision making process. Municipal, city, district and even ward level governments have the authority to carry out displacement-resettlement programs and administer their own compensation schemes (Kim, 2011). Because of these changes, combined with the rise of property prices in Vietnam, displaced residents now have three options for receiving compensation: negotiate compensation outside official channels and receive a rate higher than what is being officially offered, resettlement in a designated area, or forced compensation and relocation (Kim, 2011). In the case of Thu Thiem the Ho Chi Minh City Government and the District 2 Government are the primary actors involved in the resettlement process (Thu Thiem Planning and Investment Committee, 2014; Natural Resources, 2009). The current decentralized model has led to increased bureaucratic red tape and has made the system very inefficient for dealing with a project on the scale of Thu Thiem (Stumpf, 2012; Harms, 2013; Kim, 2011; Castiglioni et al., 2010) It is also typical for Vietnamese governments to attempt to save costs by offering land to private developers who have agreed to build the resettlement housing required for a given project; this is the case in Thu Thiem (Kim, 2011; Stumpf, 2012).

Vietnam still does not officially allow protests and as a result there are essentially no forms of support from civil society for residents that are being displaced in Thu Thiem (Kim, 2011). Essentially the government will turn a blind eye to protests that it feels do

not threaten the state (Vuving, 2008). For example, Vietnamese farmers protested after rural land grabs by the government took their land in 2007 (Vuving, 2008). These protests were allowed to take place because the protesters were poor farmers with little power and the protests were fairly small. In another example from the same year students protested in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi about attacks by China on Vietnamese fishing boats around the Spratly islands as part of the ongoing dispute for the land by the two governments (Vuving, 2008). These protests were stopped by the government because it feared retaliation by China, it did not want the protests to turn anti-government in nature and it does not like political activity that it cannot control (Vuving, 2008). In essence, the Vietnamese government will allow protests that may help to give the Vietnamese population a false sense of being able to sway the government in its decisions while also remaining non-threatening to the state's existence but it will suppress any protest that actively threatens the state or its objectives (Chu, 2008). Presently there are no reports of organized protests coming from the Thu Thiem project. This could be because most residents are more concerned with simply getting their compensation, perhaps they believe that a protest would be futile, or perhaps the government has suppressed any protest that has happened because it is heavily invested in the project.

The displacement resettlement process began in Thu Thiem in 2002 (Stumpf, 2012; Harms 2012). Residents were initially offered only compensation in the form of payment, by square metre, for their land. The base compensation was 3.6 million Vietnam Dong (VND) per square metre (\$170 USD) or 2 million VND (\$95 USD) if the property was not facing a road (Harms, 2012; Castiglioni, 2010). If residents participated in the revolution or were in some other way credited with aiding the communist victory in 1975 they were given a slight increase in compensation (Harms, 2012). Other heroes of the

revolution received the opposite treatment though. One resident explained that he was told he would receive very minimal compensation for his land, despite being a soldier in the Vietnamese-American war, and this was because he was an unofficial resident (Harms, 2012).

Land that was designated for agricultural use was only compensated at 150 to 200 thousand VND (\$7-9.50 USD) per square metre, despite the land having been urbanized for quite some time (Harms, 2012). Unofficial residents, defined by either a K4 or K3 Ho Khau status, were offered 30% of the base rate if they had lived in Thu Thiem before 1993, 15% if they lived in Thu Thiem between 1993 and 1998 and no compensation at all if they moved in after 1998 (Harms, 2012; Stumpf, 2012).

In 2006, after many residents had complained that they were not receiving enough money to even buy new land, the government raised compensation rates by 1.4 million VND (\$66 USD) per square meter (Harms, 2012). In 2009 another increase took place which raised the compensation by up to 16 million VND (\$760 USD) (Harms, 2012). At best residents were receiving about 16'500'000 VND (\$780 USD) per square metre in 2010 at which time land in District 2 was valued at \$800 USD per square metre (Castiglioni et al., 2010). However, many residents were still receiving only 8 million VND (\$470 USD) per square metre (Giang, 2009). It should also be noted that the compensation rates were not even enough to buy new land and did not include building costs which typically range from \$25-\$150 USD per square metre in Ho Chi Minh City depending on the quality desired (Castiglioni et al., 2010). In addition to the low compensation rates most residents seeking compensation had to wait months or even years to receive their compensation due to inefficient bureaucracy and a lack of funds (Harms, 2012; Stumpf 2012; Nam 2009). Residents who refuse to move are harassed,

threatened with the forceful destruction of their homes, exposed to endless propaganda campaigns throughout Thu Thiem and are generally made to believe that leaving is their only choice (Harms, 2012; Stumpf, 2012; Nam, 2009).

In October of 2004 the Ho Chi Minh City government announced its plan for the first resettlement complex. This marked the first time when residents in Thu Thiem were given a second option to the government's compensation for land. The complex was to be built on land about 7 kilometers from Thu Thiem in the An Phu and Binh Khanh wards of District 2, which are directly adjacent to Thu Thiem (Saigon Times, 2004). The complex was to cost 365 Billion VND (\$17 Million USD) and was expected to have 512 units (Saigon Times, 2004). Construction was to start in early 2005. At this point the government made clear that if residents decided to take an apartment from the resettlement housing they would be given half of the compensation for their land and would be required to buy the apartment themselves (Nguyen and Thao, 2009). The money they would be compensated for their land would not be enough, in most cases, to pay for the resettlement apartments. Private corporations that would eventually have land in Thu Thiem for developments were given contracts to build the resettlement housing, which they had to complete before they could build in Thu Thiem (Nguyen and Thao, 2009; Saigon Times, 2004) In April 2009, ground had only just been broken for the first set of apartments and the government compensated by raising the compensation amounts, as outlined above (Giang, 2009; Dung, 2009). At this time the government also committed to raising the total number of apartments to 12'500 in an effort to accommodate almost all of Thu Thiem's 15'000 displaced households (Dung, 2009). At the time it was estimated that the new apartments, not the original 512, would take 30 months to complete (Dung, 2009). The Ho Chi Minh City government claimed that the resettlement complex was to

be of a similar “modern” style as Thu Thiem and praised its organization, excellent community planning and its environmentalism; it also claimed that its high rise design would be comfortable to the tenants (HCMC Government, 2010). In reality the complex is relatively isolated in a swampy, underdeveloped area beside the East-West highway (Harms, 2012; Stumpf, 2012).

In June 2011, nearly 7 years after construction on them began and 9 years after the displacement-resettlement process began, the first apartments were made available for displaced persons from Thu Thiem; a total of 512 apartments were ready at this time (Dung, 2011). Over the next 6 months the Planning and Investment Committee, and the Ho Chi Minh City Government, began to feel the pressure as it became evident that the second batch of apartments would not be completed on time. In February of 2012 the government began to become impatient and ordered the companies responsible for building the apartments to speed up the process (Mien, 2012; Dinh, 2012). At this point the project’s extremely expensive cost began to become evident. The total cost for the resettlement project had ballooned to nearly \$500 million USD in borrowed funds and the daily cost of servicing the debt was almost \$150 thousand USD (Mien, 2012; Dinh, 2012). By late 2013 no new apartments had been handed over to residents but the Ho Chi Minh City government claimed there would be more available soon (HCMC, 2013). Ironically enough the building of the apartments has taken so long that many residents choose to move elsewhere and the city may now face a surplus of resettlement units in the complex (HCMC, 2013). This surplus may be an early sign of the failure of Thu Thiem to attract investment. In August of 2013 an investment and planning advisor hired to evaluate the situation informed the Ho Chi Minh City government that they should focus on receiving investment for Thu Thiem and slow down on building office space as Ho

Chi Minh City already had an excess amount of offices; in effect the office space in Thu Thiem will remain empty because there is cheaper space available elsewhere (Thong, 2013). There have been no announcements of plans to change the Thu Thiem NUZ schedule or plan as of yet and it seems the project is lumbering forward despite the warning signs.

Harms (2012) and Stumpf (2012) offer the most in depth data on what displaced residents are experiencing through the process. The people of Thu Thiem tell their story from their own perspective through these ethnographies that reveal their true concerns. As the resettlement process is still in progress and the “aftermath” has yet to reveal itself these studies offer us the best firsthand information on how the resettlement process effects the displaced in Thu Thiem.

One of the major losses to displaced residents, already mentioned, is the unique economy of Thu Thiem. That was just part of a larger “culture” of Thu Thiem. Another loss is the actual spaces in the ward. Godfrey (2013) documented his time visiting the last remaining Communal Temple (*Dinh*) in Thu Thiem in 2013. He spent time getting to know the owners of the temple and the people who visited it and learned that it clearly held an important place in their lives (Godfrey, 2013). He was invited to participate in the Vietnamese New Year in 2013 which was to be the last New Year Celebrated in the temple before it was demolished to make way for the NUZ (Godfrey, 2013). One resident, 80 year old Nguyen Thi Lun, explained that her family had owned and tended to the temple for 5 generations, and that it existed long before that (Godfrey, 2013). The temple was demolished in spring of 2013. Other residents explained that they believed that their children would receive a lower quality education going to schools in other districts compared to the education available in Thu Thiem (Harms, 2012; Stumpf, 2012). In

addition to the loss of these physical spaces there are losses that are difficult to quantify like the loss of social networks tied to space and the feelings and memories associated with Thu Thiem (Harms, 2012).

The amount of time that it takes for the compensation money to reach residents is also having effects on their livelihoods. Many residents believe that if they wait in their homes in Thu Thiem the compensation rates will continue to rise, or they will be offered a nicer resettlement apartment (Harms, 2012). Others believe that they will only have to live in temporary housing for a few months, or up to two years, when in reality some resettled families have been living in resettlement housing for more than 10 years (Harms, 2012). Harms says this view of time “implies a linear march toward an ‘end time’ of sorts” where residents expect to have a better living situation than in their current situation in Thu Thiem (Harms, 2013, p. 352). One man interviewed by the Vietnam Ministry of Natural Resources, Dinh Van Lam, explained that he was not offered enough money to even buy a small parcel of land; instead he plans on waiting for a resettlement apartment that will be large enough to hold his family and he also wishes for the compensation amounts to raise again (Nam, 2009). Mr. Lam, like many Thu Thiem residents, is in a dilemma: He can choose to sell his land, but not have enough money to buy new land or build a new house; he can choose to relocate to a resettlement apartment but be unsure of when he will be able to move in and he might have to live in temporary housing for years or lastly, the longer he waits in Thu Thiem the more he’ll be harassed to leave his land and have to live a life among an empty landscape (Nam, 2009). On the extreme end, one resident explained that bulldozers will destroy the homes of anyone who refuses to leave, though the extent to which this takes place is not documented (Harms, 2012). Another relocated woman reported that she and many Thu Thiem residents had

received their compensation but could not afford land elsewhere in the city so they moved back to Thu Thiem illegally (Nam, 2009). She also reported that the city began offering land in another area of the city for homeless residents but that the land had no water or electricity service (Nam, 2009). During these periods of uncertainty and anxiety residents reported that they were unable to carry on with their normal lives (Harms, 2012, 2013; Stumpf, 2012). While they wait, or move to another area of the city, they are unable to build new social networks (Stumpf, 2012).

Finally, even if residents are able to get into the resettlement housing they are still at a disadvantage. Stumpf conducted interviews that revealed that the high rise resettlement apartments are not conducive to supporting the Vietnamese way of life through many ways already mentioned (Stumpf, 2012). Because the amount of space at the street level is limited not many families are able to have space for shops and stands (Stumpf, 2012). The apartments allow residents on each floor to interact with each other well but other floors are more spatially separated from one another making it difficult to connect and create social networks; in addition to this not many people live around the area the resettlement housing is in making it difficult to create more extended social networks (Stumpf, 2012). Some residents are also reluctant to continue living in the high rises because such housing is considered only for poor residents and as such carries a negative stigma (Stumpf, 2012). In summary, the culture and economy of Thu Thiem don't work well when applied to a high rise apartment building (Stumpf, 2012).

So far the data shows that the Thu Thiem project is not going well for the residents that are to be evicted. One question that could remain unanswered is whether the Vietnamese government, or the government of Ho Chi Minh City, are capable of carrying

out a resettlement program that would at least leave the resettled population in the same standard of living they had before they were displaced.

The success of other resettlement programs in Vietnam has been mixed. Beginning in 2013, the A Luoi hydro dam project evicted 274 farmers and rural families from their homes in Northern Vietnam, near to the Laos border (Ty et al., 2013). It is eerily similar to Thu Thiem in that compensation was offered, in the form of “land for land” (the same amount of land taken would be given as compensation), but that no care seemed to go into any other aspect of the resettlement project (Ty et al., 2013). Residents were not consulted on their concerns and the land they were resettled to was poor for growing crops (Ty et al., 2013). This resulted in lowered incomes, tenure security, negative effects on health and unhappy residents (Ty et al., 2013).

In another example Bolay and Du (1999) show that financial support from a ward and district level government in Ho Chi Minh City, as well as organizational support, was used to displace and resettle homes safely for an urban upgrading project. The project took place along two different canals in Districts Binh Thanh and 8 and aimed to clean the canals. Its main goal was to remove public toilets from the canal’s banks and begin operating a sanitation service in the areas (Bolay and Du, 1999). The community was involved in the entire process, adequate compensation and assistance was given to resettled residents and the project was a success in the end; new sanitation systems and workers have kept the canals clean since (Bolay and Du, 1999). Some of the displaced people were given employment as part of the ongoing sanitation improvement project (Bolay and Du, 1999). While this thesis does not necessarily call this form of “employment as development” as an effective form of development, it is certainly a step in the right direction, and better than what is happening in Thu Thiem.

Perhaps the most successful case of displacement-resettlement in Ho Chi Minh City, or Vietnam as a whole, was not exactly a case of displacement-resettlement. In 1991 an urban upgrading project in District 4, often cited as the poorest urban district of Ho Chi Minh City, sought to improve the homes and lives of 900 households by upgrading the entire community (Coit, 1998; Gunnewiek and Mosselman, 1995). All of the residents in the area to be upgraded were squatters, not a single family had official land use rights (Gunnewiek and Mosselman, 1995). Many of the residents were illiterate and had no formal education and many more were poor rural migrants (Gunnewiek and Mosselman, 1995). The project involved not only the ward level government but the city government, various city departments, a Paris-based NGO and the people from the community (Coit, 1998; Gunnewiek and Mosselman, 1995). The residents were relocated on a short term basis while the construction took place but were able to return to their new homes after the project (Coit, 1998; Gunnewiek and Mosselman, 1995). The residents, along with the other involved parties, all worked together to create a scheme that worked to make the upgrading as beneficial to the residents as possible (Gunnewiek and Mosselman, 1995). Consultations at every stage of the project, and for every issue, were made with the residents to ensure they were being treated fairly and that their concerns were being met (Coit, 1998; Gunnewiek and Mosselman, 1995). The residents were given new homes, sanitation and water services were improved and the streets were redesigned (Coit, 1998; Gunnewiek and Mosselman, 1995). Some residents were not resettled with the same neighbours as their original home and their economic networks were disrupted as a result but they did not complain about this fact and otherwise remained happy (Gunnewiek and Mosselman, 1995). Assuming that the data collected from Gunnewiek and Mosselman (1995) is an accurate depiction of that resettlement program's success it demonstrates a

potentially successful method of displacement-resettlement. Compared to the disconnects in Thu Thiem this is a small price to pay for upgraded housing.

These examples show that the Ho Chi Minh City government and the Vietnamese government can be successful at implementing successful resettlement programs, and programs that can benefit both the state and the people in a particular community. Most recently Vietnam, in partnership with the World Bank, has committed to following the World Bank's resettlement standards for another project to take place in the Central Highlands of Vietnam beginning this year (VN Highlands, 2013). This project will displace hundreds of households with the intention of upgrading transportation networks and living standards (VN Highlands, 2013) The Bank's resettlement standards, commonly referred to as "OP 42.1", which is its operational name, is quite strong in its efforts to support "involuntarily displaced persons" (World Bank, 2001). Supported by the Bank, and a robust resettlement plan, Vietnam's government will upgrade homes and communities that will actually benefit the local residents. Assuming they don't stray from the plan this could be the next successful example of displacement-resettlement in Vietnam.

In the next section, the Analysis and Discussion, the data from this section will be analyzed to uncover its development lessons. The development outcomes of the Thu Thiem project as well as Thu Thiem's place in the earlier discussions on urbanization and urban bias will be clarified. All of the ideas and information in the thesis will work together to paint a picture of these particular development conundrums and inform the reader what the lessons are.

Chapter Four: Analysis and Discussion

The “Discussion and Analysis” chapter will analyze and compare the literature discussed earlier with the empirical data presented in the previous chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss, in detail, the issues in the thesis and to explain what the data collected means. It will extract and tease out all of the data in the thesis and make it visible; all of the ideas, issues questions and debates will come together. It will link all of the parts of the thesis together to make sense of what is going on “in the real world”, so to speak. It will also offer solutions, in a general sense, to the issues discussed and will suggest what directions further research should take. More specific solutions will be offered in the conclusion.

The chapter will follow a structured layout so as to keep the discussion on track and logical. In general it will follow the “hierarchy of issues” that was followed in the previous chapters. Some mixing of issues and discussion will occur but using the hierarchy structure will keep things on track. Each section will begin by addressing the most obvious generalizations and end with the most complex extractions.

Urbanization and Urban Bias in the Developing World

The relationship between urbanization and migration is complex, but the relationship most certainly exists. This thesis has stressed urbanization as a pressing issue mostly because of the enormous challenge of organizing spaces for such large concentrations of people. Some of the side effects of urbanization are already seen in some places like Mexico City with its slum population of 4 million. With the developing world’s population only now beginning to surpass the 50% urbanized mark more enormous issues will arise when it reaches 60% urbanized, 70%, and so forth. The data collected by national governments and organizations like the UN and the World Bank prove that the

developing world is urbanizing rapidly. Humans have chosen to make cities our home by organizing our governments and economies around cities. It is obvious that humans are moving to cities in the developing world primarily because they see the urban space as offering the most opportunity for survival and the best employment opportunities.

Whether it is because of government rhetoric and complex belief systems, as is the case in Vietnam, or the centering of the global economy on cities, or for more simple reasons, cities are being made our homes by organized, conscious efforts. Trade, politics, information and now humans are all focused in cities. This urban bias is contributing to the continuing migration to cities and this relationship will sustain itself for some time to come.

Urbanization has been creating an entirely different class of people in many urban areas of the world. This was discussed by Jones and Corbridge (2009), Lipton (1977) and Robbins (2005) when they discussed the centering of the economy on cities. Migrant workers who once participated in an economy almost exclusively based in their community are now participating in the global economy, the wage economy, at increasingly higher rates. They are not producing their own food and thus rely on markets to supply them with food. This class of people is dependent on selling their labour for a wage to survive. They are also dependent on commodity chains for everything they need to survive. These chains are centered in, or at least directed by, entities housed in cities. Whether by choice, or by the sheer push of economic forces making it seem impossible to survive without participating in the wage economy, many rural migrants choose to move to the city in search of prosperity and in doing so are contributing to the change of the entire global economy. More importantly the dependency on a wage and markets to supply necessities makes rural-urban migrants, and many urbanites in the developing

world, vulnerable to economic shocks. While many migrants, and city dwellers, may hold the belief that they can ascend to a higher standard of living by moving to the city and gaining employment, this is not necessarily true. Many attempts at “fixing” urbanization have tried to slow the flow of migration or make the rural areas more attractive to live in. Not only are these solutions not working but it directs focus away from the large population now settled in cities. Rural-urban migration needs to be addressed first and foremost in the cities where the populations already are. Simple solutions like providing appropriate housing, education and services are where governments, international organizations and NGOs should begin to focus.

Urbanization has implications for rural areas as well. The Green Revolution was the international community’s answer to fighting poverty and starvation, though it arguably only had minimal effects on poverty alleviation, which charged rural farmers with feeding the city. As Lynch (2009) discussed, the rural areas depend on the technology inputs designed in the cities, like harvesting equipment, and they depend on the city to consume their agricultural products to generate a living. In effect each city and rural area system could be viewed somewhat as a core/periphery model. Rural areas produce resources and labour that serve the interests of the city, while the inhabitants of the city stand to benefit from this. Rural areas receive less resources of their own unless those resources contribute to generating more things for the city.

The UN data on agriculture shows that it generally does not compete with other areas of most economies in terms of income generation. Though agricultural production is integral to the prosperity of cities there is still a profound imbalance in the allocation of resources to cities. Agriculture is not as valued in the global economy as other things are. In other words, cities require agriculture to survive but rather than spend more on

agriculture to ensure a strong and cheap supply of food, the global economy still allocates more resources to cities and the institutions there. This imbalance is urban bias, agriculture is not recognized to be as valuable in the global economy as most other things, despite it being a vital component to the growth and maintenance of cities. More importantly it is the rural areas that are not important to the global economy because they are not as “productive” areas as urban spaces are.

Despite urban bias cities are simultaneously home to some of the worst poverty the world has ever seen in the form of slums. One of the most common experiences one can have when they travel to a developing country is to see massive wealth directly next to desperate poverty; while this is definitely possible to experience anywhere in the world, but it is more obvious in the Global South. In Ho Chi Minh City it is possible to stand on top one of the tallest and most expensive buildings in South-East Asia and look upon various low income settlements and slums in the surrounding area, including the area of what was once the Thu Thiem community.

The combination of urban bias, urbanization and slums (or urban poverty in general) signals that any form of “trickle-down economics” is clearly not taking place in cities. The absence of top-down economics is most evident in the Thu Thiem project. Thus far it has only harmed the people being evicted from the ward, and cost the government a great deal of money. It only stands to benefit private companies with land usage rights in Thu Thiem.

Urbanization creates slums that are primarily characterized by low-income families and individuals that are vulnerable to economic shocks or to sudden changes in their living situation. The view that Saunders (2010) has on slums as “transitional” spaces where rural migrants move to seek employment so that they may one day own property

and raise their standard of living is not realistic. Slums are not the waiting room for a ticket to prosperity. The people who live in slums are often marginalized and are almost always disadvantaged. This is evidenced by the living conditions in slums which are often lack services of some kind and usually have poor security of tenure. Davis (2006) pointed out that slum growth has actually outpaced overall urbanization in the developing world. Though this is a general statistic it shows that slums are growing in size; they are not constant and they are not shrinking. Saunders' interpretation of the slum as a "first stop" is not accurate because many people living in slums are in fragile financial situations and leaving the slum is usually not possible.

Saunders' view does hold value though in that it explains why people move to cities. Slums may be seen as transitional spaces by many migrants to the city who seek a better life and employment. Urban Bias is also one of the drivers for this migration as it makes cities appear to be prosperous places. Migrants move to the city to support their families and seek a better life but can never make enough to move out of the slum, as they grow older their children must begin to work to support the family and cannot receive an education, the cycle continues. The fragility of the economic lives of people living in slums is of the most concern because many things can happen to disrupt it; the data shows that large portions of slum populations likely live below the poverty line. If an illness in a family can be enough to send it into desperation than larger things like displacement could have disastrous effects. The fragility of their tenure is important as well and the data on slums shows that many people living in slums often live in structures or on land that is not their own. In summary, slums are places of vulnerability. Many of the people living there cannot manage to move out of the slum let alone address minor economic

shocks. Larger shocks like displacement are events that will only lead to more drastic consequences.

The lesson should be that taken out of this section is that if developing countries either choose to make cities large population bases or are unable to prevent this from happening than they must be prepared to deal with the problems, like slums, that come along with large cities. Some countries will not have the resources to address this and they will have to seek assistance. But the flow of urbanization in the developing world is unlikely to be stopped by the governments of those countries. Instead preparations should be made to accommodate the world's populations in cities. Urban poverty is a big problem but it is also not an impossible one to fix. As will be seen in the next sections there are cases of urban upgrading carried out that made a huge positive impact on the people living in slums and low income communities. These strategies could be employed as a way to help people in slums have better living conditions and perhaps even help them out of poverty.

To summarize this section, cities are becoming the primary home of humans of a globalized economy and a perceived or actual need to participate in the wage economy by workers around the world. The population of the world already lives mostly in cities and the overall flow of urbanization will not be significantly altered any time soon, barring some sort of immovable force that requires humanity to do so. In order to challenge these issues cities must be viewed in a holistic way that allows all of the issues associated with such large populations living in cities, especially with regards to slums to become clear.

Forced Displacement and Resettlement in the Developing World

The data on forced displacement-resettlement in the developing world shows us that any kind of resettlement project has the potential to disrupt the lives of the resettled persons. The overall determining factor in how much or how little a resettlement project negatively affects the resettled population depends on the quality of the resettlement project, and its ability to respond to changing needs. There is one item that should be addressed before moving forward. Whenever possible resettlement should be avoided because it is very difficult to ensure that the process won't have negative effects on the displaced, especially when the displaced are low-income individuals and families. In the data section there was a discussion on "Resettlement with Development" and how resettlement can be treated as a development project in itself. While this approach should be the bare minimum to resettlement projects that do occur it should not be taken to mean that resettlement projects should be used as a development strategy in themselves. Certainly there are cases where certain populations and communities must be moved but in every instance possible resettlement should be avoided.

Lee (2006) and Cohen (2006) said that urban internally displaced persons (IDPs) are likely the least researched and least cared for group of displaced persons worldwide. The fact that there is little understanding and support and that International Organizations like the UN are unable to adequately support urban IDPs means that they are a particularly vulnerable group. Taking into account the vulnerability of slum dwellers due to their precarious economic situation and combining it with the lack of support for urban IDPs it is evident that urban slum populations that are forcefully displaced will encounter a situation that is likely to exacerbate their poverty. Sundal (2010) said that forced displacement actually creates slums when not enough care is placed on their relocation.

As much of the literature and data shows slums are often the target of development projects meant to clear the slum or recreate it for various reasons. If people living in slums are forcefully displaced it will not only exacerbate their poverty but it will also only relocate them, it will not improve their standards of living. Whether they move on their own or are resettled as a group, slum populations will just form a new slum where they move, unless the resettlement program is focused on not allowing this to happen. In Thu Thiem this is made worse by the Ho Khau system. The government is not only evicting the poor but it is also punishing them for being poor by offering only 15% or 30% of the value of their land in compensation. The Ho Khau system in Vietnam is useless and does nothing except make internal Vietnamese migrants more poor and disadvantaged. While official residency programs may serve some useful purposes in other places they should be waived during resettlement programs in cases like deciding if residents deserve housing or the resettled population might be unjustly excluded from compensation like in Thu Thiem. In short, resettlement programs should extend universal support and compensation to the resettled population.

Awareness of this issue needs to be raised within International Organizations and a clear mandate needs to be given to an international group responsible for assisting urban displaced persons. It seems that in many cases the governments of developing countries are unwilling or unable to protect urban IDPs given their small amount of resources or because of negligence. In the case of Thu Thiem it is unlikely that the Ho Chi Minh City government will ask for assistance from NGOs or any other organization to help with the resettlement process because this would be an admission of failure. Seeing as the government is so heavily invested both financially and politically in the project, and is growing desperate because of this, it will move to complete the displacement-resettlement

process as quickly as possible. Getting outside groups involved at this point would be displeasing and “messy” for the Ho Chi Minh City Government. In other cases of displacement governments should invite NGOs, International Organizations, the private sector and most importantly the population to be displaced to participate in the resettlement process to make it as beneficial as possible for the displaced population. This cooperation can be used to minimize the “grief, cultural involution and fundamental restructuring” of lives that Weist (1995) was discussing. NGO’s have specific focuses and can often work quickly and efficiently to complete their goals as they can avoid the bureaucratic red tape that governments and International Organizations face.

NGOs, along with Universities or other research entities, could be an integral part of the resettlement process that would have the responsibility of researching the needs and concerns of the soon-to-be displaced population. One of the most valuable lessons discussed in this thesis is that displacement-resettlement projects that do not listen to the population by conducting some form of research and maintaining communication during the resettlement process are doomed to fail. The examples in Bangladesh and Mumbai demonstrate the results of displacement-resettlement without adequate research. The Mumbai example in particular shows that low-income individuals are not the only ones affected by forced displacement-resettlement and that a holistic approach to the research and implementation of a displacement-resettlement project needs to be taken to avoid excluding any socio-economic groups. This includes researching and implementing appropriate forms of compensation, rather than “blanket” compensation. The group that knows what the resettled population needs the most urgently is the resettled population themselves.

While some scholars like Picciotto (2001) and Shin (2008) assert that the market can be used to allocate housing to displaced populations this is unlikely to be successful. This is because the function of the capitalist market is primarily to maximize profit. Its theoretical function is also to distribute resources efficiently but this has never been realized in any sense of the term and is evidenced simply by the existence of slums, and by the growing divide between rich and poor around the world. As Harvey (2003) said, private, profit driven entities in a market economy are unlikely candidates to carry out successful resettlement projects for the same reasons. Similarly, like in the case of Thu Thiem, profit driven entities should not be given sole responsibility for any one part of a resettlement project when completing the project as quickly and cheaply as possible is in their interest. In Thu Thiem some of businesses offered land in Thu Thiem were told they had to build resettlement housing before they could have land usage rights. While offloading costs to the private sector away from the government might sound good in principle it ignores that in this situation the private entities are going to build the housing as quickly and as cheap as possible, which means they may cut corners. In the case of Thu Thiem it is evident that the resettlement housing built is not conducive to life in Ho Chi Minh City. This is why non-profit entities like NGOs and international organizations like the UN should be incorporated into resettlement projects, it is their job to assist people and not to make a profit. This section is not saying that the private sector cannot be part of the resettlement process in developing countries at all, but it is saying that the private sector cannot do it alone.

In summary, slum populations are already vulnerable to economic shocks, being forcefully displaced from their home is certainly an extreme example of this especially if the resettlement program that is employed for them does not adequately address their

needs. The process of displacement-resettlement would be more successful if international organizations were able to assist. A clear mandate needs to be given to an organization that will focus on urban slum populations that have been displaced because these organizations can bring in resources that some developing countries may not have. In order to complete a successful resettlement program in the developing world research will need to be conducted on how to best carry out the resettlement and constant communication with the resettled population during the process will need to be maintained. Forced-displacement and resettlement is not a naturally occurring element of development, it is an avoidable, costly and messy event that is caused by poor planning or the absolute need to move a population. Lastly, market driven solutions to displacement-resettlement are likely to fail as profit driven entities are only meant to make a profit, they are not designed to carry out development projects with the interests of their subjects as the primary concern.

Forced Displacement-Resettlement in Thu Thiem, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

The most obvious lesson to come out of the Thu Thiem displacement-resettlement program is that the compensation offered is insufficient to prevent the displaced population from being able to maintain their standard of living. Diaz (2002) and Castiglioni (2010) show that much of the population of Thu Thiem was low-income or below the poverty line which means their ability to respond to the economic shock of forced displacement will be minimal. Thu Thiem was, by many accounts, a slum. The people living there, evidently, had very weak tenure for their homes, which according to UNHABITAT (2006) is a primary characteristic of slums. The compensation offered by

the Ho Chi Minh City government is not enough to even buy new land, let alone build a new house to minimal standards. This will certainly exacerbate the poverty of the already poor residents of Thu Thiem. At the very least it will force them to relocate to another low-income community on the fringes of the city where the property value is low enough for them to afford a new home. As discussed in the data section it also leads to residents returning to Thu Thiem once they cannot find another place to live. When the resettlement housing option is chosen this has similar effects, keeping in mind that if the apartment was chosen the residents had to purchase it and they were only given half of their compensation payment. In this scenario, assuming the family is able to afford the apartment, they are still being undercompensated and are essentially being made to take on a portion of the financial burden of the NUZ's cost. In short, if a resettlement program is to offer compensation it must at least aspire to keep the recipient at the same standard of living that they had before they are displaced. In the case of Thu Thiem specifically it was a poor choice to make the residents pay for the resettlement housing because many of them could not afford it. Because of the apartment surplus the Ho Chi Minh City government now has to pay both the costs of the apartment buildings and the compensation to the Thu Thiem residents, costing them more money. In most cases, the compensation offered was simply too low to reasonably expect low income individuals to relocate without repercussions. In a country where the state owns all of the land and the law says that the government must provide adequate housing to every individual it should not be difficult to supply homes for the resettled population of Thu Thiem.

The planning and execution of the resettlement process was not well designed. When the government decided to build the NUZ it should have taken the appropriate steps to prepare the population of Thu Thiem for resettlement. Instead it began by evicting

residents from the beginning. The resettlement housing should have been completed before the eviction process began; the fact that there was a 7 year gap between when the resettlement housing was promised and when it was completed shows negligence on the part of the authorities. The fact that they waited to begin building apartments for the rest of Thu Thiem's population only after the original 512 apartments were completed also shows a lack of preparation. Similarly the amount of time it takes for compensation payments to reach the resettled population is unacceptable, and shows a lack of planning. It can also be attributed to the massive cost of the program, though if the government is so financially strained that it cannot complete adequate housing for the people in Thu Thiem it should have never moved forward with the project in the first place. This delay in housing or compensation leads to anxiety in the resettled population. While they wait for their compensation they cannot continue on with their normal routine. This is highly disruptive and causes a lot of stress. The authorities also did not conduct appropriate research for the planning of the resettlement apartments as evidenced by the complaints from the resettled residents saying that they could not conduct normal life in a high rise apartment. If the residents of Thu Thiem had been interviewed before the resettlement housing was built more appropriate housing could have been made that they could afford and be happy to live in. As discussed in the above section, and the literature review, the concerns of the resettled population need to be prioritized for a resettlement project to be successful. Much of the literature shows that resettlement can be successful when consultation with the resettled population takes place before, during and after the process. This must also be accompanied with a monitoring process that can address issues that come up during the resettlement program. In a different example Modi (2011) demonstrates what happens when these principles are not followed in India; the resettled

population ends up worse off than when it started. The lessons here are that a successful resettlement program will include detailed planning and preparation before it begins. It will incorporate the population to be resettled into the planning process so that it is designed to meet their needs. According to McDonald, Webber and Yuefang (2008) it will also invite various levels of government and the private sector. This collaborative format of resettlement seems to be the most likely to succeed in maintaining or improving the standard of living for the resettled population because it focuses on the population to be displaced and incorporates various experts and entities into the process.

To be clear, every displacement-resettlement program has a purpose. It is probably not often that governments carry out a slum upgrading program with the sole goal of improving the lives of the population that is the subject of the project. There are likely other goals that they are trying to achieve. Displacement-Resettlement projects aren't being carried out for the benefit of the displaced population most of the time and likely serve some other purpose like making room for a development project like Thu Thiem or to clear out a slum that is seen as an undesirable element of the city. In this way forced displacement-resettlement can never truly be called a "success" because it is still a form of oppression against the population being displaced. For our purposes a "successful" displacement-resettlement program is being described simply because they will continue to happen and it is easier to suggest strategies of displacement-resettlement that can benefit the displaced population rather than suggesting that all forms of displacement-resettlement simply stop all together.

Luong (2003) described an accurate history of the Ho Khau system. It never fully succeeded in carrying out its job of trying to halt rural-urban migration and movement around Vietnam in general. This says a few important things about Vietnam's

urbanization. First, it shows that despite the risks associated with being an informal resident many Vietnamese still choose to relocate to the city. Second, it proves that the UNFPA report which describes why Vietnamese rural-urban migration is taking place is accurate. This shows that Hardy (2001) may have been wrong to say that the household system is easily negotiated. This may be true in certain circumstances but when the registry works in the favour of the powerful in Vietnam, like it does in Thu Thiem, there is no negotiating it. With this said the Vietnamese government should dismantle the Ho Khau system. As it fails in its intended function and serves only to punish Vietnamese migrants who are moving despite its existence, it serves no useful purpose in Vietnamese society. In the case of the Thu Thiem resettlement program the authorities are actually using it to their advantage to give lower compensation rates to unofficial residents. In its current use Ho Khau is only effective at keeping poor people poor and making them more desperate. If the residents receiving the highest bracket of compensation are unable to buy a new home then low-income recipients of much less compensation cannot be expected to find adequate housing either. This shows that if residency status exists in a region carrying out a resettlement program that it should not be a factor in determining the compensation amount given to the resettled population. Doing so is essentially a denial of the right to shelter.

To be clear, the use of Ho Khau as an excuse to not pay compensation is obviously crooked but it serves mainly as a scapegoat for the socialist-in-rhetoric-only government of Vietnam. If Vietnam were truly socialist it would not have used the registry system as it did to keep compensation payments from reaching the unofficial residents. Ho Khau should be dismantled, as mentioned above, but if it was that doesn't automatically mean that the Vietnamese or Ho Chi Minh City government would start

paying compensation to everyone in displaced communities, it would just make it harder for it not to. In any case the governments should be sensitive to the needs of displaced persons in Thu Thiem, and in other cases, because housing and shelter is a basic human need. If the government is going to take away the home then they must provide a new one.

The displacement-resettlement process will separate the residents of Thu Thiem from their cultural space and socio-economic networks. In its hurry to displace the population the Vietnamese government did not adequately plan to relocate not only the displaced persons, but their social networks as well. Castiglioni et. al (2010) and Lio Ruo Xuan (2012) pointed out the displacement will destroy local economic and social networks in the process of displacement. In the data section various sources including Harms (2012) and Stumpf (2012) supported this literature when they discussed how Thu Thiem, like many areas in Ho Chi Minh City, had a strong street level economy. Many displaced residents will be scattered around the city and will be forced to integrate into new communities, which will be difficult. Those who choose to live in the resettlement housing will have difficulty replicating the same networks and economy in a high rise apartment building. If the displaced residents are in temporary housing then there are practically unable to form new social networks while they wait to be moved. Though it may not sound urgent it is important to recognize that the informal economy is very important in Vietnam and especially so in low income communities. Once the ability to create the networks needed for this economy is removed it becomes very difficult for low income residents to generate an income. Much of the time employment is directly attached to the space that someone lives in. Unlike the example by McDonald, Webber and Yuefang (2008) where the project involved giving jobs to the displaced population,

the NUZ in Thu Thiem will only employ middle and upper class professionals and people able to work in the formal economy. Again, this is a sign of poor planning by the government and a result of no consultation with the residents.

Another possibility is this poor planning by the government to eliminate the street level economy maybe purposeful. As Harms (2009) showed there is a conscious effort in Ho Chi Minh City to reduce street level activity because it is not seen as modern. Removing the informal economy, and the people who participate in it, is definitely part of the vision of the NUZ but if it is a vision of the resettlement housing too then the displaced population is being forced to participate in this vision in their own home. Whatever the reason for the elimination of the street level economy it is going to have negative economic effects on the displaced population. As discussed earlier urbanites generally rely on the wage economy, or some kind of employment whether it is formal or not, to supply them with the income necessary to survive in the city. In eliminating the economy of Thu Thiem the government has made it harder for the displaced to participate in the city's economy and generate a wage.

Thu Thiem is an eviction of the past. As long as projects like the Thu Thiem New Urban Zone continue the population of Ho Chi Minh City will come to view office towers, luxury apartments, ordered pathways and retail space as a normal part of everyday life and culture. This will not only eliminate the unique aspect of spaces that do not fit this definition, but it will make anything outside it a potential target for change. The NUZ will not benefit the displaced residents; rather it will benefit the companies that occupy that space and the middle and upper class people who go there to consume "modern" luxuries. It is meant to benefit property owning elites and the ruling political class in Ho Chi Minh City and Vietnam. In razing Thu Thiem and displacing its

population Ho Chi Minh City has not solved the “problem” that it saw as the poverty in Thu Thiem, it has just moved it elsewhere. If the city truly wants to eliminate poverty it cannot do it by upgrading urban spaces and shuffling the poor people to less noticeable, more peripheral areas of the city. It will have to make a strong, coherent urban upgrading policy that aims to keep the needs of all of Ho Chi Minh City’s residents as its top priority, not just the more wealthy ones. Urban upgrading without good policy and good planning will only result in more poor people. The current mode of thinking is contradictory. Poverty is not fixed by hiding it, but by addressing it.

The examples by Bolay and Du (1999) and Gunnewiek and Mosselman (1995) show how effective urban upgrading or resettlement can be done in the context of Ho Chi Minh City that will not only beautify the city but will also benefit the community’s residents. If Vietnam is truly committed to the World Bank’s resettlement policy “OP 42.1” then it will have to be taking a closer look at what displacement will do to the population that is moved. At this point it is not only costing the people being displaced, but it is also costing the Vietnamese government as well. A better approach to displacement-resettlement projects would benefit the entire country.

Thu Thiem’s resettlement project was not a failure just because of poor planning or a lack of investment. It was a failure because the government of Ho Chi Minh City, and to a lesser extent the Government of Vietnam, genuinely thinks that Thu Thiem is a good project for the city. It is likely that it recognizes the negative effects that the displacement will have on the residents of Thu Thiem but thinks that the sacrifices are necessary for “the greater good”. When the government of Vietnam initiated the famous economic reforms of 1986 it did so out of desperation. The planned economy was failing and the Communist Party knew it. The slow move towards a market economy was

because it was what would preserve the Vietnamese state and by extension the Communist Party's rule by having a strong economy. Similarly in Ho Chi Minh City the government wants to move "forward" and make Ho Chi Minh City modern not just because they think that tall towers and office buildings are attractive but because they believe that this model of development is the best one for Ho Chi Minh City. They are doing what they think is best for Ho Chi Minh City, just as the 6th Party Congress did what it thought was best for Vietnam in 1986 with the economic reforms. This kind of paternal thinking is noted by Luong (2003) and Gainsborough (2010) and can be summed up by saying that the Vietnamese government claims to know what is best for its citizens and for the country. It might be obvious that the NUZ will have a limited impact on the population of most of Ho Chi Minh City's population in any way other than taking the land of the current residents, but the governments of Ho Chi Minh City and Vietnam are likely doing what they think will preserve their rule and the economic success of the city and of the state.

A major lesson is that forced displacement-resettlement does not have to harm the livelihood of the displaced population. A successful program can be devised by following three simple principles: creating an extensive plan before any resettlement takes place; inviting the participation of the population to be resettled, this includes monitoring and evaluation at all stages of the program; and adequate investment (spending) to carry out the steps of the resettlement plan. The Ho Chi Minh City government did none of these things and as a result the livelihoods and quality of life of the displaced population are suffering. Resettlement programs around the world can benefit from these principles, however, they also require actively thinking about slums in a different way as well. Slums

are still seen as an undesirable element of the urban landscape; this thinking will need to change in order to have successful displacement-resettlement.

The central lesson comes from an examination of all of the issues discussed in this section. Urbanization is maintaining its growth as rural migrants move to the city for employment and what they see as a way to raise their standard of living. This is largely because the global economy is centered in cities. As the world continues to urbanize slums will continue to grow meaning that more people will become vulnerable to things like forced displacement-resettlement. International organizations, like the UN and many NGOs, do not have the mandate or the resources to assist people forcefully displaced in urban areas. Forced displacement-resettlement will happen more as slums grow and cities expand. If large slum populations are going to be subjected to forced displacement it should be done in such a way that at least maintains the living standard and social networks of the displaced population. If possible displacement-resettlement should be treated as a development project in itself and should have the goal of improving the lives of the displaced, though this might be wishful thinking as the resources and motivations required in much of the global south may not always be available.

To close this section it must be said that in a perfect world forced displacement-resettlement would never happen. The home is a very intimate, important place for nearly everyone in the world and ejecting people from their homes is almost certain to have downsides even if they are subtle or not easy to notice at first glance. If at all possible forced displacement-resettlement should be avoided to prevent the downsides that were discussed before like loss of culture, harm to livelihood and standard of living, depression and unhappiness, financial costs and perhaps most importantly a loss of social and economic networks. This discussion and the next section, the conclusion and

recommendations, offer suggestions on how to best carry out a displacement-resettlement project to have positive effects on the displaced population, but they do not argue that it should never happen, nor does any other part of the thesis. A pragmatic approach was taken so as to have the most meaningful impact on how development studies thinks about forced displacement-resettlement. Deciding whether or not displacement-resettlement should ever take place or not is something the reader can conclude on their own after reading this thesis. It should be clear what conclusion that will be based on the data supplied. Simply writing a thesis saying that it should not happen at all would not offer any solutions to current projects being improperly carried out and it would be a hopelessly naïve attempt at stopping forced displacement-resettlement.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

With the developing world rapidly urbanizing developing countries are going to need to develop strategies to combat urban poverty that do not try to stop urbanization but instead focus on assisting migrants and low income community's with the challenges they face as part of being in the city. Slums are communities with inhabitants in precarious situations that are vulnerable to sudden changes in their lives including loss of income or loss of home. Forced displacement-resettlement can have major effects on the displaced population. Using examples from the developing world it is clear that a successful resettlement program involves robust planning, democratic participation from the resettled population at all stages of the process and enough investment to carry out the goals of the resettlement. The success of a resettled program is measured by its ability to either resettle the population with no reduction in their standard of living or, preferably, by raising it.

In Thu Thiem Vietnam, the displaced population faces two major issues from the displacement program. The first is the loss of their homes and the space that they occupied. This separates them from the physical spaces in Thu Thiem, like their homes, the local meeting places and its location in Ho Chi Minh City. It also separates them from non-physical things like the economy of Thu Thiem and the social networks that they had there. The second major issue is the financial burden. Thu Thiem's displaced residents are compensated much less than what their land is worth. As a result many of them cannot afford to buy a new home, or move into the offered resettlement housing and as a result they are more poor and vulnerable than before the project began. The Ho Chi Minh City government was unwilling to make a resettlement plan that made sure not to lower the

living standards of the displaced Thu Thiem population because they were too focused on the modernization project of the Thu Thiem New Urban Zone.

There are several lessons learned in this thesis. Slums are growing while simultaneously being frequently targeted for forced displacement-resettlement. Because of the fragile nature of slums this often has can have negative effects on their livelihood but, unlike persons displaced by conflict or environmental disasters, there is a lack of international support and recognition for urban displaced persons. This lack of support and recognition makes urban displaced persons particularly vulnerable to the negative effects of forced displacement. International organizations, like the UN and NGOs, must agree on a concrete definition of what urban displaced persons are and must extend support to them similar to the support offered to refugees, when possible. Mostly this support will be in the form of knowledge of how to create a successful development program and monetary support for areas lacking the necessary funds to carry out the programs.

Additionally displacement resettlement programs in the developing world should follow three principles to minimize the negative effects of displacement and maximize the potential benefits. First, the project must be planned before any resettlement begins. This involves designing appropriate compensation regimes which includes resettlement housing and how to mitigate the effects of the displacement as best as possible. This requires knowledge of the population to be displaced. Second, the population to be displaced must be involved in this planning process and must be consulted with throughout the process. In addition their resettlement should be monitored so that any issues that may at any point of the resettlement can be addressed. Lastly, there must be

adequate investment (funds) available to complete the resettlement process as it is planned. The Ho Chi Minh City government did none of these things adequately.

The success of these principles in the future requires that slums no longer be treated as real estate to be taken over by authorities. There should be an effort to remove registry systems like *Ho Khau* because they will only make resettlement more difficult or damaging for poor people in the future. Slums must be seen as what they are- human settlements. They deserve the respect that other communities do and cannot be less valued than other settlements. If international organizations were to agree on a definition of urban displaced person and they were to coordinate their efforts to assist this group they could also advocate for the rights of slum dwellers in cases of forced displacement-resettlement.

Forced displacement-resettlement does not have to be a negative experience for the people involved. It can mean moving from the slum to a new, planned and healthier community. If the principles discussed above are followed during the resettlement process and international organizations are able to assist in the process than this can easily become a reality. Ho Chi Minh City, and Vietnam as a whole, actually has an excellent position to make the success of forced displacement-resettlement a reality. The Vietnamese state owns all of the land in the country, a particularly rare occurrence around the world today. In the case of Thu Thiem they could have given the land for new homes to the displaced population at no charge and given enough compensation for a comfortable new home at a similar cost to the current resettlement process, or perhaps less. Ho Chi Minh City was in a position with enough resources that they could have actually improved the lives of the displaced population.

Ho Chi Minh once said "...Our lives are now much better, but Vietnam remains a very poor country. We need to work much harder." The governments of Ho Chi Minh City and Vietnam should recall these words of their President while going through Vietnam's current era of modernization. As much of the country improves on the wave of success that Vietnam's economy has enjoyed in recent decades no one needs to be left behind. The displacement-resettlement program in Thu Thiem was an opportunity for the authorities to extend a helping hand to the poor population of Thu Thiem. Instead they swatted them aside.

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Annex



Rubble in Thu Thiem. Photo: Adriana Roos (<http://adrianaroos.com>). Do not copy or distribute without permission.



A woman cycles by a destroyed home in Thu Thiem. Photo: Adriana Roos (<http://adrianaroos.com>). Do not copy or distribute without permission.



Empty homes in Thu Thiem. Photo: Adriana Roos (<http://adrianaroos.com>). Do not copy or distribute without permission.



A demolished home in Thu Thiem. Photo: Adriana Roos (<http://adrianaroos.com>). Do not copy or distribute without permission.



Thu Thiem from above, July 2012. Photo: author.



The progress of the eviction is evident in this July 2013 photo. Photo: author.



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