Cam Thanh

Situated in the southeast of Hoi An, Cam Thanh landscape is one of the larger communes and is an intricate system of waterways and mangrove forests. The commune is separated into 8 hamlets. Most of the household’s fish or harvest leaves of the Nipa Palm Tree and bamboo stalks to construct walls and roofs for homes. Cam Thanh is also very susceptible to flooding and storms due to the location downstream of the Thon Bon River.

Tourism was recently developed. The commune has been changed to accommodate them. For example, there use to be a fish market but at the beginning of the year, they closed because the smell turned away tourists.

The fishermen of the commune take part in two types of fishing, near and far. Near fishing takes place in the waterways that weave through the commune. Far fishing requires the fishermen to travel to Cu Lao Cham and the surrounding waters. The weekly income varies from 1,000,000 VND to 5,000,000 depending on the type of fishing, the size of the boat, the time and the season. There are no regulations on fishing.

Another major source of income for families it to harvest coconut tree leaves for building material. The leaves are dried, cut, and then sewed together to make walls and roofs. The harvesting is seasonal. Typically from February to July. After the rainy season they do not cut the trees. Companies will hire families to take care of the trees for 100,000 VND daily. So they do not belong to the people. Typically construction companies or tourist companies will buy these to construct tourist facilities. Residents will also opt to construct their homes from these leaves as well. They are cheaper than cement and brick but the families need to replace then annually as they cannot withstand rain and wind. Other major areas of employment are within the tourism industry and construction. Typically, the children are more drawn to these industries.

Urban Services and Housing

Water

Urban services vary from hamlet to hamlet. The water quality and electricity is good through the year but access is not consistent for every resident. For example, hamlets 4 and 7 receive consistent service but hamlet 7 does not receive enough clean water. They have to go the village next to them. In hamlet 2, the water supply is not adequate. There are 10 households that do not have water and the well water or underground water is not sufficient during the hot season. Families will have no access to water for a month. The family we spoke with had to fill big blue containers of water in Cua Dai and transport back to their home for use once every 3
day. This costs them 15,000 VND every trip averaging out to roughly 150,000 monthly. For a family whose income is approximately 3,000,000 VND for a household of six.

Electricity

There are two electrical systems in Hoi An, the general system or old system and RIBIT, the new system. Hamlet 2 only has access to the general system, which is the weaker of the two but still have to pay prices for RIBIT (2 times more than the general system). There are about 100 households in the commune that are in this situation.

Drainage

The drainage system in the commune is not very good. During flood season the streets take roughly 4 or 5 days to one week to drain. There is also no wastewater collection system. The residents will collect the wastewater in tubs and walk them over to the river (or wherever) and dispose.

The road was paved a few years ago which in turn raised the land prices in the commune. Due to the natural disasters and the hit to the coast, local residents are selling their land to foreigners and relocating in-land. Most of them are relocating to Cam Thanh.

Housing

There are no major housing construction projects in the commune. Usually, children will marry and move into new homes. The land area has also stayed the same. There are two types of homes in the commune, permanent and temporary. The city does have a program where they have been replacing the temporary homes with more permanent ones.

Environment and Climate Change

Natural Disasters severely affect the people of Cam Thanh. Typically, the storms do the most structurally damage but the floods are the most affecting to the people’s livelihood and health. In the past, there were roughly 7 to 8 storms and presently, they can have 12 to 13 annually. From 2006 – 2010 the community experienced the big storms that lasted for days. In the most extreme damages it will take the family a month to recover but because they are so accustomed, they can recover in a week or two. To fully recover means the water is drained and the mud is clear out and the roofs are remade. During the first 10 days, families cannot fish. Water from the floods will drain fairly quickly due to the location of the commune. However, flood levels could rise to 2 and ½ feet. During those times, the families will gather on beds or ledges until the water subsides.
In some cases people need to be evacuated to schools, community centers, or multiple level homes. Each hamlet has a rescue team who places priority on people living in temporary homes, the elderly, women and children.

**Local Governance**

The local government will support the rebuilding of homes and relocation of people. However, there are no awareness or education programs. There are monthly meetings held where the divisions will explain to the community changes, projects, and facilitate discussion related to current community related issues.

In addition to the government, there are also the Farmer’s Association and Women’s Association that are very prominent in the commune. Both groups hold separate monthly meetings to address their areas of interest. Farmers will discuss new fishing methods, flood, or rights on the farmers.

Both groups offer financing options for members. The Women’s Association will offer loans with an interest rate of 0.65% and the Farmer’s Association offers loans at a 0.6% interest rate. The bank’s interest rate starts at 1.02%. The Farmer’s Association has conditions for the loan. The person must use the money to build a toilet, bathroom or well.

All the people we interviewed in Cam Thanh expressed their want for more educational programs that discuss climate change mitigation and environmental issues or disaster alleviation methods with brochures, surveys, etc. They also made it a point to note that these must be consistent.

**Minh An**

Also known as the Ancient Quarter or the city center, Minh An is the economic hub of Hoi An City. It has the highest concentration of hotels, restaurants, and business. The majority of tourist activity is conducted in this ward. There are also a number of heritage sites located within the ward. The urban services that were identified as inadequate were: street conditions, water drainage, wastewater drainage, electricity, building construction and solid waste collection. Although many of the families still live and work in the same homes as they have for generations prior, due to the increase in land value and the inadequate urban services, many families have sold their properties and moved to the periphery.

The impact of tourism and urbanization vibrates throughout Minh An. During the questionnaires that were distributed in the second stage of the community profiling process, there were many positives associated with the increase in tourism. The recurring positive was the rise in livelihood and income for the local residents. A recurring negative was the influence
of “western life” on the youth. This prompting drug, alcohol, and the increase disregard for traditional culture. In addition to social changes, there are visual changes, like the congestion in the streets and the number of taxis in the city.

Due to the importance of Minh An to the economic development of Hoi An, there are many government driven efforts to protect the unique characteristics of the community. For example, the major streets of Minh An are closed at specific time for pedestrian and non motorized transportation only. Once a month during the 14th day of the lunar month, electricity is forbidden and the only source of light is lanterns. These are only two examples of the steps taken to preserve the traditional cultures and minimize impacts of urbanization.

Flooding was a major concern for Minh An due to its proximity to the river. Families are given roughly a day or two to prepare, if new reports and weather forecasting is correct. Families usually move their belongings onto the second floor, if available, or to other dry locations. Flooding characteristically occurs for three to four days and will sometimes last for a week. This depends on the intensity of the storms. Typically, it will take approximately one month for families to recover. The major streets to flood are Bach Dang, Nguyen Thai Hoc, and Tran Phu Street. These are also the slowest areas to recover due to the severity.

**Cam Ha**

Cam Ha is located in the northwest area of Hoi An City. It is another larger commune with roughly 1,570 households. Although it is roughly the same size as Cam Thanh it is not separated into hamlets or villages. The people make their living from growing flowers, ornamental trees and handicrafts (lanterns). Almost all households will have multiple sources of income due to the seasonal characteristics of growing flowers and ornamental plants. On the low end, the monthly income is around 2,000,000 VND. (We did not get a max because most of the people did not want to talk about their income).

**Urban Services and Housing**

Each house has an underground well that adequately supplies them with water. The electricity is adequate, although the previous year they had frequent outages. They also have a waste water system and solid waste is collected regularly.

The infrastructure is slightly better than the other areas of Hoi An. This is because the residents paid a higher land tax to improve the roads. This happened roughly 10 years ago.

The housing conditions are also better in Cam Ha than the other areas. There is more multiple story permanent housing due to a government program to replace temporary housing that
started in 1990. There are also a significant number of households that have moved out of the Ancient Quarter because the land is cheaper and they have more room.

**Environment and Climate Change**

Cam Ha is not affected by floods because the commune is on a higher elevation. However, they do experience severe storms. Depending on the severity, it could take them between a week to month to recover. The community did collectively note that the storms have been getting progressively bigger and more frequent. In the past they had about 3 per year and currently they have 6 or 7. As with Cam Thanh, Cam Ha does have a rescue team that places the elderly and children as priority.

On the northern end of the commune, there is Tra Que vegetable planting village. This has recently been developed mostly for tourist but historically belonged to the local residents. Children support their parents in tending to the gardens but have jobs in town.

In the village, much of the land is being bought by people and investors in DaNang to develop, the only exception to the sale of farmland. This is not permitted by the city. Recently, the area has seen an increase in land prices. Some families have platted off their land selling to multiple people for a profit. There are plans to make the village into an Eco-village but not much was found out in the interview process.

There are two homes that take part in an eco-tourism project. The guests are picked up from the hotels, given a tour of the garden, have the option of working in the garden and the day is ended by preparing a meal from the fresh vegetables. The once state-owned turned private enterprise, Hoi An Tourism Company began the project about 5 years ago. Ironically, the high volume season for the tour is flood season. Due to the higher elevation the area does not flood but is affected by storms.

**Cu Lao Cham Island**

The Cu Lao Cham Biosphere Reserve is a collection of 8 islands. The fishing Community of Thein Hiep is located on the main island, or the only inhabitable one. The community is comprised of 4 villages, Bai Huong Village, Lang Village, Cam Village and Bai Ong Village.

**Bai Huong Village**

There are approximately 113 households in the village. It has been recorded that the total population of the village is 418 people. 106 leave for education or employment. This leaves an actual population of 312 residents. Of that number 174 are of working age (15-60) and the other 138 are elderly, children or pregnant women.
The kids leave to look for employment other places or for education. The interviewee said there are no real positive or negative effects on the community. Some send money back “sometimes we even have to send them money” and some come back to visit. Because they leave, the pressure is taken off of the community to find land for them. Obviously, the unmentioned negative effect is the population grows older. As seen with the numbers above over half the population is unable to work.

The majority of the village fishes but some earn their income through agriculture (9 households), working in shops or working on the construction sites. There are no regulations on overexploitation. Since the trade of fishing has been learnt from their fathers, the fishermen know the cycles of the fish and when enough is enough. However, there is competition between the big boats and the smaller ones.

The village has the part-time use of solar panels that were sponsored by the Province. It has been 2 years since the solar panels were installed and production has steadily been decreasing. In its first year of operation, there were 180 cells by the end of that year 60 went out but were replaced with only 40. By the end of the second year only half of them work. The community has to separate into 2 groups and rotate use of the cells. One group has 60 households and the rest of the households are in the second group. The energy available is dependent on the demand of each group. Therefore, the amount energy available is inconsistent. During winter months they have no power during the day.

Waste is an issue. A boat from Hoi An comes to carry their trash away 2 or 3 times a week depending on the amount needed to be collected. The people will call the city to have them make extra trips or miss a trip. There is no composting but Bai Lam has a landfill. There is no wastewater pipeline and the culvert is broken so the waste water overflows. This leads to mosquitoes and insects which is a major source of disease. It is also pointed out in the interview with Mr. Hien that local residents will throw their trash in appropriate places. There should be a cleanup program along the beach front because most of the trash is concentrated on the beaches.

The community would like to see major tourism development on the island. Currently there is not enough tourism on the island for there to be a negative or positive effect on the community. Tourism really only benefits the people directly involved. There are 10 households that are involved in tourism. 5 are tour guides through the mountain or coral reefs and the other 5 offer accommodations. The 5 households that handle accommodations are organized so each house is in rotation.

The village has a disaster rescue team of 5 people from the village. The Community Management Unit has a leader, a vice leader, one person who is assigned to facilitate
communications with women, fishermen and someone assigned to head security. The unit is responsible for making sure everyone is accounted for after the disaster and ensure that they have what they need.

The amount of water available is not enough for the village. At times there are some people who don’t have constant access to clean water. Some households pump water from a well but most people get water from the stream. However, over use of the stream has caused a steady decrease in the amount of clean water available. Currently, there is a city sponsored reservoir being constructed for the island. As of now, the residents of Bai Huong pay a flat fee of 5000 VND per month regardless of use. With the completion of the reservoir at the end of three years, the water will be metered.

The roads have been cemented over but still collapse. The road from Huong Village to Lang Village has been rebuilt and paved three times. However, the embankment helps prevent the water from ruining the roads. The flooding still washes away much of the beach. Aid from the government should be directed towards improving the roads.

The community focuses too much on the economic value and not on the spiritual or traditional culture and environment. The level of awareness is not high in the elderly and community is inconsistent and has low solidarity. The solution is to assess and approach the issue subjectively. Currently, programs in the community are organized by companies and organizations from other regions.

Since 1969 there have been significant climate change related disasters. It has been getting hotter and the water is getting warmer.

Governance on the island is weak and does not support the residents. Some examples include the culvert overflowing when the flood comes and the support given to the households is not equal.

**Bai Ong, Lang and Cam Village**

On the other side of the island are the other three villages that make up Thein Hiep Commune, Bai Ong, Lang, and Cam Village.

The people would like to see more government support for poor people, environmental protection, and efforts to increase the quality of life.

The total population of the three villages is about 2500 people. As with Huong Village most of the households are fishermen (60%), other households farm (raise pigs) and the others take part in agriculturally based fields (rice cultivation). Most women stay home and dry fish to sell
or repair and make fishing nets. There is a total of 3 hectares used for rice cultivation and during flood season these are destroyed and there is no rice for the season. August is the start of the storm season, therefore most of the fishermen take part in small fish harvesting closer to the island. Like Huong Village, there are no official regulations on fishing but the three interviewees did note that the village fishermen follow the rules of the sea but others from the mainland do not. Some activities have caused the quality of fish to degrade significantly. For example the fish and ecosystem along the coast have no time to regenerate due to constant harvesting. Some take part in raising sea creatures, such as lobster but this is an investment of 50 million VND, which is too high for most families.

They are supplied electricity from 6pm to 11pm by government owned generators and pay approximately 3000 VND but the amount is based on use. There is no wastewater management system and the waste is collected 3 times per week by a boat from Hoi An City. The water does not reach Ong Bai Village and there is no water filter system. The residents pay roughly 10,000 VND per month for water but this can double or triple depending on the use. The water on this side of the island is already metered. The island has also seen a significant increase in the use of motorbikes. Approximately 50% of the residents use them.

A big issue for the island is the lack of harbor space. Boats are severely damaged during the storm season.

The maximum number of tourists seen in one day can be as high as 200. However, not many stay the night. Tourism is not seen as a threat to the culture of the community but the three men do recognize the loss of natural resources, such as the damage to the coral reefs with the increase number of divers. Tourism does increase the income of the community but it also increases the cost of local goods for local residents. There is no campaign or promotion for homestays or diving but Hoi An Tourism Company is building a resort in the Bai Bim area (* will need to double check this with Mr. Trinh—since it is a bioserve, new development is not allowed). There was a campaign to begin using small glass bottom boats so the tourist can see the reefs from the boat but the boats run for approximately 300 million VND. There needs to be an increase in coral reef conservation to ensure sustainability.

The health facilities and services and improve greatly. The residents have to go to the mainland for treatment. There is only one pharmacy for the entire island and no clinic.

**Cam An**

Of all the communes and wards, Cam An is experiencing the most economic growth. Located in the northernmost part of Hoi An, An Bang beach is not as crowded as Cua Dai beach just 3 km to the south. There are also a higher number of foreigners (mostly French) residents in the area.
who own businesses and homes in the commune. Most of the households fish for income. Most of the younger generation works in the hospitality service industry. Some parents have been pushing their children find placement in other industries because the quantity of the fish is slowly depleting even if the price is increasing it is not enough to live. Most of the women work in a fish packing plant but the plant is relocating to Tam Kay. This will leave almost a third of the residents out of a job.

Historically, Cam An and particularly An Bang, was considered the poorest community both in income and services. The city began a campaign in the 1990s to begin developing the area. Now, there are plans for 2 new resorts, one in An Tan village (Investor: 5 Star) and complete resort community (Investor: HB Group) a km north of An Bang beach and tentative plans for an urban park (Investor: Whitestone). There are also a string of restaurants that cater to foreigner tourist Italian and French restaurant and a few bars directly on the beach.

Currently, 5 Star has an investment project for a resort located on the south side of An Bang beach in An Tan Village. The project was started about 6 years ago and just last year people started moving out.

This project will relocate more than 60 households to a new site. The new site is located next to the old. Although, the services are better, the residents have a strong opposition to the relocation. The monthly costs of basic utilities are significantly higher and the land is not suitable for farming or gardening. The residents said that the government went door to door to tell the residents of the project to avoid any mass confrontation. Currently there is a petition circulating protesting the move. Because the project was approved, if the household refuses to move, the government can force them out. The deadline to be out of their home is unknown to the residents.

Each household receives only 200 sq/m of land regardless of the amount of property they previous had. More land can be purchased for 1,700,000 VND/sq/m. The compensation given for the construction of the house is 100 million VND, this does not include the price of the land. The land price is 120 million VND/100 sq/m. The breakdown for compensation is as follows:

- Residential land: 400,000VND/sq m
- Agriculture land: 240,000VND/sq m
- Floral land: 70,000VND/sq m

The residents have not received any compensation for career retraining or any other efforts that there will be. Although, the Center of Land Management, who handles resettlements said relocated residents receive 6 million VND/person.
Perhaps due to the interest of the area, there are currently 3 non-profits that are working in Cam An and An Bang beach specifically. These three are, FINCO, Green Landscape Solutions (GLS) and Eco-Comm. Urban-Rural Solutions, a urban planning consulting firm has also developed a eco-village plan for the area. FINCO supports the community by teaching and funding micro-financing endeavors. GLS promotes community development, as well as raise awareness in the benefits of natural landscapes. They even provide the seeds and trees. ECO-Comm supports community development, environmental awareness and career re-orientation. All three are financed by HB group.
Cam Kim

Cam Kim commune is located to the south of the Ancient Quarter. It is surrounded on three sides by the Thu Bon River and bordered by the Duy Xuyen District to the south. Cam Kim can be accessed by a 10 minute boat from Hoi An or 1 hour by car traveling around the commune and through Duy Xuyen District and Dien Ban District. There are 4 villages, Phuc Thanh, Can Thanh, Doung Ha, and Dong Jao. Each village has roughly 300-360 households. Known for carpentry, other sources of income are agriculture (corn and rice), tourist services, handicrafts, fishing and labor. Some families have small businesses, for example a sugar cane drink shop, auto repair, or small convenient store. Some of the households have looked into other industries. For example, an older woman began making incense sticks and was drying them about a year ago. Statistically, the commune is the poorest, however, the housing inventory is nicer than most of the other communes. This is because most of the people will travel to different cities for manual work or start businesses then send back money. There is a health clinic.

The majority of the commune is on a very low elevation. Therefore, floods are a major issue. The people will evacuate to the highest elevated area of the commune when the floods are severe. However, this is such a regular occurrence that the people have made flood preparation a part of their lives. This can be seen in the construction of the homes. Nearly all the houses have a second floor. The newer homes have concrete foundations that are roughly 3 or 4 feet above ground. Floods typically happen twice a year and are from August to September in the lunar calendar. Boat service stops during flood season, so the only way for people to get into town is by land which takes approximately one hour.

Each village has a flood team of 8 members that are assigned by Cam Kim People’s Committee. They also receive help from the youth during post disaster. The poor households will evacuate to the community house. Van Thanh village has no community house so people will move into the private homes of their neighbors during a flood. Since floods are so frequent the people are more worried about the storms and typhoon which happens every 2 or 3 years.

Multi-modal transportation is lacking therefore land price is much lower than other areas of Hoi An. The residents see the development of a bridge that connects them to Hoi An as the answer to most of the land and income issues present in Cam Kim. They also want stronger community houses that are constructed in the same manner as the new homes.

There is a grade school but no high school. The students have to travel into the city. Water and electricity is adequate on the island. People use to dig wells but now they have a city regulated water pipe that runs throughout the commune. It is metered so the monthly service fee is based on usage.
Cam Nam

The second of the two islands included in this project (the first being Cu Lao Cham Island), Cam Nam is one of the most affected by flooding and erosion.

The land around the riverbank is primarily river bed sediment. The main crop grown is corn because the land cannot support rice cultivation. With the annual floods and erosion the sediment is swept away and the residents have to retreat further inland. Over time, the sediment re-settles and the residents can begin planting or living further on the shore. The cycle period is approximately 60 years according to the elders of the community. The residents along the shore have settled in the current location for 40 years now.

A young man we spoke with (17 years old), had said about 12 years ago he remembers the river being only a few yards from his house. Now it is much further away. As depicted by the pictures you cannot see it.

Water is piped and there is enough. However they cannot drink it. Electricity is sufficient there are tons of electrical lines that run throughout the city and street lamps are present but they are not used on the majority of the roads. Like Cu Lao Cham there is a radio system with intercoms reporting daily news and weather alerts. The residents are unsure why the street lights do not come on at night.

Most people live in Cam Nam but work in Hoi An. The island is a lot denser than the other areas profiled. The housing inventory is a mix. Some of the homes are more stable and permanent these are mostly along the main street that connects to the bridge into Hoi An center. The majority of the homes along the distributor roads and local streets are smaller with more temporary homes between. There is also a lot more tourist facilities (mainly hotels and restaurants) on the island.