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Bachelor thesis

**Squatter communities in South-East Asia with special  
regard to the situation in Vietnam**

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## **Declaration**

I hereby declare that I have written this bachelor thesis titled “Squatter communities in South-East Asia with special regard to the situation in Vietnam” myself and independently, only with the expert guidance of my thesis supervisor Vladimír Verner.

I further declare that all data and information I have used in this thesis are stated in the references.

Prague - Suchdol, April 2014

.....  
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## **Abstract**

This work has the character of a literature review and deals with community residents with low incomes, which are called squatter communities, slums and informal settlements. In these communities which now house up to 14% of the urban population in Sub-Saharan Africa, South-East Asia and Latin America and Caribbean, was based on the available literature sources, an analysis of basic living conditions and socio-economic aspects of life in these places. Thesis was methodically based on available literature sources from the Thompson Reuters ISI Web of Knowledge ®, supplemented by a studies published by UN-HABITAT. An important contribution of this work is definition of individual terms, which are inhabitants with low incomes without a clear relationship to the land characterized. The study confirmed that nowadays is the biggest problem of those communities health conditions that threaten the lives and health, especially among children, and also possibility of land ownership. In addition, attention was focused on South-East Asia sub-region with special regard to the local fast economic growth. Reachable scientific studies deal with the issues, especially the Philippines, where low income communities have to face forced eviction very often especially in Metro Manila. From all the countries from sub-region South-East Asia was special regard given to Vietnam as a country with one of the highest, but especially the most stable economy increase. Specific feature of Vietnam is its socialist form of government and access to land ownership, which should be owned by all, but for poor inhabitants is prohibitively expensive. Nevertheless, appearance of informal communities occupying large areas of urban and suburban areas begins to be documented. According to our results it is obvious, that situation in Vietnam was well mapped in large cities such as Hanoi, Saigon and Hue. However, further studies should devote to the specific areas of socio-economic as well as environmental conditions such as informal populated delta regions or vast lagoons and bays near agglomerations.

### ***Key words:***

urban areas, informal settlements, living standard, agriculture, environment, South-East Asia, Vietnam

## **Abstrakt**

Tato práce má charakter literární rešerše a zabývá se komunitami obyvatel s nízkými příjmy, což jsou tzv. squatterské komunity, slumy a neformální osady. U těchto komunit, které jsou domovem pro 14% městského obyvatelstva v subsaharské Africe, jihovýchodní Asii či Latinské Americe a Karibiku, byla na základě dostupných literárních zdrojů provedena analýza životních podmínek a základních socioekonomických aspektů života v těchto místech. Metodicky vycházela práce z dostupných literárních zdrojů z databáze Thompson Reuters ISI Web of Knowledge®, doplněná o studie publikované UN-HABITAT. Důležitým přínosem práce je vymezení jednotlivých pojmů, kterými jsou komunity obyvatel s nízkými příjmy bez jasného vztahu k půdě charakterizovány. Studie potvrdila, že v současné době jsou největší problémy těchto komunit hygienické podmínky, které ohrožují životy a zdraví především dětí a také možnost vlastnictví půdy. Dále se pozornost soustředila na sub region Jihovýchodní Asie s ohledem na tamní rychlý hospodářský růst i s ohledem na zájmy České Republiky v rámci rozvojové spolupráce. Dostupné vědecké studie se zabývají danou problematikou především na Filipínách, kde velmi často dochází k násilnému vystěhování obyvatelstva chudinských čtvrtí, především ve městě Metro Manila. Ze všech zemí této oblasti rozvojového světa byla dále pozornost upřena na Vietnam, jako zemi s jedním z nejvyšších, ale zejména nejstabilnějších přírůstků ekonomiky. Určitým specifickým rysem Vietnamu je jeho socialistická forma vlády a přístup k vlastnictví půdy, která by měla být vlastnictvím všech, přesto však chudé obyvatelstvo k ní většinou nemá přístup. Přesto začíná být v této zemi výskyt komunit neformálně okupujících rozsáhlé území městských a příměstských oblastí dokumentován. Dle našich výsledků je zřejmé, že se situace ve Vietnamu, podařilo poměrně dobře zmapovat ve velkých městech, jako jsou Hanoj, Saigon a Hue. Nicméně, další studie by se měly věnovat oblastem se specifickými socioekonomickými a též environmentálními podmínkami, jako jsou neformálně obydlené delty řek či rozsáhlé laguny a zátoky v blízkosti aglomerací.

### ***Klíčová slova:***

městské oblasti, neformální osady, životní standart, zemědělství, životní prostředí, Jihovýchodní Asie, Vietnam

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## List of Abbreviations

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CECI	Centre for International Studies and Cooperation
FAOSTAT	Food and Agriculture Organization Corporate Statistical Database
G77	Group of 77
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HCHM	Ho Chi Minh City
PRB	Population Reference Bureau
UN	United Nations
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
WB	World Bank



# 1 Introduction

Population growth in the world is very distinct, however the main growth form the population in developing countries. Actual information shows that in 2013 was population of developing countries about 5.9 billion, which is almost five-times more than number population in more developer regions. Main difference between developing and more developer region is, that in more developer region is expected that population is not going to increase, but in developing region sis estimated, that the population is going to grow up to 8.4 billion in 2013 (PRB, 2013). Main side effect of this rapid growth is increasing level of urbanization, mostly emerging like a insoluble problem in developing sub regions. According to the available data was found that nowadays for the first time live more people in urban areas than in rural, in 2013 it was 52% of the global population. Proportional representation of urban population is higher in more developed regions, but in total numbers it counts only 947 million opposite to the situation in developing regions, where urban population come to 2.77 billion people. From total Asian urban population 1.3 billion now significant proportion (about 41.7%) live in low income housing, which is slums, squatter communities and in Vietnam authentic group of sampan dwellers. These communities possibly share same inadequate living condition and lack from access to services, but in some ways are quite different (UN-HABITAT, 2008).

## **2 Objective**

Firstly, this thesis reviewed available scientific articles focused on low income housing, slums and squatter communities and determined main differences between each type of low income housing. These places have faced various problems regarding to human development, i.e. public health, education, job opportunities or lack of access to sufficient and improved water supplies.

Secondly, in this thesis was analysed socioeconomic conditions of the population in low income housing and focus on relationship between level of urbanization and slum population growth if there is direct influence between them. We also focused on situation in whole South-East Asia region and compared functionality and availability of development projects in low income communities.

Finally, was made research of economic indicators to analyse the situation in Vietnam, including brief information about economic development in the country with special regard to each economical centres of Vietnam.

### **3 Methods**

For the purpose of this thesis, main sources of information were represented by two scientific databases, i.e. Thompson Reuters ISI Web of Knowledge® and SciVerse Scopus®. Following keywords : slum dwellers, squatter communities, low-income housing, popular housing, slum dwellers in Vietnam, urbanization in Asia, slums in Latin America, Slums in South-East Asia, and slums in Sub Saharan Africa were entered into database in order to document present level of knowledge on this issue.

Furthermore, United Nations organizations UN-Habitat, United Nations, Food and agriculture organization of the United Nations and World Health organization, were used in order to gather the most proper definitions and the most recent data.

For purpose of dependence between growth of GDP per capita annually and growth of urban population annually was made correlation analyses in programme Microsoft Office Excel as well as other figures in this thesis.

Specific focus of our study was to document the situation of low income housing population in South-East Asia, especially in Vietnam. . United Nations (UN) approach was chosen for specification of the region of South-East Asia, which comprises following countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam (UN, 2013).

## 4 Population growth

Today, world population exceeds 7.2 billion and it is anticipated that it will achieve in 2050 about 9.7 billion people. Majority of the population growth is emerging to a serious problem in developing countries, where it is expected that in 2050 the population will reach 86.5% of total population with growth about two billion people. On the other hand, in developed countries is rate of natural increase mostly zero, or sometimes even negative. It is expected that in European Union is not going to happened any changes in number of population. In Eastern Europe is going to decrease the number of total population with annual rate about  $-0.1\%$  (PRB, 2013).

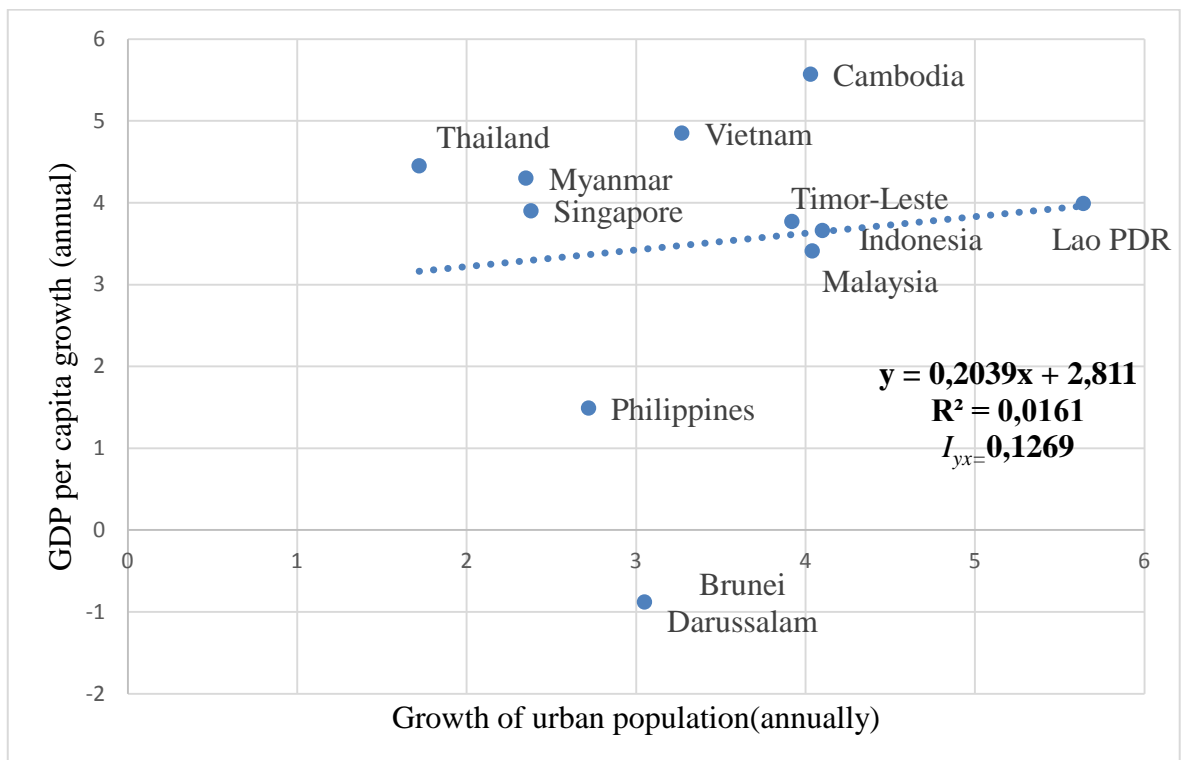
**Table 1. World population growth in 2025 and 2050**

	population mid-2013 (millions)	Rate of natural increase (%)	Projected population	
			mid-2025	mid-2050
Sub Saharan Africa	926	2.7	1 259	2 185
Northern America	352	0.4	386	448
Latin America and Caribbean	606	1.3	682	780
Central Asia	66	1.7	78	98
South Asia	1779	1.6	2047	2 432
Southeast Asia	612	1.3	699	828
Europe	740	0.0	746	726
Oceania	38	1.1	45	58

Source: PRB, 2013

Developing countries will witness continuous growth of their population in next three of four decades. In 1950, there were about 1.7 billion people living in developing countries and it is expected in 2050 the population would reached 8 billion or more. As a result, developing world will be a homestead for about 86% of total world population (PRB, 2013). Most of this growth will take place in Sub-Saharan Africa, in relative numbers, and

in South and South-East Asia, in absolute values (see Table 1). The highest natural rate of population growth is expected to be in Sub-Saharan Africa region with annual rate equal to 3 percentages. Considering such rapid rate of population growth, Sub-Saharan Africa is going to reach about 2.1 billion people in 2050, i.e. 2.2times higher comparing to the situation at these days. In cities high urban population growth may bring serious environmental problems like water scarcity and contamination, land shortage, and insufficient sanitation (Gizewski and Homer-Dixon, 1995).



**Figure 1:** Correlation between annual urban population growth (%) and annual growth of per capita GDP in period 1985-2012. Source: WB, 2013

South-East Asia is with total population about 4.3 billion people the most populous region in the world. The rate of natural increase is not as high as in Sub-Saharan Africa, but it is still expected that the region will be the most populous one in 2050. At these days, out of total global population representing 7.2 billion people, 60.27% live in Asia, from which about 61.22% are situated in two countries – China and India. South-East Asia contributes by 8.57% to the global population today (about 612 million), which is expected to increase with natural rate about 1.3% to 699 million in 2025 and about 828 million in 2050 (PRB,

2013). From the sub-region South-East Asia, the most populous country is Indonesia with number of population about 248 million and with annual population growth rate 1.5% per year. The highest rate of increase, about 2.7%, was found in Timor-Leste and the second highest in Cambodia (nearly 1.8%). On the other hand, one of the lowest increases was found in Singapore, but there is number of population extremely high and with its population density about 7,971 is on the third place of the world (PRB, 2013).

**Table 2 : Population in South-East Asia and growth in 2025 and 2050**

	<b>population mid-2013 (millions)</b>	<b>Rate of natural increase (%)</b>	<b>Projected population</b>		<b>Urban %</b>
			<b>mid-2025</b>	<b>mid-2050</b>	
Brunei	0,4	1,4	0,5	0,5	72
Cambodia	14,4	1,8	17,2	21,5	20
Indonesia	248,5	1,5	290,6	366,2	50
Lao	6,7	2	7,9	9,1	27
Malaysia	29,8	1,3	34,3	41,3	64
Myanmar	53,3	1	57,7	58,6	31
Philippines	96,2	1,5	115,8	151,9	63
Singapore	5,4	0,6	6,4	7,1	100
Thailand	66,2	0,4	67,1	61	46
Timor Leste	1,1	2,7	1,3	1,8	30
Vietnam	89,7	1	100,1	108,9	32

Source: PRB, 2013

## 5 Urbanization

Urbanization is considered as a result of natural growth, rural-urban migration and transformation of rural to urban area (Buhaug and Urdal 2013). People migrate because they are displaced of their native places because they cannot earn passable income to sustain themselves in their households. Others may be pushed out of their houses, either permanently or temporary, by natural disasters such as droughts, floods or earthquakes or because of endless ecological changes, such as soil erosion or desertification. Reason for migration is also better education and health facilities, or more freedom from restrictive social and cultural realities, for themselves and for their children and better job prospects, despite the professional market may struggle to absorb fast-growing populations (UN-HABITAT, 2008).

**Table 3: Urban population and percentage in 2013 and 2050 by regions**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Urban population 2013 (million)</b>	<b>Percentage of total population 2013</b>	<b>Urban population 2050 (million)</b>	<b>Percentage of total population 2050</b>
<b>Africa</b>	0.45	40.26	1.38	57.58
<b>Americas</b>	0.78	80.78	1.07	87.34
<b>Asia</b>	2.00	46.54	3.36	64.99
<b>Europe</b>	0.55	73.36	0.58	82.27
<b>Oceania</b>	0.027	70.81	0.042	74.34

Source: FAO, 2014

The main problem in developing countries is assumed the rapid growth of urban population (Adel El Menshawya, 2011). One of the most dramatic changes over last two decades in Asia has been the movement of people from villages to cities. The United Nations estimates that urbanization in Asia will increase between 2005 and at the rate of about 2.5% each year. On this assumption, more than half of Asia's total population will live in urban areas by the year 2025, and by 2030, it is expected that 54.5% of Asia's population will be urbanized. This means that by 2030, one out of every two urban

residents in the world will be in Asia. In many cities in the Asia region, the creation of new slums and squatter settlements is more because of new urban households' formation rather than rural-urban migration (UN-HABITAT 2008). Percentage of urban population in South-East Asia is 47%. The highest percentage of urban population is found in Singapore, on the other hand in numbers is on the first place Indonesia with about 129.25 million inhabitants living in urban areas (PRB, 2013)

**Table 4: Urbanization in Asia (1950-2015)**

	<b>Urban population</b>	<b>Urban population in millions</b>	<b>Average annual rate of growth (2006-2010)</b>	<b>Slum population in urban areas 1990</b>	<b>Slum population in urban areas 2005</b>
<b>Brunei</b>	72%	0.288	2.6%	*	*
<b>Cambodia</b>	20%	2.88	4.6%	72%	78.9%
<b>Indonesia</b>	50%	124.25	3.3%	32%	26.3%
<b>Lao</b>	27%	1.809	5.6%	66%	79.3%
<b>Malaysia</b>	64%	19.072	3.0%	*	*
<b>Myanmar</b>	31%	16.52	2.9%	31%	45.6
<b>Philippines</b>	63%	60.60	3.0%	55%	43.7%
<b>Singapore</b>	100%	5.4	1.2%	*	*
<b>Thailand</b>	46%	30.45	1.7%	20%	26%
<b>Timor Leste</b>	30%	0.33	5.0%	*	*
<b>Vietnam</b>	32%	28.7	3.1%	60%	41.3%

Source: UN, 2013. Note: symbol \* shows data, which were not available.



## **6 Low income housing**

Main amount of urban residents around the world live in low income housing. About 1 billion people, or 32% of the world's current urban population, reside in low income housing. It share about 43% in South Asia and 36% in East Asia, and it reaches a high of 62% in sub-Saharan Africa (UN-HABITAT, 2008). They occur all around the world, sometimes called by different names like: Favelas, Kampung, Tugurios, but they offer the same squalid conditions for living (Adel El Menshawya, 2011). Residents of low income housing have at least two options: live close to opportunities of income in the commercial and industrial centres of cities and towns in effort to minimize the cost and time spent in getting to work. But good land in these central places is generally in high demand and for that reason expensive (UN-HABITAT, 2011).

### **6.1 Squatter settlement and informal settlement**

An informal settlement, sometimes also called squatter settlement, is found on inappropriate places like ravines, steep slopes (Owen, 2013), mostly also on swamps (Wekesa, Steyn et al. 2011) or sometimes on places like garbage dump (Minnery, Argo et al. 2013). These places are defined like area with lack of vegetation, mostly just about 5-10%, while formal settlement covers about 30% of public spaces. The main difference between squatter communities and slums is that squatter communities are an area of low-income housing built on illegally occupied land (UN-HABITAT, 2008). These places are absolutely insufficient for safety living conditions. Inhabitants have to face various risks like floods, landslides, earthquakes, point source pollution (Karen K. Owen, 2013). A squatter community represents the higher risks of mortality, especially for children (Pugh, 2000).

### **6.2 Slums**

Slums are emerging as a prevalent type of housing in many urban areas of developing countries. Slum growth became a practically synonymous with urbanization level in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the annual slum and urban growth rates are almost consonant

(Isunju et al, 2011). UN-HABITAT defines a slum household as a group of people living under the same roof in an urban area who lack one or more of the following conditions: durable housing, sufficient living area, access to clean water, access to secure tenure and proper sanitation. Dwellings are mostly overcrowded and characterized by extremely high density. Its residents do not have access to secure tenure and may be displaced and they experience high level of poverty and social exclusion (UN-HABITAT, 2008). Due to the overcrowding and high population density in slum areas, there is much higher potential for spread of diseases, mortality and disasters (Isunju et al., 2011).

### 6.3 Housing in Asia

Particularly evident is the housing challenge in urban Asia. In spite of the fact that Asia is still predominantly rural, it is urbanizing at the fastest rate in the world. Predictions propose that between 2010 and 2050 the urban population in Asia will almost double to reach 3.4 billion. Every day Asian cities will need to accommodate the 120,000 new inhabitant, which regard as identical to a daily housing require of at least 20,000 housing units.

**Table 5: Slums in Asia (Figures at 2001)**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Total population (in millions)</b>	<b>Total urban population (in millions)</b>	<b>% of total population</b>	<b>Total slum population (in millions)</b>	<b>% of total urban population</b>
Eastern Asia	1,364	533	39.1	193.8	36.4
South-Central Asia	1,499	429	29.6	253.1	59.0
South-East Asia	530	203	38.3	56.8	28.0
Western Asia	175	115	65.7	29.7	25.7
<b>TOTAL Asia</b>	<b>3,519</b>	<b>1,280</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>533.4</b>	<b>41.7</b>

Source: UN-HABITAT, 2006

Especially for low-income groups in Asia remains affordable housing an issue due to a lack of affordable and well located housing alternatives, nearly a third of households in Asia live in slums and informal settlements (UN-HABITAT, 2008).

**Table 6: Urban slum population at mid-year by region (in millions)**

<b>Sub-region</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2012</b>
Sub-Saharan Africa	102.7	122.6	143.2	168.0	198.1	213.3
Latin America and Caribbean	104.8	110.8	114.9	110.1	110.1	113.4
Southern Asia	181.7	190.8	194.3	192.8	190.6	200.5

Source: UN, 2013

Percentage share of urban population living in slums is declining since 1990, which does not imply that total number of slum population is achieving growth as well. Total slum population has growing tendency in all studied sub regions. During the period 1990-2012 was rate of increasing urban slum population the highest in sub region Sub Saharan Africa with about 107.7%, on second place was situated South-East Asia with rate of increase 10.4% and sub region of Latin America and Caribbean with growth 8.2% (see Table 6, 7).

**Table 7 : Proportion of urban population living in slum (per cent)**

<b>Sub-region</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2012</b>
Sub-Saharan Africa	70	67,6	65	63	62,4	61,7	61,7
Latin America and Caribbean	33,7	31,5	29,2	25,5	24,7	23,5	23,5
Southern Asia	57,2	51,6	45,8	40	38	35	35

Source: UN, 2013

## **7 Informal settlers in South-East Asia**

In some cases governments and private developers provide modern garbage and sewerage systems, enhance public sanitation and hygiene, and provide electricity and clean water. In the region, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore have provided different housing schemes to stop the housing problem for poorer informal settlers. In Indonesia, major private developers in Jakarta have built satellite towns for populations of 150,000 persons and more. Along with building these towns, the developers have provided that there are many flats within the estate for poorer people, who constantly are going to be employed by the wealthy residents as chefs, maids, gardeners and drivers. In the Malaysian example, the government has provided private developers a set amount of money for them to build houses for the poorer urban dwellers. Some developers have complained that the amounts per unit are too little and hence the flats that are built are sub-standard and of poor workmanship (Syed, 2000).



**Figure 2:** Squatter community in Kampong Chnang, Cambodia.

Source: Personal, 2013

On the other hand, some squatter settlers have to face threats of eviction. Forced eviction is describes what happens when people are removed from their homes and communities against their will – sometimes with, but mostly without, provisions to resettle them somewhere else. At their poor, evictions can be and mostly is extremely violent, brutal procedure, in which people’s houses, personal properties, communities, livelihoods and support structures are all destroyed. When the residents evicted from their informal settlement communities are provided with alternative places to live, such relocation sites are often so far away from their jobs and support networks, so under-serviced, so environmentally hazardous and inappropriate for human living, that the evicted people are effectively provided homeless. Forced evictions had to face inhabitants from Metro Manila in Philippines, who were forcibly evicted from their homes. Without prior notice armed police entered the community and denied requests for some time to collect their belongings and began demolishing the houses. In several brutal ways were also evicted inhabitants from river-side slum in capital city of Cambodia, Phnom Penh (UN-HABITAT, 2008).

## **8 Situation of low income housing in Vietnam**

Situation in Vietnam, especially economic reform policies, has transformed after introduction of *doi moi* in 1986. This transformation also accelerated a process of rapid urbanization as well. Today there three major economic growth triangles are identified: the Red River Delta connected with Hanoi, Hai Phong and Ha Long in the North; the Mekong Delta secured by Ho Chi Minh City in the South; and a Central triangle based on Da Nang (Coulthart et al., 2006). Ho Chi Minh City which experienced supremely rapid expansion and although it is still just slightly more than one-third size of Bangkok it is already characterize as the world's next "Bangkok" (Drakakis-Smith and Dixon, 1997).

Nowadays Vietnam is still assumed as a part of less developed country according to economic and trading groups with lower-middle-income economy (\$1,036 to \$4,085). Country is part of political groups like Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Group of 77(G77) and groups related to UN such as United Nations Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), World Health Organization as a part of Western Pacific region (UN, 2013).

### **8.1 Housing in Hanoi**

The housing opportunities in Hanoi are gravely inadequate, unevenly distributed and much are demoted, sub-standard or illegal informal housing on public lands. It is estimated that more than 30% of Hanoi residents live in extremely crowded conditions (Coulthart et al., 2006). Three case studies in Hanoi shows typical informal housing in Chuong Duong, Tuong Mai and Thanh Cong. Area of Chuong Duong was owned by State forestry company and their provided part of this land for state employees. Today the site now mixed informal settlement with residential apartments and commercial offices. There haven't been issued any building permits because this area is zoned for future open space in the City plan. Tuong Mai used to serve as a agricultural land, but then was constructed army housing from which became informal settlement. Many households were permitted to change land tenure to residential, but just ten years afterwards the area was the object of government clearance projects. Finally the Thanh Con is an illegal settlement situated on

rubbish dump. (Minnery et al., 2013). Support in housing from state in procuring housing and improving living standards predominantly receive those with a higher income or good business in the private sector. The subsidised prices for low-income and poor households in the private sector are well beyond their means. Especially difficult situation is for households with one income earner and several dependants (Han, 2008).



**Figure 3:** Informal housing extensions to public housing in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Source: UN-HABITAT, 2008

## **8.2 Housing in Ho Chi Minh City**

Case study in Ho Chi in City showed, that housing conditions are not inappropriate as well. Because of large amount of inhabitants moving to the city every year, there is no more places to house there. Last time this area was detailed study was in 1996, when there were about 300 thousand squatter inhabitants living in 67,000 squatter houses in HCHM city. Were studied two squatter communities, Xom Ma and Xom Ruong. First of them Xom Ma is also called the City of Ghosts was built in 1988. In the time of this study was most of these shelters without electricity. In both areas is emerging the percentage of

unemployment about 18.3% and most of them were participated in informal sector of economy like trishaw drivers, assistant chef, dress makers and bricklayers (Vinh & Leaf, 1996).

### **8.3 Housing in Hue**

One of the poorest groups in Vietnam is considered to be sampan dwellers<sup>1</sup>, who live and work on boats in coastal areas and tend to have low income, poor living conditions, are landless and lack accessibility to services, education and job opportunities. In Vietnam there are a number of sampan dwellers in locations such as Tam Giang Lagoon, the nearby river Hue, and Ha Long Bay in the north. Differences amongst these groups include their relationships with local intermediaries for selling their catch, the size of their boats and the types of fishing undertaken. Tam Giang Lagoon is considered to be one of the largest lagoons in Asia, located in Thua Tien- Hue Province, Central Vietnam (Vo and Nguyen, 2000). Since 1980-2000 number of typhoons have had severe impacts upon the sampan dwellers in Tam Giang Lagoon when was killed about 1493 humans and 350 injured. After the 1985 typhoon was established village of Thuy Dien as a result of current resettlement policies which are often aimed at reducing poverty. A number of those resettled reported significant alteration of local relations and networks since relocation, because they are not separated from community anymore and it was indicate that on water it was difficult to promote relations over time, given the semi-nomadic naturalness of living on a boat. (CECI, 2003; Da Costa, 2006).

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<sup>1</sup> Sampan dwellers are considered by Vietnamese State to be a semi-nomadic group with livelihoods that revolve around fishing, water and natural resources for which seasonality plays the most important role (Vo and Nguyen, 2000).





Figure 4 : Sampan dwellers in Halong Bay, Vietnam.

Source: Author, 2012

The move to land have resulted in a number of previous sampan dwellers became more involved in Vietnamese society through not only greater contact with others because of road access to neighbors and markets, but also membership of mass organizations. On the other hand resettlement process for the sampan dwellers has not been without its issues, one of the main fears became return of some of them to living on boats in the lagoon after their initial resettlement, pointing to the potentially limited sustainability of their new livelihoods (CECI, 2003).

## 8.4 Land and housing policy in Vietnam

Land is conceptually still owned by “the whole of the people”, and the State continues to own, control and divide land and obtain the user’s rights (National Assembly of Vietnam, 2003). Monopoly of city planning is held by State as well as design of housing and production. Homogenous residential areas were constructed with the purpose of providing families with the same living space and living conditions levelling out social differences in line with socialist ideology (Trinh and Parenteau, 1992). The new land law since 2003 provide further rights for using a land as a gift and as well as to claim for replacement, when land is sourced by the Government for development (Han, 2008). To support housing in private sector, the government launched a privatization in existing state-owned housing stock. The state-owned housing<sup>2</sup> was sold to reduce state participation in housing and let people have involvement in the management of current housing stock. After 12 years since this launch, by 2006, had been privatized 68% of state-owned housing. A little attention have paid housing policies to middle and low-income groups, although there has been a slight degree of ambition to take care of some socially disadvantaged groups. A result of few state projects was a limited number of apartments built for the very poor and also some households in extreme conditions have received upgrading assistance. The local authorities in Hanoi have present several policy steps in order to build up an affordable housing offers to acquire newly produced dwellings from private developers in exchange for a reduction in land premiums. Those are then sold at cost price to state employees in need of housing. However, due to poor administration and corruption, these rarely reach the groups in acute need of housing (Tran and Dalholm, 2005).The housing law from 2006 emphasized in an effort to solve the problem of housing affordability the need to develop ‘social housing’. Anyway, social housing is not exactly aimed on social disadvantaged groups, but is targeted at ‘workers working in the economic zones, industrial areas, production areas, high tech areas’ and ‘state employees, officials, government staffs, military officers, professionals in the defence forces. To corroborate inequality between social groups and strengthening the already existing social hierarchy has contributed that new housing policy

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<sup>2</sup> Land tenure in Vietnam is connected to, among other things, that families cannot bury their dead in permanent burial grounds, considered essential in Vietnamese society to ensure a successful after-life (Vo and Nguyen, 2000).

continues to support the formerly privileged group of public servants, especially elder ones, and reject others in need such as low paid workers in the private sector, people who employ in small family businesses, those without regular work, and unemployed ones (Tran and Dalholm, 2005).

## 8.5 Demographic and socioeconomic situation in Vietnam

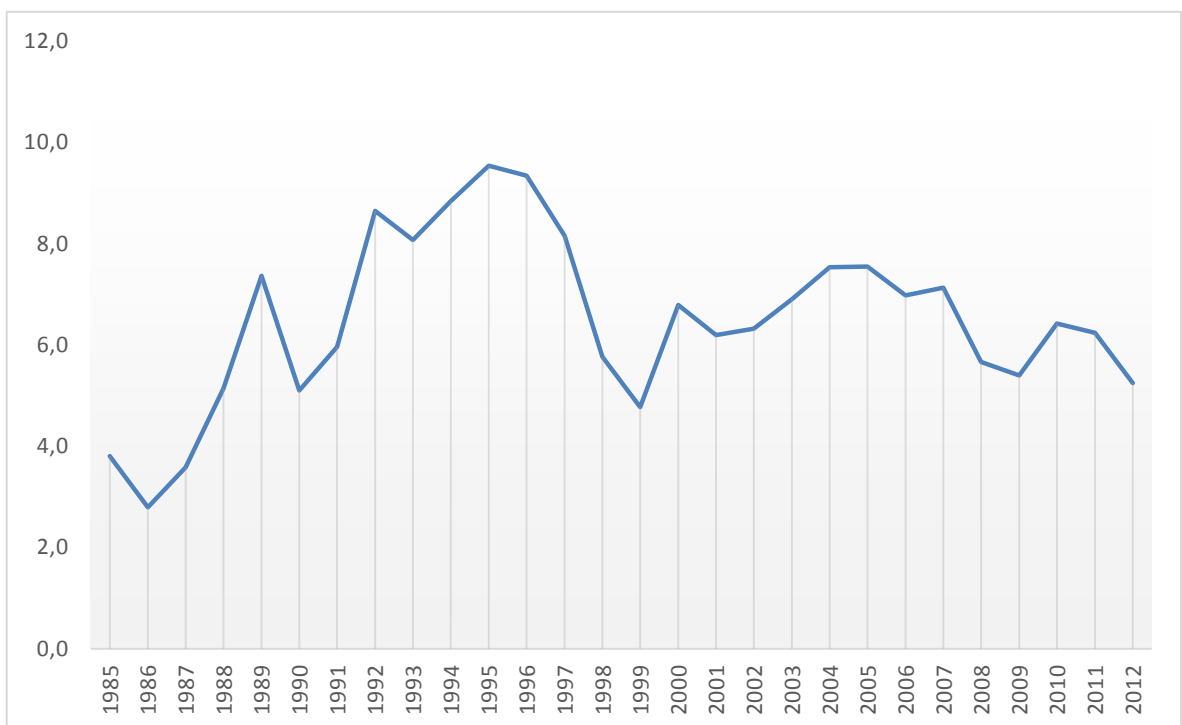
From the sub-regions of developing countries, South-East Asia was recorded with the highest average annual growth of GDP in Cambodia (7.74%,  $\pm 2.23\%$ ), where was seen the maximum value of growth 13.25%. The highest maximum value of growth of GDP annually was determined in Timor-Leste with (16.34%), but it is the most unsteady country of the whole sub region (SD =  $\pm 6.8$ ). On the other hand, Vietnam was determined as the most stable country in the whole sub-region (6.47%,  $\pm 1.33\%$ ). Moreover, it has the highest minimum value of annual growth of GDP (2.78%) within the focused period (see Table 8).

**Table 8 : Real GDP annual growth 1980 - 2013**

Country	mean	standard deviation	Max. value	Min. value
Brunei	0.54	2.64	4.75	-19.82
Cambodia	7.74	2.23	13.25	0.08
Indonesia	5.51	2.21	9.08	-13.12
Lao	6.31	1.85	14.19	-2.01
Philippines	3.34	2.30	7.63	-7.32
Malaysia	5.97	2.60	10.00	-7.35
Myanmar	5.80	4.07	13.84	-11.35
Singapore	6.79	3.35	14.78	-2.17
Thailand	5.47	2.86	13.28	-10.51
Timor-Leste	6.61	6.80	16.34	-6.69
Vietnam	6.47	1.33	9.54	2.78

Source: WB, 2013

Vietnam is the third most populous country in South-East Asia after Indonesia (248.5 million) and Philippines (96.2 million) with total population 87.7 million. With its natural rate of increase about 1% is estimated that in 2025 total population is going to exceed 100 million inhabitants and in 2050 it is going to reach up to 108.9 million inhabitants. Percentage of urban population is not extremely high in Vietnam, but in numbers is on fourth place with 28.7 million inhabitants living in urban areas (PRB, 2013). The biggest problem in the intra-urban area is deterioration and degradation of the environment. These deals essentially with sewerage issues, clean water, efficient and clean energy, garbage disposal and air, land and water pollution are the most severe environmental problems confronting cities in Southeast Asia. The creation of polluted environments that are detrimental to human health creates in densely populated cities and environment of disease and ill-health (Dasgupta et al., 2005).



**Figure 1** : Real GDP annual growth in Vietnam 1980 – 2018.

Source: WB, 2013

The most dramatic changes happened during the period 1980-1985 when from negative annual growth the Vietnamese economy reach up to 5.6% annual growth of GDP. In 1995

was the growth on highest level with growth about 9.5%, but after this success the percentage of growth is not moving higher (see Figure 1.)

**Table 9: Percentage of households by main source of drinking water 2002-2012**

	Private tap	Public tap	Buying water	Hand dug	Rain water
2002	12.7	3.9	1.0	29.4	8.7
2004	15.3	3.8	0.5	22.8	14.8
2006	20.6	2.9	0.5	23.4	15.2
2008	23.3	2.8	0.7	21.4	16.8
2010	26.7	1.4	1.2	18.8	12.8
2012	30.0	0.9	1.1	17.8	12.4

Source: GSO, 2013

As a serious problem emerging in less and least developing countries all around the world is access to potable water. As it is obvious (see table 9) percentage of population with private tap water doubled in Vietnam during the last decade, but there is still just 30% of them with access to drinking water this way. Other ways of getting drinkable water is connection to public tap, buying water, which is the least-used type, hand dug connection to source of water and also collection of rain water.

**Table 10: Percentage of households having a toilet by type 2002-2012**

	Flush toilet	Pour flush toilet	Compost latrine	Toilet directly over the river
2002	25.5	4.7	24.9	14.9
2004	32.5	4.7	23.8	12.7
2006	34.3	4.7	20.0	11.0
2008	40.7	5.3	19.0	9.5
2010	54.0	5.2	16.4	10.3
2012	60.0	4.4	13.0	8.7

Source: GSO, 2013

Safe water and adequate sanitation are critical determinants of health status, particularly for children. Ingestion of coliform bacteria from contaminated drinking water or food is a prime cause of diarrheal disease, which is in turn a major cause of infant mortality in developing countries. (see Table 10) As it was found in whole Vietnam is just 60% of total population connected to flush private toilet, with still about 8.7% population with sewerage connected directly over the water (GSO, 2013; Dasgupta et al., 2005).

## 9 Conclusion

Bachelor thesis analysed available literature sources on low income housing worldwide with special regard to the situation in South-East Asia. It was observed that definitions and terms differ among particular literature sources and that slums and squatter communities are not exactly the same places. Was found, that inhabitants of these communities share same inappropriate living conditions for living and lack from access to potable water, sanitation and other services including proper education and job opportunities. On the other hand squatter communities resides on land, which does not belong to them. South-East Asia, as a sub-region, is and will be one of the most populated part of the world even till 2050 with expected population about 828 million people. Furthermore, urbanization process will predominantly emerge in developing sub regions as a result of natural rate of increase. According to results from correlation analyses with correlation coefficient 0.1269 is obvious, that there is imperceptible dependence between annual growth of GDP per capita and annual growth of urban population. The main problem in informal settlement was found the hygienic situation, which is especially for children main source of diseases, mainly diarrhoea. Improvement of sanitation in low income areas may reduce infant mortality rate, which is emerging in developing countries with percentage up to 44%, opposite to 5% in more developed regions. The specific feature in situation of Vietnam is, that low income housing communities are mainly situated in agglomeration of main economical centres, which is in correspondence with the situation of other countries in the region of South-East Asia.

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