

A circular photograph of a woman in a white shirt and headscarf, smiling and holding a basket of corn in a field. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent yellow filter.

# Indigenous Local Food System – a Vietnam Case Study

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# Content

1. Brief Introduction of the study site
2. Main characteristics of the local food system
3. Change over time
4. Climate change and resilience elements



Moc Chau district



Hoa Pang commune

# The village landscape



# Study site: Village Km16

- Established in 1979: a groups of 3 households of the Dao ethnic groups who migrated to reclaim new land.
- Population: 64 household with more than 300 inhabitants;
- Allocated along side of the national high way No 43.
  - Easily to access to district or provincial town or to other provinces/cities by buses/long-distant buses.
- Access to markets & trading services
  - 4 small shops in the village
  - About 5km from the commune market
  - About 17 km to 30 km from the district big markets.
  - Market connection: development of agriculture services
- Infrastructure:
  - Grid electricity and fuel
  - School, kindergarten community hall
  - Inter-village tracks were cemented.
  - Cell phone; village speaker-hone: main communication
  - Motorbikes are the main transportation of households.
- Poor village in the Hua Pang commune (about 40%)

## Study site (cont.)

### Landscape:

- Land: mostly up-hill land;
  - Land use rights were entitled to households since 1994;
- Forest areas around the village:
  - Decreased due to land reclamation and intensive exploitation;
  - One small forest: sacred forest protected.
- Water:
  - there used to be 4 water sources, but now remained only one for clean water use;
  - Water for cultivation: depend on rain

# A village map



# The food system

- Farming is the main livelihood: for subsistence & for cash income;
- Crops & breeds:
  - Rice; maize, taro; arrowroots; sweet potato,
  - Different varieties of beans/peanut
  - Vegetables: more than 20 varieties by seasons;
  - Fruit trees (15): mango (3), longan (2), lychee, banana (3); apple-custard, jackfruit, grapefruit (3); plum (3), apricot, etc.
  - Breed: cow; pigs; chicken, siasame ducks, goose;..

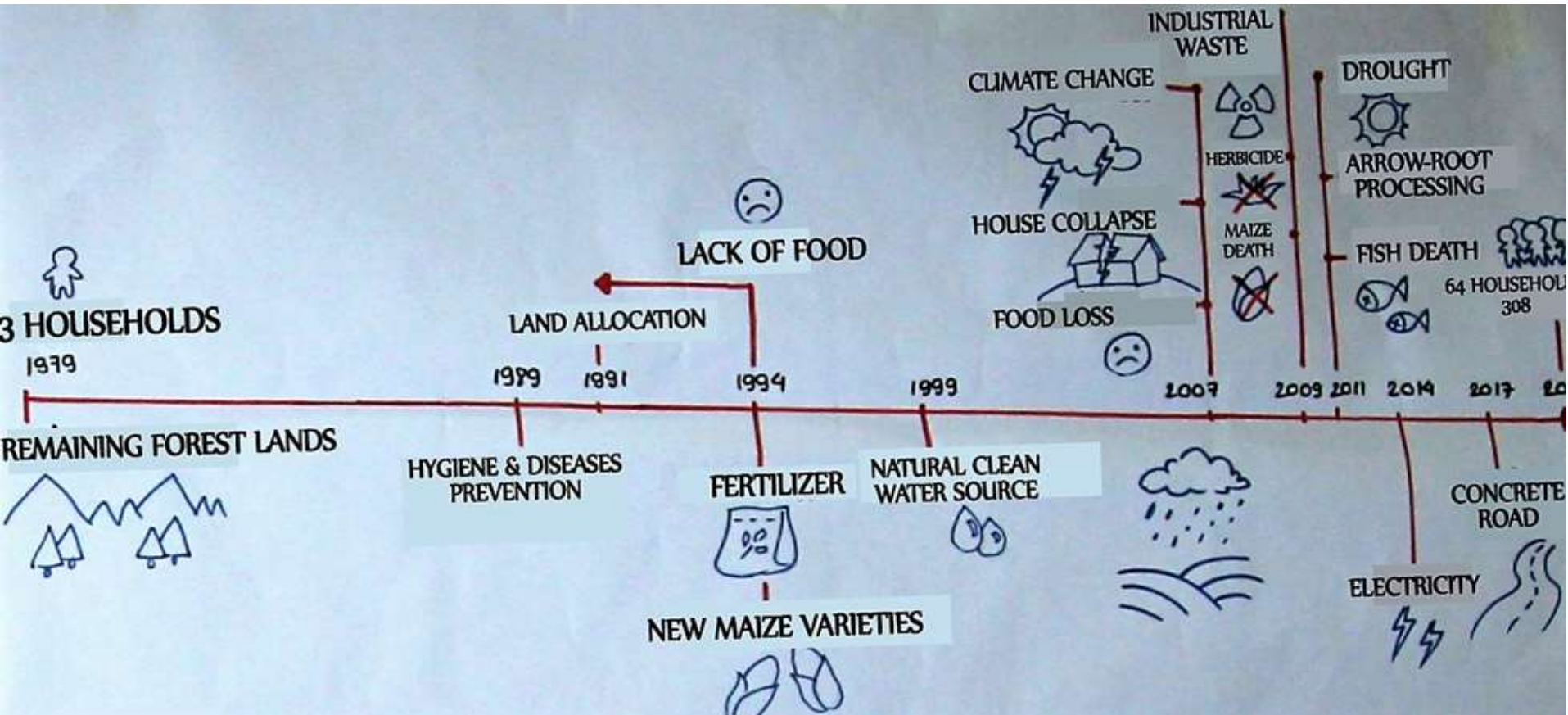


# Food system (cont.)

- Diversified: different traditional & high-yield ones
- Cultivation practice:
  - Each crop on each land plots
  - Integrated crops-trees
  - Chemical fertilizer & green manure
  - New practice & technology
- Wild products: eat & sale
  - small animals
  - Insects
  - Wild plants

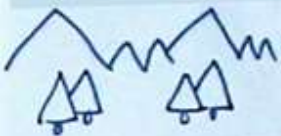


# Change over time - the village history line



3 HOUSEHOLDS  
1979

REMAINING FOREST LANDS



LAND ALLOCATION

1979

1991

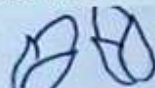


LACK OF FOOD



FERTILIZER

NEW MAIZE VARIETIES



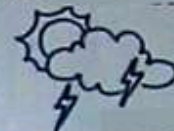
HYGIENE & DISEASES  
PREVENTION

1999

NATURAL CLEAN  
WATER SOURCE



CLIMATE CHANGE



HOUSE COLLAPSE



FOOD LOSS



INDUSTRIAL  
WASTE



HERBICIDE



MAIZE  
DEATH

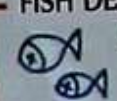


DROUGHT



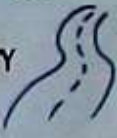
ARROW-ROOT  
PROCESSING

FISH DEATH



64 HOUSEHOLDS  
308

CONCRETE  
ROAD



ELECTRICITY



# Change over time

- Diversity of crops and breeds;
- Diversity of livelihood: increased cash income generating activities;
- Food is adequately sufficient: 3 meals a day
- Accessibility to diversified food, including milk and dairy products.
- Instant/processed food access increased.
- Wild products decreased.



# Recognized problems

- Increased extreme weather events & animal epidemic
- Water scarce
- Forest degradation
- Soil erosion
- Landslides
- Non-biodegradable waste and risk of environment pollution
- Gradually dependence on the market:
  - Fertilizer, seeds/breeds
  - Traditional varieties/breeds become less



Photo. Preservation of maize seeds for the next cultivation.

# Community resilience

- Try to maintain traditional varieties & breeds;
- Afforestation
- Plants more fruit trees to keep land from erosion and sliding; dike fields with sand bags;
- Leave land uncultivated for a period of time
- Green manure: leave trunks and leaves in the fields for decomposing
- Re-use water and buy big tank to store water
- Animals (pigs, chicken) to raise in cages
- Forest/land and water protection;
- Weather forecast to inform timely to people/alert about coming bad weather and what should do;

# Community resilience (cont.)

- More job opportunities to improve cash income to invest more on agriculture activities: buy seeds/breeds; fertilizer, machines/equipment, etc.
- Plant bamboo trees for forestation and also for taking bamboo roots;
- Raise wild pigs and some other small wild animals for sale.



Photo. Bamboo root is a common food for the community.

# Supporting external factors

- Government policy and program: on forest protection; credit program, agriculture extension services/program; new rural development program; supporting linkage between farmers – scientist-services providers;
- Development of market connections: services available and accessible;
- New practices and technology accessible
- Relief programs/activities from governments/organizations and peoples;
- Community strong coherence, helping each other in needs.





Photo. A couple takes break during harvesting maize.

# Barriers to resilience

- Population grows but land;
- Over exploitation of forest and the wild take longer time to recover of some important food sources in the nature;
- Young generation become less interest in agriculture production, especially they may not concern of the needs to maintain traditional knowledge and crops. And traditional knowledge may gradually disappear in the future.
- Community people do not fully aware of the need to maintain traditional knowledge and traditional best practice;
- People lack knowledge and information: about the market and market price; use of chemical/toxic material and non-biodegradation waste; lack adequate information/understanding about nutrition/healthy food;
- Increasing dependency on the outside/market products, including instant food may put people in disadvantage in term more dependency on cash income to cover for daily lives expenses.
- Uncontrolled/unplanned trial of crop/fruit trees

Thank you for your attention!