



# LEARNING CITIES & REGIONS CONFERENCE

## Learning Resource Centres in Vietnamese Cities and Regions

Professor David Wilmoth, RMIT, Australia

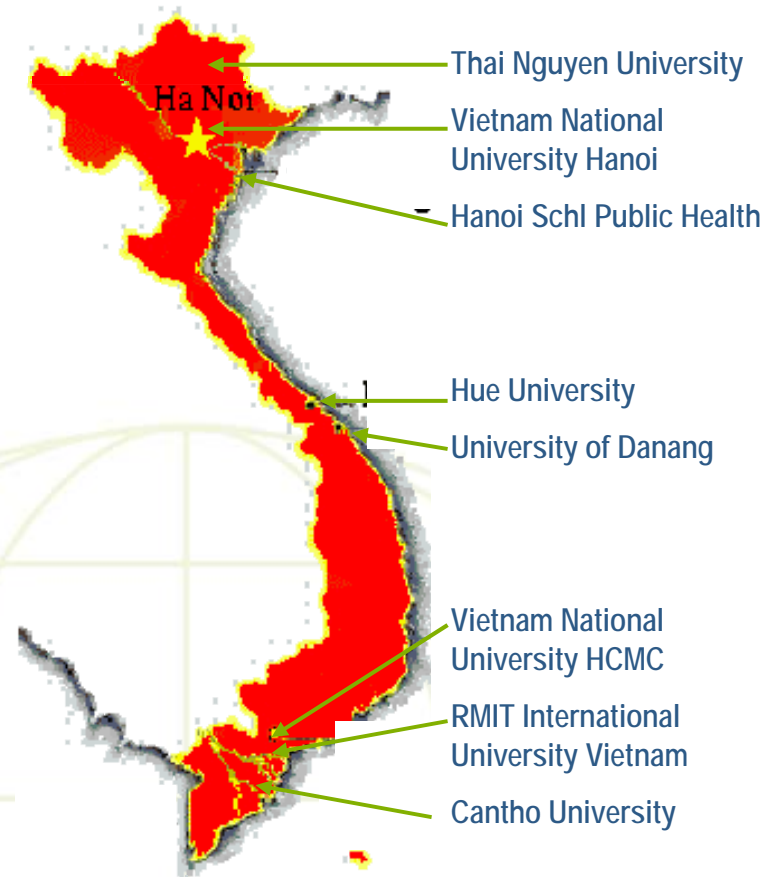
🌐 Sheraton Towers, Melbourne  
14 & 15 October 2002





# Introduction: Universities in Vietnam

- Long reverence for learning
- Legacy of war and poverty
- National commitment to learning society, ICT literacy
- Dramatic demand > 6 x places
- Poorly resourced infrastructure
- Rudimentary connectivity
- Teaching and learning reforms
- System reforms: mergers, QA, training, openness, devolution
- IFI support, esp World Bank



*Vietnam, Relevant Universities for Learning Resource Centre Program*



# Objectives: Learning Resource Centres

## Typical objectives:

- Upgrade library and information resources, and library management systems
- 'e-learning and research management platforms that truly connect outside and inside institutions'
- Support modernisation of learning, research and regional engagement,
- Training & capacity-building for LRC, its users and stakeholders
- Enhance inter-university, national and international collaboration to make them work
- Sustainability: low energy, low operating costs, pay the way, reduce the digital divide

## Typical LRC project tasks:

- Project and building planning and design
- Documentation, building and fitout
- Human resource evaluation, recruitment, training & education
- Procurement of ICT
- Acquisitions of library systems, information resources, other systems
- Commissioning, start-up
- Sustainable operation
- Post-occupancy evaluation
- Dissemination of experience



# Objectives: Links to Learning Principles

## *OECD policy principle*

Ensure educational provision, esp. good general education to upper secondary, and university research for regional spinoff

Org'l learning within firms, and networked

Org'l learning all sectors, not just hi-tech

Identify regional contributing resources and also impediments

Respond to emergent conditions & unlearn

Mechanisms for policy coordination

Foster appropriate regional social capital

Evaluate continuously, accord legitimacy

## *LRC corresponding objective*

Both are key aims of LRCs. Note that in Vietnam private returns to HE > secondary, and social returns are  $\approx$  [Mooock et al 1998]

LRCs to transform univs within and among

LRCs linking to econ priority sectors first

LRCs dependent on universities' linkages with regional resources and impediments

LRCs foster unlearning: of information control, university rigidity, rote learning

Doing that region-centre and across gov't

Indirect aim of LRCs

Early days for LRC evaluations & impact

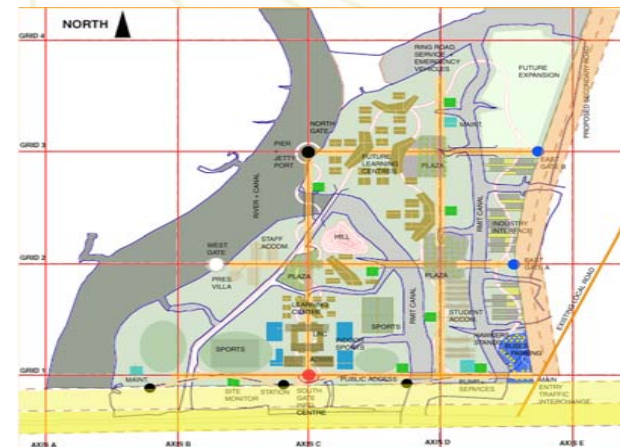


# Data: RMIT Vietnam's LRCs

- RMIT International University Vietnam established 2001 – a new model
- Owned by RMIT, also financed by IFC, ADB, strong philanthropic support
- City campus operating 1 year, has LRC and ICT centre, 450 students
- A centre for ICT and Education programs, also for other universities
- Saigon South campus major LRC site, 10,000 students by 2010
- Major support capability of RMIT
- Common learning platform design principles for RMIT Melbourne, Vietnam, regional Australia



*RMIT Vietnam City Campus, HCMC*



*RMIT Vietnam Saigon South campus plan, HCMC*



# Data: Hue University LRC

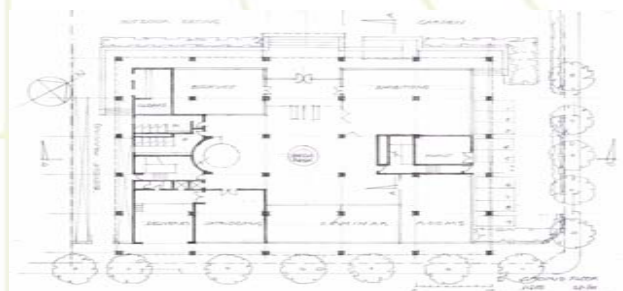
- Hue region: ancient cultural capital of Vietnam, knowledge economy via cultural tourism and conventions, using historic sites.
- Central Vietnam poverty - development need
- Multicampus university, 16,000 students, faculties in science, medicine, pedagogy, arts, economics and agriculture and forestry.
- LRC in main Le Loi Street on famous Perfume River. Pivotal location, serves city campuses and links with provincial library / archive being relocated
- Partners are Hue University, East Meets West, RMIT Vietnam, GHD, Atlantic Philanthropies
- 7000m<sup>2</sup>, 900 places, ca USD 5 m
- Post-LRC cooperation with RMIT on educational programs, R&D to reach region together



*Hue Citadel*



*Hue LRC, now under construction*



*LRC layout working sketch, ground floor*



# Data: University of Danang's LRCs

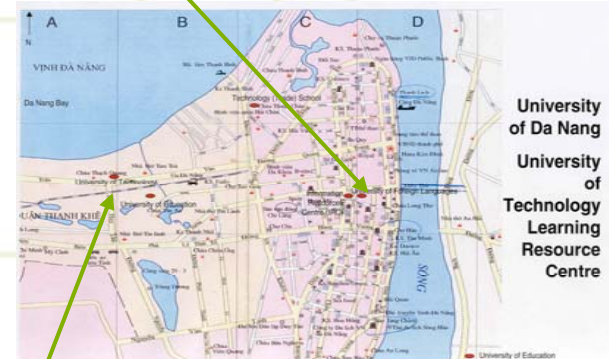
- Danang region: food, textiles, ceramics, transport, tourism; a hub on Vietnam's international cable links
- Central Vietnam poverty-reduction task
- Multicampus university, 16,000 students, faculties in Engineering, Foreign Languages, Education, Economics, Trade School.
- Partners for both LRCs have been variously University of Danang, East Meets West, University of Queensland, RMIT Vietnam, GHD, Atlantic Philanthropies
- 2000m<sup>2</sup> ,+ 5,500m<sup>2</sup>, ca USD 4m
- Post-occupancy evaluation of locally-developed library management software and pattern of usage



*First Information Resource Centre on city campus, with U of Queensland*



*Region a transport and tourism and transport hub with high bandwidth*

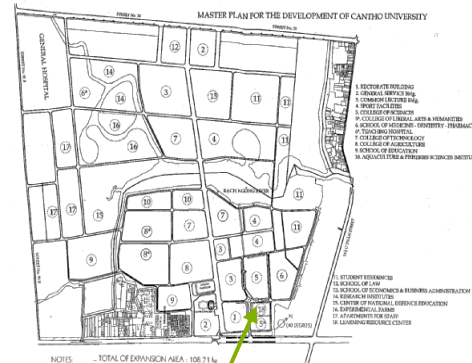


*Second LRC at Technology Campus, west*

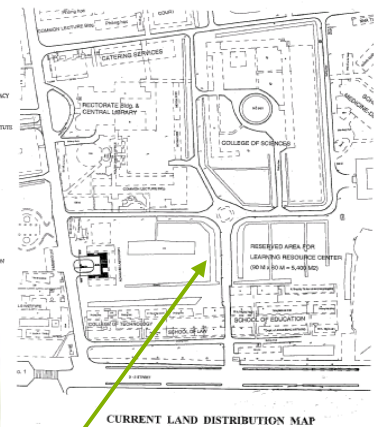


# Data: Cantho University LRC

- Regional HQ for rich delta production but also poverty reduction need
- University focus on agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, ICT. 15,000 students
- Relatively developed library system, network of library branches, but still poorly-resourced
- LRC, 10,000m<sup>2</sup>, to be part of university campus redevelopment
- LRC to be a vehicle for regional university extension, including several regional development projects
- Intensive use of distance education and on-line learning through the LRC



Cantho campus development plan shows LRC as site 18



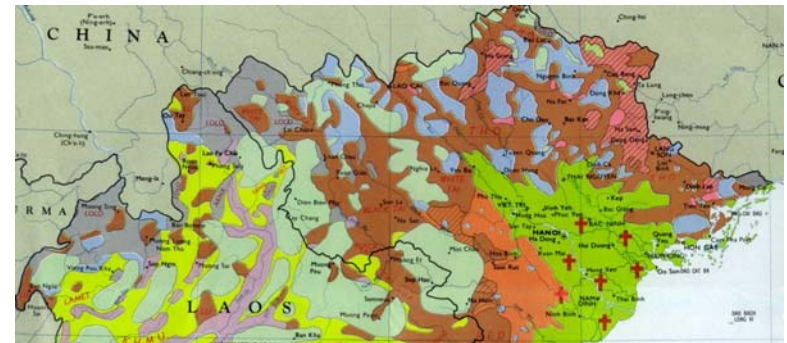
Cantho LRC development site



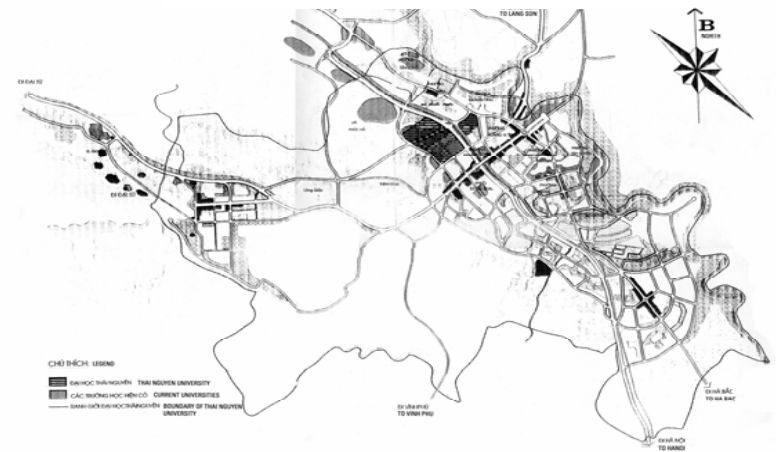


# Data: Thai Nguyen University

- Serves the development needs for the northern mountainous area (NMA), economically undeveloped
- Diverse ethnic representation (55% are minorities) and multicultural mission
- 30,000 students in medical, education, industrial engineering, agriculture and fisheries and vocational colleges
- University campus development plan consolidating separate campuses
- Possible LRC feasibility study to examine distributed learning and information resources in this regional context



*Thai Nguyen regional ethnic diversity*



*Thai Nguyen University campus development plan*



# Data: Vietnam National University Hanoi

- Pre-eminent university in Vietnam, highly autonomous, the result of mergers, 40,000 students and 2,300 staff
- RMIT's longstanding partner for joint masters program in systems engineering – joint building
- 5 campuses: Cau Giay, Thuong Dinh, Le Thanh Tong, Me Tri, Hoa Lac (the latter new campus 1000 ha to west of Hanoi)
- VNU Hanoi strategic mission for national development and international linkages for Vietnam; less so regional development
- Thus the hub for many national ICT, teaching and learning and research centres; relatively well-endowed
- Its potential role in the national LRC network is pivotal even though not part of the Ministry of Education and Training: LRC systems prototypes and testbed for change



*VNU Hanoi, main Cau Giay campus*



# Key Lessons: LRCs in a Network

*National decisions on policies, systems and standards have to address regional LRC problems: breaking regional and national bottlenecks iteratively and consensually*

- National-level project on Information Resource Systems and Standards helped crystallise overdue decisions
- Towards common internet infrastructure via EduNet; university pressure to lower the firewall around international traffic
- LRC network described links into Vietnam Development Information Centre and Global Development Learning Network
- Common standards for cataloguing classification, font recognition, interfacing, search engines etc
- Consortial behaviour on library management system procurement, shared electronic subscriptions, interlibrary lending, publishing, repositories
- Replication of common LRC elements including layouts and building design, systems configuration
- Pooled staff training for LRCs at RMIT Vietnam



# Key Lessons: LRCs in the Regions

- Radical attempt to create a network of LRCs across Vietnam
- Early days yet, still evolving, some way from learning cities and regions but Vietnam has set its goals that way
- Universities the host and the transmission medium to and from the cities and regions, LRCs not practically open to the public
- An open information resource base for economies of regions vs regulated access (resource constraints, firewalls, censorship, organisational silos) to be unlearned
- A supply-led change strategy: interactive learning platforms and e-libraries in advance of articulated regional learning needs



*LRC working at RMIT Vietnam Ho Chi Minh City Campus*



# Summing Up: Vietnam Embraces New Learning Economy Through Regional LRCs

*Partners for LRC network include:*

- *Ministry Education and Training*
- *Ministry Culture and Information*
- *Ministry Science and Technology*
- *Ministry of Planning and Investment*
- *Participating universities*
- *US Library of Congress*
- *Atlantic Philanthropies*
- *East Meets West Foundation*
- *Simmons College Boston*
- *The World Bank*
- *RMIT Vietnam*
- *GHD*
- *National Library of Vietnam*
- *National Centre for Science & Technology Information and Documentation*



*First LRC national systems and standards workshop*