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Ernie Kuhn

USAID/Laos

23 February 1973

**BREAKDOWN OF REFUGEES BY ETHNIC GROUP
IN MILITARY REGIONS OF LAOS**

MR-I

Ban Houei Sai Area

(29,505 Refugees)

Lao Thung Groups	36 %
Meo	04
Yao	14
Lu	17
Thai Dam	14
Lahu	02
Kalom	11
Akha (E-Kaw)	01
Other	01
	<u>100 %</u>

Luang Prabang Area

(36,244 Refugees)

Lao	29 %
Lu	04
Thai Dam	01
Meo	14
Lao Thung Groups	51
Other	01
	<u>100 %</u>

Sayaboury Area

(1,148 Refugees)

Meo	41 %
Lao	35
Lao Thung Groups	24
	<u>100 %</u>

MR-II

Xieng Khouang Area

(115,077 Refugees)

Meo	70 %
Lao	15
Lao Thung Groups	15
	<u>100 %</u>

MR-III

Savannakhet-Thakhek Area

(21,927 Refugees)

Lao	60 %
Lao Thung Groups	<u>40</u>
	100 %

MR-IV

Pakse Area

(38,029 Refugees)

Lao	70 %
Lao Thung Groups	<u>30</u>
	100 %

MR-V

Vientiane Plain

(11,757 Refugees)

Lao	47 %
Lao Thung Groups	40
Thai Dam	07
Thai Phuan	<u>06</u>
	100 %

Vang Vieng Area

(4,668 Refugees)

Lao	70 %
Lao Thung Groups	24
Yao	<u>06</u>
	100 %

Paksane Area

(2,490 Refugees)

Lao	72 %
Lao Thung Groups	15
Meo	10
Thai Dam	<u>03</u>
	100 %

NOTE: Total Refugees Receiving Support
as of 23 February 1973

260,675

USAID/Laos
23 February 1973

REFUGEE RELOCATION SITES IN LAOS
AND
NUMBER OF REFUGEES BEING RESETTLED

LUANG PRABANG AREA

(Xieng Ngeum-Muong Nane) (Long Nam Khan Project)	4,245 (Receiving support)
Add: Houei Phai Project	1,600 (Resettled and no longer receiving support as of this date)

VIENTIANE AREA

(Hin Heup Project)	5,929 (Receiving support)
Add: Vientiane Plain	27,775 (Resettled and no longer receiving support as of this date)
Paksane Project	8,000 (Resettled and no longer receiving support)

SAVANNAKHET AREA

(Seno)	2,875 (Resettled and no longer receiving support as of this date)
(Thasano)	6,400 (Receiving support)
(Thasano ext. 2)	1,010 "
(Thasano ext. 1)	2,072 "

PAKSE AREA

(Phu Ba Chieng Project)	7,337 (Receiving support)
Add: Houei Nam Pak Project	1,075 (Resettled and no longer receiving support)

O. Benson

OFFICE MEMORANDUM * UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : SEE DISTRIBUTION Date: 5 June 1973
FROM : John W. MacQueen, AD/RA
SUBJECT : Evaluation to Determine the Effectiveness of the PL-480 Training Program

As you know, refugee girls have been brought to Vientiane twice within the past two years and trained to give demonstrations to refugees on preparing PL-480 foods.

We are trying to ascertain the effectiveness of the PL-480 Training Program that has been (or is being) conducted in your area.

Please indicate, by checking the appropriate box, your evaluation of the effectiveness of the work that has been done and your response to the other questions listed:

Questions:

(1) Is the PL-480 demonstration training program serving a real need in your province? Yes No Undecided

(2) Is the PL-480 demonstration program effective in promoting the use of PL-480 foods in the refugees' diet? Yes No Undecided

If "No", what reasons do you feel are the causes for the lack of success of the program?

(3) Do you think a PL-480 demonstration training program is needed to show refugees how to incorporate PL-480 foods in their diet? Yes No Undecided

(4) Are the girls, who are demonstrating, doing a good job of teaching the refugees? Yes No Undecided

If "No", do you think they need:

- a. Additional training? Yes No Undecided
b. A refresher course? Yes No Undecided

5. Will the province, in which you work, require new refugee demonstrators who will need training in Vientiane?
 Yes No Undecided

(6) If the province needs more training for refugee girls in PL-480 in Vientiane, what topics should be included or emphasized in the training?

(7) Are the Home Economics Agents making periodic visits to check on the performance of the girls who are demonstrating to preparation of PL-490?
 Yes No Don't know

If "Yes", is this supervision necessary and/or effective (please give reasons)?

If "No", (please give reasons)

(8) Please list any suggestions you may have for improving the effectiveness of the program.

DISTR: BHS:Johnson
LP:Benson
XK:TBaranyi
SVKT:RMHearn
VTE:EAmundson
Pakse:JTucker

ORA:WCL *WCL*

Memorandum

June 28, 1973

TO : Mr. Charles A. Mann, Director, USAID/Laos

FROM : *Ronald L. King*
Ronald L. King, Site Supervisor
Supervisory Auditor, Bangkok Office, Far East Branch, GAO

SUBJECT: Review of U. S. activities related to Laos (Code 49212)
Interim Memorandum No. 7 - Refugee Relief and Resettlement

EB
HKA
Bah

The purpose of this memorandum is to present our observations on the effectiveness of the Refugee Relief and Resettlement Program in Laos. It represents the views of the on-site audit staff and should not be construed as the official position of the General Accounting Office. We are soliciting your comments on the matters discussed herein, including any additional information or planned corrective action(s).

STATEMENT OF CONDITIONS

Our overall evaluation of the refugee program is that the Mission has continued to improve the assistance being provided to the refugees. However, the program is still not effectively achieving the objective of refugee self-sufficiency. Self-sufficient refugees continue to be fed once they are able to support themselves. (The program has in some instances interfered with traditional Lao customs and religion.) There has been poor planning and coordination in the PL 480 aspects of the program and refugee land distribution in the Pakse area has been a failure. There has also been some indifference to the needs of the refugees, especially by the Public Health Division of USAID.

WHERE?

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The refugee program in Laos consists of emergency relief and resettlement assistance. The emergency relief aspects dominated the program through 1969, after which time USAID placed increasing emphasis on resettlement. Assistance to refugees has averaged about \$25 million per year over the last three years. Emergency assistance includes immediate essentials such as food, clothing, shelter, and medical care. Relocation

and rehabilitation is provided through the cooperative efforts of USAID, the Lao Government, and the refugees.

Emergency Relief

Emergency relief activities were not observed during the review. However, based on our observations of newly arrived refugees at several refugee sites, and our discussions with USAID field personnel, there does not appear to be any problems in this area. The Mission is apparently geared to provide rapid aid to new refugees with food, medical and other commodities needed to sustain them until they can be reestablished.

Resettlement assistance

The Mission has met its short-range objectives of resettling refugees into secure areas as quickly as possible, establishing traditional-style villages and providing the refugees with the basic essentials. Although the long-range objective of the program is to assist the refugees until they are totally self-sufficient, USAID has not discontinued assistance when this objective has been achieved.

FOOD SUPPORT

It is the stated objective of the program to assist refugees in attaining self-sufficiency comparable to the non-refugees in the area. Our review has disclosed that a realistic criteria has not been developed to determine when self-sufficiency has been attained and field personnel opinions on village self-sufficiency are not being given much consideration.

Self-sufficient refugees receiving food support

We visited the Pak Sab refugee relocation area near Vientiane which contains about 3,700 refugees who came from Thakhek in rented boats. ^{WNEW?} They procured all of their own rice and corn seeds, and their housing materials, except for the thatch provided by USAID. Many of the villagers are earning 450 kip per day working as laborers at the nearby Japanese refugee relocation project. The villagers say they do not need a school because the older children are attending school in Vientiane. The question

naturally arises as to why USAID is providing these refugees with full food support when they seem to be quite capable of taking care of themselves.

Nearly 26,000 refugees were evacuated from the Plain of Jars and resettled on the Vientiane Plain between February and October 1970. Roughly three years later they are still getting full food support from USAID even though field personnel estimate that in 90 percent of the villages, nearly 70 percent of the families are self-sufficient in rice and other foods.

Inequitable support to
the Seno Project

Refugees at the Seno Project have been resettled for three to four years. Yet they are all still receiving food support. The first four villages at Seno are in fact self-sufficient, while the remaining four villages are not because USAID has not fulfilled its commitment to plow one-half hectare of paddy land for each family. The reason given was USAID's two farm tractors are inoperative and have not been repaired. This second group also lacks buffalos and plows, which the first group possess, and must therefore work the land by hand. Thus at Seno, we have the paradox of USAID providing food support to self-sufficient refugees on one hand and not providing adequate support to needy refugees on the other.

USAID support of refugees apparently
unwilling to support themselves

The refugees in Village II at Houei Nam Phak have been resettled for over three years but they are still on partial food support. USAID-cleared farmland is under-utilized and over-grown with weeds. We can only conclude that the refugees have not seen the necessity to grow enough food for themselves so long as USAID is willing to support them.

Reasons given for supporting self-sufficient
refugees and those unwilling to become self-sufficient

We have been told that the reason for USAID's decision to support these categories of refugees are:

- USAID defines self-sufficiency in terms of rice production alone and does not consider other food sources nor the refugees' income.

- Refugee groups have applied political pressure on the Lao Government and in turn on USAID. This has been done primarily by those groups which have attained self-sufficiency (e.g., Pak Sab).
- Field personnel cannot "prove" that a village is self-sufficient. However, in our opinion, they should not be occupying their positions, if their judgment, based on experience, observations, and discussions with the villagers, cannot be trusted.

NEED FOR BETTER PLANNING AND COORDINATION
OF THE PL 480, TITLE II REFUGEE FEEDING PROGRAM

The Mission has demonstrated poor planning and coordination in estimating fiscal year 1974 PL 480, Title II food requirements for itself and the Catholic Relief Service (CRS), by not considering known factors and revising estimates. USAID and CRS estimated that CRS would be feeding 34,000 refugees at full rations for six months. Although, CRS is currently feeding 44,000 refugees, and the latest USAID estimate is that they will be feeding 48,000 for nine months, no action has been taken to revise the CRS fiscal 1974 requirements. In addition, CRS has run out of food and USAID will have to supply their requirements for the period of May-August 1973. USAID has not only had to revise their estimates to cover this shortfall, but must cover the extra number of refugees and the extra period of time they will be supported.

INEFFECTIVENESS OF PL 480
HOME DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Our discussions with refugees and USAID field personnel lead us to question the value of the home demonstration project. The girls who give the demonstration use ingredients such as sugar which the refugees generally cannot afford to purchase and consequently do not use. We have sampled the products made by the demonstration girls and those made without the extra ingredients and can attest to the fact that there is a significant difference. Those without the extras are tasteless.

REHABILITATION

USAID has done a commendable job in providing refugees with shelter, medical care, an adequate water supply, educational assistance, and cooking utensils. However, we found that some problem areas still remain.

Providing wrong types of rice seeds

USAID has provided paddy rice seed to hill refugees who do not have paddy rice fields. (In some cases this has happened for the second year in a row. Paddy rice requires regulated water, weeding, and only two or three seeds to a hole to keep from being stunted. Lowland hill rice seed would provide much better yields.

USAID has also given refugees rice seeds which require intensive cultivation with fertilizer and insecticides, commodities which the refugees are not given and do not have.

Interference with Lao tradition and religion

Our review has disclosed that USAID is building wats and feeding monks. We believe that it is unfortunate that USAID, in doing this, is destroying a highly venerated tradition in Laos that goes back for hundreds of years. The Lao Buddhist have traditionally earned merit for themselves by raising money to build wats and by sharing their food with the monks. We do not think USAID should be interfering with such an important part of the Lao culture.

Areas needing emphasis

Although the Public Health Division has improved the medical care of refugees with their medics and dispensaries, they have shown an indifference to the areas of sanitation and preventive medicine. We would appreciate an explanation as to why these areas have been ignored and being advised as to what detailed plans the Mission has formulated for the future. This is particularly important in light of the recent cholera

X epidemic in the Thasano Relocation Project which was initially taken lightly by the Public Health Division as just one of those things you have to expect at this time of the year, despite the fact that several refugees had already died.

(There is also the question of how long the land will support the resettled refugees. The Mission is using redirection, but it has not looked into training the refugees to use more intensive agricultural methods. We would like to know what plans the Mission has for helping the refugees improve their output through more intensive land cultivation.)

VALUE OF REFUGEE STATUS REPORTS

Our review of the weekly and monthly refugee status reports leads us to question their value as a management tool because they do not fully explain net changes in the number of refugees receiving assistance. For example, the refugees moving into the Pak Sab site are merely described as a group of refugees from Thakhek. We think that the Mission Director should have been given reasons for their move from Thakhek and a detailed justification for USAID support.

LAND DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM PROBLEMS

We have been advised that there are several problems with the refugees losing their land to local residents who remove the surveyors' stakes or just simply cultivate the land themselves. Local officials have been reluctant to enforce the refugees' rights to the land until USAID has put pressure on them. However, this has done nothing to reduce the bitterness which has built up between the refugees and their neighbors, leading in one case to the death of two refugees in Village No. 3 at the Seno relocation project. We feel that the long-range success of the land distribution program is endangered by this lack of cooperation among the indigenous population. The land distribution program is not being pursued in Pakse because USAID field personnel (do not believe) there is a legal basis for the refugees owning their own land.

CONCLUSIONS

In our opinion, the criteria being used to determine whether refugees are self-sufficient is not in accord with the program's stated objective.

Every refugee is provided with food support until all the refugees in the group are self-sufficient in rice production. By definition this criteria ignores other sources of food, and income which could be used to procure food. Consequently, many refugees lack the motivation to achieve self-sufficiency because they know USAID will continue to support them whether or not they are able to support themselves. It is not only wasteful of USAID's limited resources, but, in our opinion, destroys any incentive the refugees might have to become self-sufficient. USAID needs to be more selective in who it supports. If there are a few families in a village who cannot support themselves for good reasons, then they should be supported by USAID until the village is able to support them in the traditional manner. USAID should not be feeding an entire village when only a few cannot support themselves.

We believe the Mission needs to exercise tighter control over the refugee program to prevent the refugees from becoming welfare dependents. The refugees should be informed that if they choose not to fully utilize their available resources and properly cultivate their crops, USAID will withhold further support. USAID field personnel, in our opinion, should report on the percentage of available land each refugee village has cultivated and the detailed reasons for any shortfall. They should also report on the amount of rice and other foods harvested. It follows then that USAID should review their status reporting procedures and modify them in order to make the reports a usable management tool.

In view of the ineffectiveness of the PL 480 home demonstration project, we believe the project should be reevaluated and, if methods of food preparation resulting in palatable food, utilizing those ingredients normally available to the refugees cannot be developed, the project should be terminated.

We further believe the Mission should exercise more care in the selection of rice seeds to be given to the refugees. It is unrealistic to expect refugees to become self-sufficient in rice production if they are continually given the wrong kind of seeds. We also believe more emphasis is needed in the areas of sanitation and preventive medicine by the Public Health Division, and in the area of agricultural techniques by the Agriculture Division.

The Mission should encourage the Lao Government to solve the land distribution program problems and continue to apply the necessary pressure on local officials to ensure that the refugees' rights are enforced. The Mission also should make their field personnel aware of the rights of the refugees regarding ownership of land.

Finally, we cannot see how United States objectives are advanced by interfering in the religious customs and traditions of the Lao Buddhist. We therefore believe that USAID's policy of constructing wats and feeding the monks should be terminated.

ANSWERS

1. Latest figures - as of 27 July 1973

Ban Houei Sai	28,447
Luang Prabang	41,692
Sayaboury	1,786
Xieng Khouang	151,736
Thakhek	5,332
Savannakhet	19,209
Pakse	49,293
Vientiane Plaine	45,326
Paksane	7,079
Muong Kassy/Vang Vieng	<u>7,402</u>
	357,302

These figures are only those people presently receiving food support (rice, salt, meat and PL-480 commodities such as Bulgar Wheat, Cornmeal, Noodles and Salad Oil) from the USAID/RLG/SW. RLG figures show approximately 600,000 refugees but these figures go back further in time and include people who have become re-established, gone into business etc. and are not receiving food assistance.

2. Approximate ethnic composition of the refugees as broken down by area is as follows:

Ban Houei Sai Area

28,447 Refugees

Lao Thung Groups	36%
Meo	04%
Yao	14%
Li	17%
Thai Dam	14%
Laku	02%
Kalom	11%
Akha	01%
Other	<u>01%</u>
	100%

Luang Prabang Area

41,692 Refugees

Lao	29%
Lu	04%
Thai Dam	01%
Meo	14%
Lao Thung Groups	51%
Other	<u>01%</u>
	100%

<u>Sayaboury Area</u>	1,786 Refugees
Meo	41%
Lao	35%
Lao Thung Groups	<u>24%</u>
	100%
<u>Xieng Khouang Area</u>	151,736 Refugees
Meo	70%
Lao	15%
Lao Thung	<u>15%</u>
	100%
<u>Savannakhet - Thakhek Area</u>	24,541 Refugees
Lao	60%
Lao Thung Groups	<u>40%</u>
	100%
<u>Pakse Area</u>	49,293 Refugees
Lao	70%
Lao Thung Groups	<u>30%</u>
	100%
<u>Vientiane Plains Area</u>	45,326 Refugees
Lao	28%
Lao Thung Groups	10%

Thai Dam	02%
Thai Phuan	<u>60%</u>
	100%

Vang Vieng Area 7,402 Refugees

Lao	70%
Lao Thung Groups	24%
Yao	<u>06%</u>
	100%

Paksane Area 7,097 Refugees

Lao	72%
Lao Thung Groups	15%
Meo	10%
Thai Dam	<u>03%</u>
	100%

Approximate percent of Refugee Population by Ethnic Groups

Lao	30.13%
Lao Thung Groups	23.95%
Meo	32.08%
Thai Phuan	07.61%
Thai Dam	01.54%
Yao	01.23%
Lu	01.81%
Other (Lahu, Kalom, Akha ek)	<u>01.65%</u>
	100.00%

2. It would be difficult to breakdown all the refugee groups as to distribution by years. The number of months that a refugee receives food support depends (1) upon what month of the year he becomes a refugees, (2) the amount of land available in the area he flees to, (3) and the level of security in that area.

As examples: In (1) above, if the individual becomes a refugee in March, April, May and June he has no time to make "Hai" for that year. Thus he would be fed until rice harvest of the next year. If he becomes a refugee sometime before February, he has time to clear and burn fields for at least a partial crop for that year. Upon harvest the refugee is taken off of food support and a survey is made to determine how many months his rice will last. When he runs out, he can receive rice again until the next harvest.

Now, (2) above is very important. In Xieng Khouang the concentration of people has been so demic the past few years that new land is not available for fields. Thus the crop yields are lower each year, necessiating more food support. In Houa Khong Province the refugees have been packed along the banks of the Mekong so that very little land is available for forming. Item (3) above is an unknown factor as the USAID and the RLG can only predict possible areas of enemy incursions - and of cause do not know exactly when or when the enemy will strike. Obviously refugees in areas where there is heavy enemy activity cannot put in fields to grow rice.

This was true in Hua Phan Province a few years back, and more recently, Xieng Khouang, especially in Bouam Long. All of the above factors make question of years difficult to answer. However, in Fiscal Year 1972 (01 July 1971) to 30 June 1972) there were 75,140 civilians forced from their villages, thus becoming refugees. During that period 74,104 refugees planted rice and were removed from support roles for varying periods of time. 63,091 of these people required some assistance during the year. In Fiscal Year 1973 (01 June 1972 to 30 July 1973) there were 135,240 civilians displaced from their villages. During the last harvest 125,000 people reached some degree of self sufficiency. Many of these people have already returned to the food support roles. A breakdown by time period for the 135,240 people in FY 1973 shows:

18,632	01 July - 27 Oct	general lull
83,464	27 Oct - 22 Feb	heavy enemy offensive
33,144	23 Feb - 23 Jun	Post cease-fire

Areas of settlement has been generally answered in question 1. Within each of those provinces there are hundreds of village locations where refugees are settled. However the USAID and the RLG have established official relocation projects at Houei Nam Pak and Phu Ba Chieng in Sedone Province, Seno and Tha Sano in Savannakhet Province, Hin Heup and the Vientiane Plains in Vientiane Province and the Long Nam Khan in Luang Prabang Province.

3. With the cease-fire there should be no more large-scale refugee moves due to military action. However since the cease-fire of 22 Oct there have been 33,144 people displaced from their homes and requiring food support. Many of these people have crossed into RLG - controlled areas to escape taxation and military conscription in the NLHX - controlled territory.

Future refugee moves will probably be more of a leveling-off of over crowded areas. The problem is in finding land that is suitable for relocation and farming. In some areas suitable land will have to be found outside the immediate area - eg the RLG - controlled portion of Xieng Khouang is over-populated. Of course there is no way to determine if the refugee population can or will want to return to their original home areas after the new Government of National Union is formed.

4. Generally the USAID and the RLG co-ordinate efforts in meeting refugee needs through the Office of Refugee Affairs of the USAID and the Ministry of Social Welfare. Medical needs are determined by the Public Health Division of the USAID and the Ministry of Public Health, "Social Relief" is a little vague. Under the general program of resettling and rehabilitating displaced refugees, former training programs have been established, loans made for purchase of water buffaloes, skills training school have been established (teaching blacksmithy, carpentry, pottery making, charcoal making, sewing, etc.) The general idea behind such programs is to assist the refugee in some field which may help provide him an occupation and means of livelihood. Maternal, Child Health Centers

have been placed in many areas to improve pre and post natal care for mothers and teach proper hygiene techniques to nursing mothers. Birth Control information is being decimated and a limited birth control program has been undertaken by the Ministry of Public Health. Such programs have had varied success.

Responsibility for conducting such programs comes under a variety of USAID Division and RLG Ministries - eg Agriculture, Commission of Rural Affairs, Public Health, Travel Publique, Social Welfare etc.

5.

6. Procedures of evacuation of civilians very depending upon the circumstances.

In the case of sudden, unexpected attacks by the enemy, refugees would be forced to walk or go by any other means of local transportation (boat, truck etc). Generally speaking all refugee moves in Khammouane, Savannakhet, Saravane, Attapeu, Wapi and Sedone in the South and Houa Khong, Sayaboury and Luang Prabang in the north, have been carried out by the refugees themselves. Other large-scale refugee evauations have been done by aircraft-eg from Houa Phan from 1967-1970, the Plaine des Jarres in 1969, the San Sook area in 1970, Muong Souie - Xieng Dat in 1969 .

If enough advance warning is given that the enemy planned to attack areas of large civilian populations, or if there were safe areas that aircraft could land, - and providing there was no way that the civilians could walk out - then an airlift would be organized by the Refugee Relief Officer in that area in co-operation and with the approval of the Chao Khoueng and Chao Muong involved and with the local and regional military commanders. Depending how critical the security situation was, the refugees would be told as soon as possible when the move was to be made and to pack up all belongings and be ready to be airlifted from the landing strip or helicopter pad as the case may have been.

The refugees would be seperated into villages in large moves and attempts would also be made to ensure and entire families traveled on the same aircraft. All household and personel effects plus chickens in baskets were allowed on the planes: In cases where several thousand people had be

moved quickly due to poor security or if numbers of aircraft were insufficient, pigs were tied up and placed, when possible in burlap bags, with the owners name attached. When all refugees had been safely moved, the pigs were evacuated last providing security was still good.

The primary idea, of course, is to get the refugees to a safe place, fact. In some case where there were large numbers of people to be moved, such as the 13,000 in March 1968 in Houa Phan and the 10,000 in Sept - Dec 1968 also in Houa Phan, the refugees "leapfrogged" from safe area to safe area. In other words it was often necessary to quickly move large numbers of refugees by air short distances in order to evacuate all the people. A security deteriorated in the new location, the people would be moved quickly to a new semi-safe area. When a relatively safe area was located, the refugees would then be moved to secure area for actual relocation. An example of this was 1968 in Houa Phan when refugees were evacuated under fire from Houie Kha Moun to Houie Hin Sa, Houie Hin Sa became insecure and evacuations were made to Houie Tong Kho and to Pha Souie. Houie Tong Kho became insecure and those people went also to Pha Souie. Pha Souie was safe due to its physical characteristics plus the fact the enemy did not push its attack further. There 13,000 people were then evacuated to the Sam Thong - Long Chieng area for relocation.

As the refugees are moving food and necessary goods such as blankets, pots etc are provided, as is medical care. Once the refugee reaches the place of relocation a full complement of supplies is issued - blankets, mosquito net, clothes, pots, pans, knives, axes, vegetable seed etc.

Once the refugees are relocated then such projects as dispensaries, schools, water systems, muong or tasseng offices, training programs etc can be established. At all levels of the relocation phase the USAID and the RLG work in co-operation and conjunction to maintain the program.

7. There is no formal division of responsibility between the USAID and the RLG regarding any group of refugees. However the USAID has taken a larger share of the operational role in MR II due primarily to close ties with the military-refugee problem and the fact that all of the sites required aircraft to reach them. This is not to imply that the RLG was not concerned or involved in the northern part of the country - Xieng Khouang, Luang Prabang, Houa Phan and Houa Khong - but rather RLG services were limited and closely dependent on USAID aircraft for travel and implementation of the programs. In example the RLG Primary School Inspector might have text book for the group scholiare at Boum Long but was forced to rely on the USAID to provide aircraft. The same would be true, say of roofing sheets from the Ministry of Social Welfare for refugee projects. In other areas such as Pakse and Savannakhet where there are good connecting roads and vehicles of the RLG are available, the dependence for USAID support is obviously much less. The distribution of rice in most areas is done by a

combination of USAID, private contract and Social Welfare trucks. Often FAR provides trucks, However in the north the rice drops to refugees rely 100% on the USAID although Social Welfare has personnel involved in certain aspects of the drop program.

The determination of who is to be fed and for how long generally is made by each Khoueng refugee committee after requests have been made by the appreciate Chao Muongs, Tassengs etc. Some highly sessitive groups such as the Plaine des Jarres refugees in the Vientiane Plaine have required approval of the Prime Minister and the Office of the Director of the USAID in order to receive continued food support after receiving food support for several years.

Both the RLG and the USAID personnel in the field have the responsibility of monitoring the distribution of food and commodities in order to ensure that such goods actually reach the intended recipients. Records are also jointly maintained to prevent falsification of refugee records. In addition to daily contact, both Luang Prabang and Houa Khong hold just USAID/RLG monthly meetings to insure correct roles and plan food distributions for the coming month.

Thus there is no clear cut formal delineation of duties or responsibilities but rather responsibilities are stared depending upon the circumstances.

8-9. The only "formal study" done on refugees is not yet completed. One part, on the Vientiane Plains - A Comparative Study of Refugee and Nonrefugee Villager - has been published and is enclosed along with several other publications on refugee programs country - wide. Certainly there have been problems and not always have programs been conducted as planned. But on the whole, given the war-time conditions under which the refugees were created and the political uncertainty of Laos under which continuing program have to be carried out, no legitimate political or war-refugee has ever been denied the basic nutritioned, health and social assistance needed to sustain ones self. Virtually no refugee is without access to a dispensary or hospital and educational opportunities have been opened to children who might never have had the chance to attend school in their local villages. This is not to say that being a refugee is not a great physical and mental strain - it certainly is. ~~But~~ all efforts have been made to sustain the refugees and provide them with all assistance needed.

10. By war widow I assume that you mean a widow of a soldier as opposed to a widow whose husband was a civilian. The FAR has programmes to assist widow of FAR troops killed and the USAID is not involved in this. Widows of the non-FAR troops in Military Regions I and II are generally given continued support as if they were a refugee - which they also are

in most cases. The Ministry of Social Welfare at That Khao in Vientiane receives assistance from the USAID. There is no program for the physically handicapped as this lies outside the scope of USAID activities. However the USAID does assist in providing artificial limb to war victims.

11. I'm not sure that I fully understand the question in regards to community - development. In addition to those items mentioned in question 4, above, of course schools dispensaries, muong offices, roads etc. have been built. Most large projects are constructed by professional labor. Small village schools and dispensaries are usually built with local village labor.

The closest program to community development has been the relocation projects mentioned in question two above. These are "total" programs in that all phases of development are included. These include initial movement of people on the project area and distribution of land, building of houses and the basic village infrastructure - streets, wells, dispensaries, schools, offices etc, and clearing of land for gardens and cereal crops. All these programmes progress at varying rates of time eventually leading to other programs such as fish ponds, charcoal making, such evening etc. In some areas the refugees have progressed quite well economically in mushroom growing, fishing, charcoal making etc. Other refugee groups have fared poorly at the same endorse. The success or failure of any local project depends upon the

interest of local RLG officials and the industrialness of the refugees themselves.

While many refugees have made good incomes, none of the above-mentioned relocation areas has yet been able to become 100% self supporting in rice.

As past feeding policy has always been that a refugee must grow enough rice to last one year to be classified as self sufficient. This concept must be reviewed as some groups are now capable of financially supporting themselves even without growing rice.

12, 13, 14 and 15. As plans are still being formed, and the new government has not yet been formed, it would be premature to speculate on future plans, priorities etc. As for the hill tribes, continued support would of course be available within any constraints may be imposed by the new government.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : See distribution

26 September 1973

FROM : *Jack L. Williamson*
Jack L. Williamson, AAD/RA

SUBJECT : Discontinuance of Refugee-Dependent Support

Staff out attached draft with concerned people
in your area. Need joint concurrence or
comments for submission to Director by
15 October 1973.

Clearance: *E. Bable*

E. Bable, AD/FO

Distribution

OD/DD

AD/FO

AD/P

AAC/LP-3

AC/XK-3

AAC/BHS-3

AAD/RA: *JL* Williamson:mhb

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. Charles A. Mann, Director
FROM : Jack L. Williamson, AAD/RA
SUBJECT : Food Support for Refugee Dependents

Present Status:

1. Dependents of former para military units, now integrated into the regular Army, for the most part, have been in a refugee status for several years. Because of their refugee status these dependents have received food rations as refugees. This ration has been funded by DoD due to the fact that the military personnel of these dependents were on active duty.

2. In the FY 74-75 Program Budget Submission, DoD funding for military dependents will cease in FY 75. This means that after 1 July 1974 approximately 95,000 dependents in MRs I and II will no longer receive food support funded from DoD sources.

The Problem:

A. Many military dependents did not plant rice last February (1973) for various reasons including insecurity, lack of adequate land and an expectation that dependents would continue to receive food support. As a result most dependents will not be self-sufficient next calendar year (1974). Thus, they will continue to expect food support through CY 74.

This poses a problem in that the fiscal year funding goes only half way through the calendar year. Cutting off food support in July would cause hardships for the majority of the dependents. To resolve this problem the following alternatives may be considered:

Alternatives

Alt. 1. Both dependent and non-dependent refugees' foodstuffs can be suspended in January 1974. This has the advantage of bringing all refugees and dependents attention to the fact that they must begin thinking in terms of becoming self-sufficient.

Dependents of military personnel will have to exist on subsistence payments and what they can grow locally.

Disadvantage to this scheme is that dependents will claim they are refugees and will request USAID assistance. Administratively it might be very difficult to determine who was a refugee dependent and who was a refugee non-dependent. This move could also be interpreted as a lack of support by local leaders who still have a moral obligation to settle refugees and refugee dependents alike.

Alt. 2. Suspend both refugee dependent and refugee non-dependent foodstuffs as of 1 January 1974.

Consider everyone as refugees and provide assistance only on the basis of need, not whether their menfolk are in military service or not. The remaining FY 74 DoD money would be cost-shared

on a proportional basis not on actual lists as is presently done. The advantage of this would be to put everyone on an equal basis in terms of judging who would receive food support. Refugee-dependents would not feel they were due food support simply because they were military dependents. Another advantage would be to delay the distribution of FY 74 DoD funded foodstuffs so that they could be stretched into FY-75 for support of refugee dependents through to the harvest in January 1975.

Alt. 3. Suspend foodstuff distribution to refugee-dependents and refugee non-dependents on 1 January 1974. Turn foodstuffs over to military and let them handle distribution to their dependents.

The disadvantage, aside from possible loss of commodities, would be dependents who were not fed by the military would then seek USAID assistance. This could be resolved by requiring a complete listing by location of all dependents before turning over commodities. Another disadvantage would still be the problem of funding after July 1974.

Alt. 4. Continue foodstuff support to refugee-dependents under the present system.

The disadvantage to this is that it discourages non-dependent refugees from working. There would be a tendency to overload refugee-dependent lists. Funding for foodstuffs will run out in July 1974 and the dependency created will then be inherited by USAID.

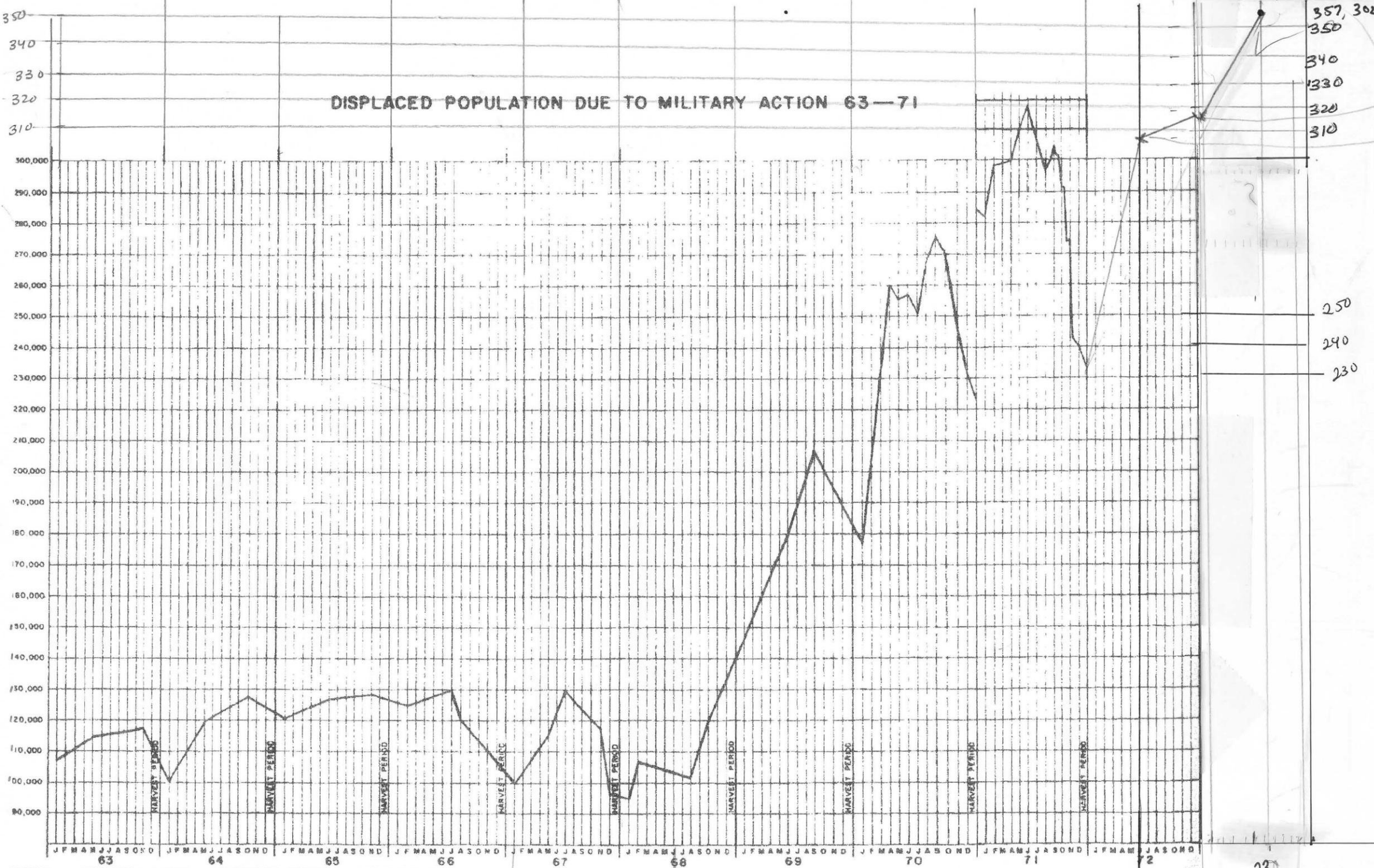
Alt. 5. Discontinue food support to refugee-dependents as of January 1974. Transfer funds which are not provided "in-kind", i. e., foodstuffs to Lao military and increase cash Kip subsistence payments. Disadvantage would be inequality in relation to country-wide military pay, and again, question of funding after July 1974.

Recommendations:

Of all the schemes, "Alternate 2" would probably work out the best. The refugee-dependents would be put on notice to start supporting themselves; those dependents who needed assistance would receive it. The total refugee population would feel more equally treated; DoD funding would be stretched out to cover the part of the year when most refugee dependents will really need the assistance; the burden on USAID will be relieved.

For morale purposes, if it became necessary to soften the initial shock of discontinuance of foodstuffs to refugee-dependents, a partial increase in family subsistence could be added to take-home pay which would equal MR III and IV subsistence payments. This pay increase could come from present "in-kind" funding. However, this will have to be determined by higher authority.

DISPLACED POPULATION DUE TO MILITARY ACTION 63-71



357,302
350
340
330
320
310

250
240
230