

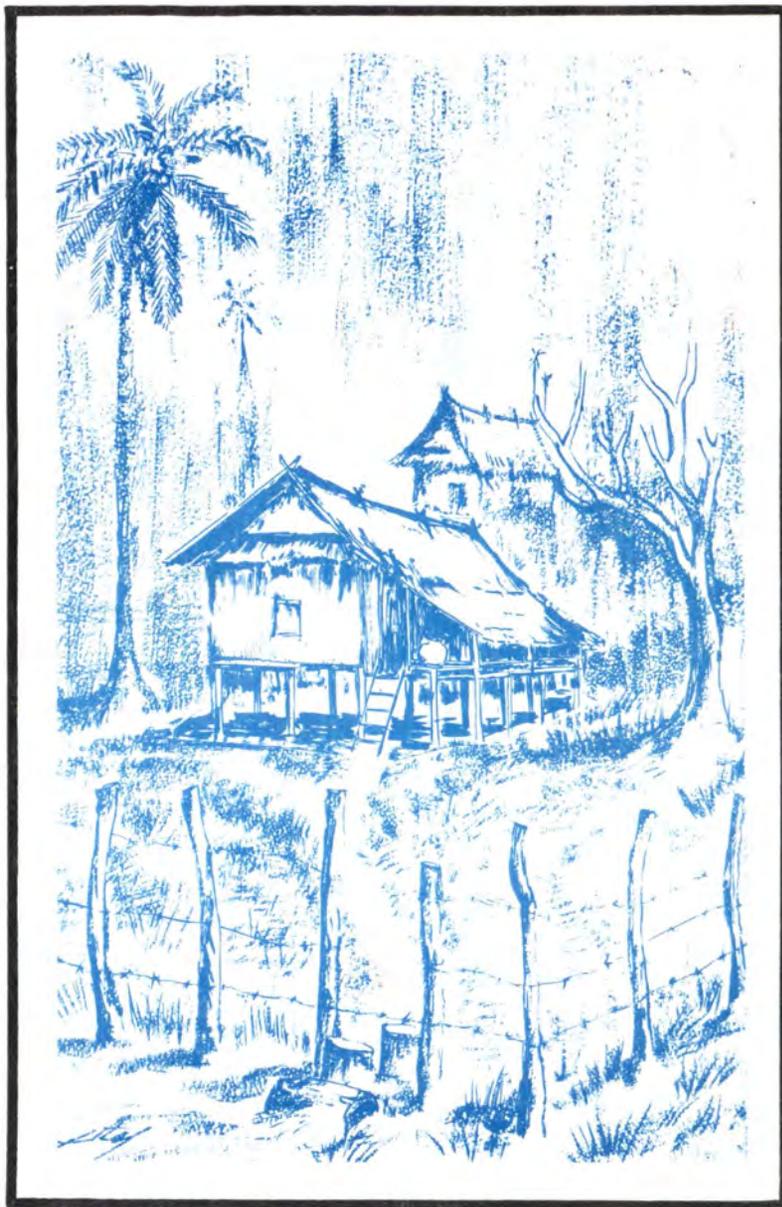
A Comparative Study of Refugee and Nonrefugee Villages

PART I: A SURVEY OF
LONG-ESTABLISHED VILLAGES
OF THE VIENTIANE PLAIN

Robert M. Wulff

Embassy of the United States
of America

USAID MISSION TO LAOS



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August 1972

VARIOUS TYPES
OF HOUSING IN
RURAL AREAS
OF LAOS



Left: Leaf roof
[very poor families]



Right: Grass thatch
roof [average to poor
families]



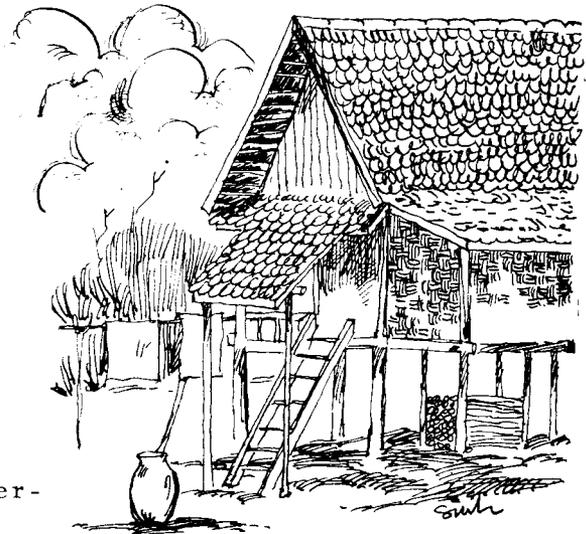
Sheet metal roof
[prosperous families]



Bamboo shingle roof
[average poor families]



Left: Clay tile roof
[wealthy families]



Right: Wood shingle
roof [poor to prosper-
ous families]

FOREWORD

The Economic Affairs Division (EAD) of the USAID Mission has been of invaluable assistance in the development of this survey. Mr. Fletcher Poling of that office selected the villages as a result of his long experience and study of economic affairs on the Vientiane Plain. Mr. Poling also helped to develop the questionnaire.

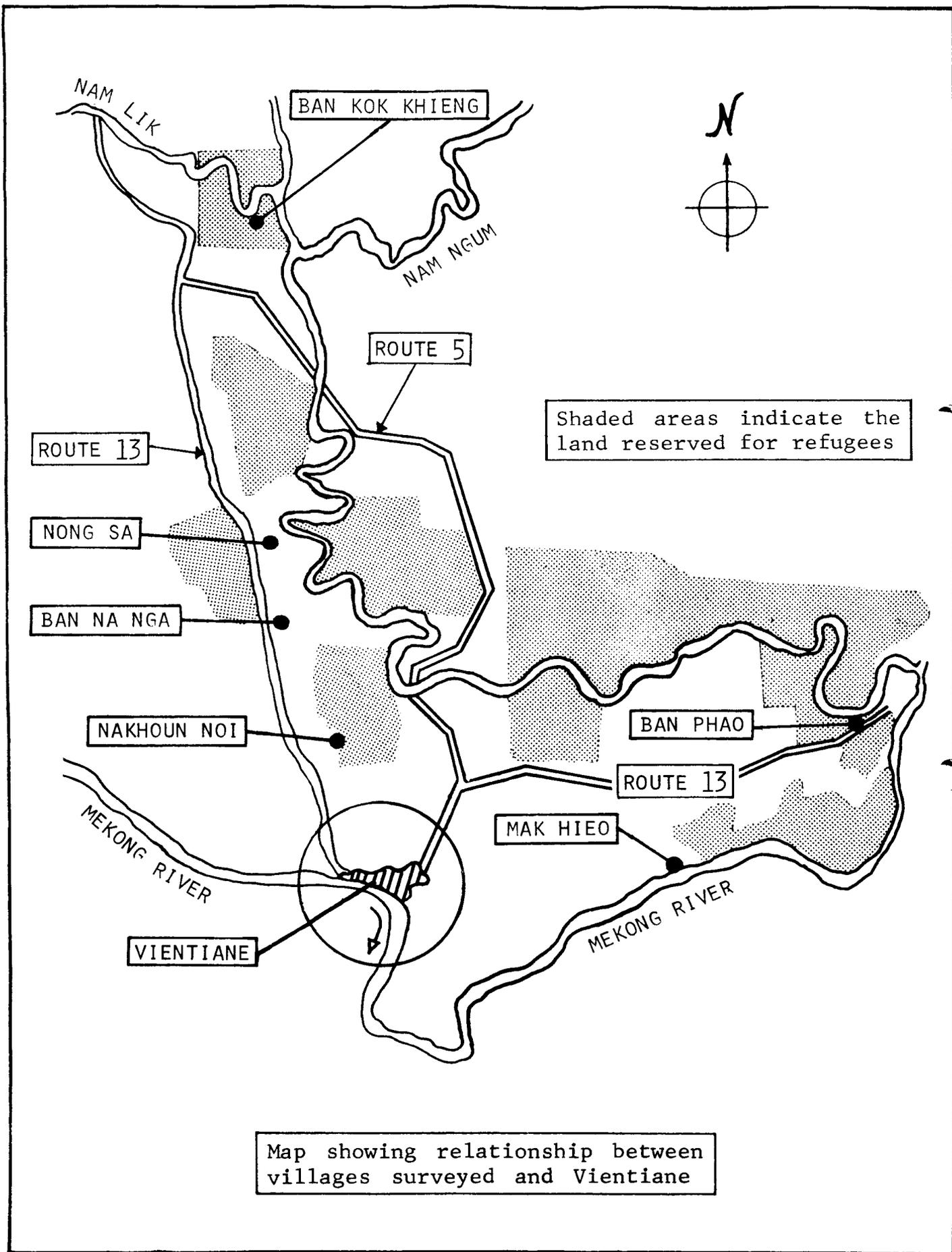
Mr. Sengdao Rattanasamay of EAD headed the survey team in the field. He worked long hours with Mr. Khamsouk Minakhom and Mr. Khamsouane Chansisourath of the Office of Refugee Affairs (ORA) to see that the questions were phrased in the Lao language common to the villagers and to make certain that everyone had the same understanding of the questions asked.

Miss Lea Knott of the Evaluation and Program Management Division contributed greatly to the smoothness of the prose in editing the manuscript. She deserves the credit for helping to make the facts more lucid in their presentation.

Mr. Joseph Budy of the Agriculture Division was responsible for the layout of this report. The credit is his for making an attractive publication from a bundle of facts, figures and photographs.

Mr. Kenneth Ross of the Communications Media Branch supervised the publication of the survey and provided the staff and facilities to accomplish it.

My sincere and grateful thanks is expressed to each of the above named persons.



INTRODUCTION

One of the goals of USAID Mission policy for refugee assistance is to help the RLG provide adequate opportunities for refugees to return to the economic and social mainstream in their country as soon as possible.

USAID and the RLG desire to see the people who have been displaced from their homes and farms by the war become self-sufficient and productive members of the community rather than a burden requiring endless social assistance.

It is Mission policy that refugees will be provided appropriate assistance up to the point at which it can be determined that the refugees have received and utilized sufficient inputs to put themselves on a par with long-established villages in a similar environment. At this point, the refugee is considered no longer in need of special assistance and henceforth receives only normal government services.

The underlying assumption is that refugees will make an effort to take advantage of the opportunities offered. Neither USAID nor the RLG is obliged to continue assistance until a specific economic level is reached by each and every refugee family. The Refugee Program is not a guaranteed annual minimum income scheme.

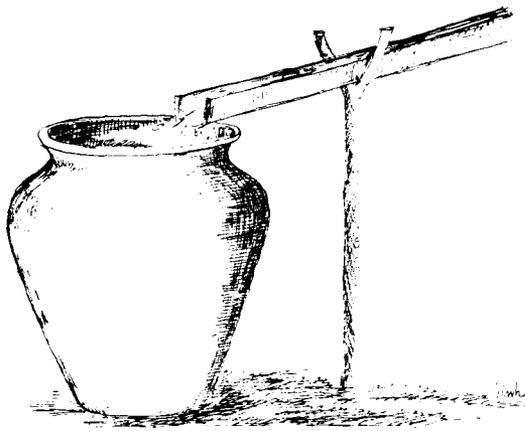
USAID and the RLG provide opportunities such as land, tools, rice seed, etc. It is incumbent on the refugee to take advantage of these opportunities to produce his income.



To determine where the refugee stands in terms of his neighbor after such assistance, a comparison with average, long-established villages will be made to provide an indicator of economic status of refugee groups. It will also provide insights into problems, if any, which prevent refugees from becoming self-sufficient.

What, then, are the characteristics of the long established villages? What are the social and economic levels of the long-time resident villager? Part I of this study seeks to answer these questions.

The average economic level determined by the survey will provide the guideline for studying the resettled refugee families' problems, frustrations and their goals.



NATURE OF THE STUDY

This study is the result of field surveys carried out in the rural areas and villages of the Vientiane Plain in an attempt to develop a profile of the Laotian farmer of the Mekong Valley. Specifically, the study covers these areas:

- Income
- Expenditures
- Holdings
- Family statistics
- Production
- Health
- Occupations

LOCALE

This study was conducted in six villages in the Vientiane Province:

<u>Village</u>	<u>District</u>
Ban Mak Hieo	Thadeua
Ban Phao	Saithany
Ban Nakhoun Noi	Nasaithong
Ban Na Nga	Nasaithong
Ban Nong Sa	Nasaithong
Ban Kok Khieng	Phone Hong

Given the distribution of the villages, their similarities or peculiarities, it is believed that the profile is fairly representative of the Vientiane Plain farmer.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

The field research on which this study is based was conducted in Vientiane by Khamsouk Minakhom and Khomsouane Chansisourath, both of ORA, and Sengdao Rattanasamay, EAD, in February, March and April, 1972. All households in six villages were surveyed.

The heads of households comprised the sample unit. In most cases, household heads prompted or reinforced responses which were recorded on a questionnaire. Illiteracy and lack of knowledge of expenses, prices and amounts render some of the data questionable in accuracy. However, patterns were observed and villager conception of his household operations noted.

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The six villages were selected to provide a widespread sample area with varying influences such as nearness to rivers, roads, Vientiane and Thailand.



FAMILY ECONOMIC
and SOCIAL PROFILE

In general, the village family looks on its present situation with optimism. Ninety percent of the villagers feel life is better today than five years ago. They are unanimous in stating that they earn more money and purchase more things than they were able to five years ago. They also recognize that prices have increased.

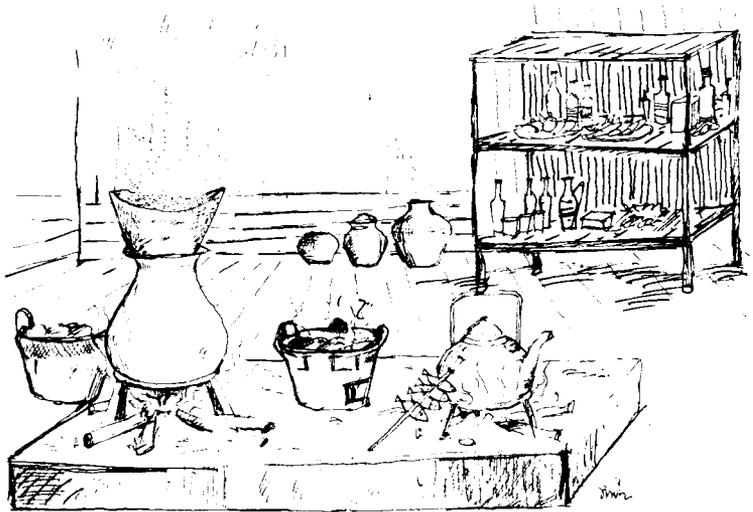
They are unanimous in stating that education and transportation are better and they say that family health is better. They believe the RLG is more responsive to their needs than in the years past.

Most important of all, they believe that opportunities for their children are better than before.

When statistics from the six villages are averaged, the following profile of a village family in the Vientiane Plain emerges:

The family consists of 6.5 persons and has lived in the village for 37.7 years. They are now living in a house 10.7 years old which would cost Kip 213,495 to replace. The family farms 1.7 hectares of rice land. They own a grain storage shelter 7.2 years old which would cost Kip 31,888 to replace. (All values are at Kip 600 = \$1.00.)

The family owns 1.5 large buffalo and 1 small buffalo; 1.2 cattle, 2.6 pigs, 2.7 ducks and 16 chickens.



The family also owns .15 of an oxcart, .3 of a boat, .5 of a radio, .4 of a four-year old bicycle and .125 of a wrist-watch. In actuality, of course, no family fits exactly the profile given above.

LAND

None of the families in any village possesses a document to show ownership of land. Nearly every villager felt he owned land and could point generally to his land boundaries. But he has no proof of ownership and has to rely on the Nai Ban and his neighbors to accept his proclaimed boundaries.

As land is claimed which never has been made into paddy with the borderline dikes, it is not easy to determine boundaries. Some land has remained brush forest, but has been thought of by the villagers as their land and source of firewood and other forest products.

Because of vague boundaries and lack of title, the villagers are uneasy about land problems. People of several villages expressed concern that the RLG was taking over village land for use by refugees. They worried about protecting their land interests.

BUILDINGS

Although most families have lived in their villages for more than 30 years, the majority of them live in houses built within the last 10 to 15 years. The houses are Lao style, built on poles, and consist of several fairly large rooms with a minimum of furniture.

Material used in construction varies from thatch and bamboo to hardwood lumber and metal and tile. The average house is built of locally sawed hardwood lumber with a sheet-metal roof. Kitchens are half open-air under a separate roof extension usually to the rear of the house. The houses contain no toilet or bath facilities.

LIVESTOCK and POULTRY

Sixty-four percent of the village families own buffalo, and usually more than one animal. The buffalo are raised primarily for working in the rice paddies although 20 percent of the buffalo owners say that they have sold an animal for cash within the last 5 years.

Only 27 percent of the villagers raise cattle, although the persons who do usually have more than one animal. Cattle are raised primarily to provide oxen for work but a few animals are sold each year for meat.

Pigs are raised by 30 percent of the families. Those who raise pigs average four animals per family. The pigs either forage for themselves or are fed locally available foods. No commercially prepared pig feeds are provided.

Nearly 48 percent of the villagers raise ducks, but very few raise them in any quantity. The average family has two or three birds.

Chickens, of course, are most popular with the villagers and 86 percent of the families raise them. Counting both large and small birds, the average family has 15 to 20. Since the birds wander about looking for food, the attrition rate on small birds is high. Many eggs are lost and many chicks disappear.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Fifteen percent of the families own an oxcart and team. Thirty eight percent own a small boat used for river fishing.

Fifty four percent own a radio and 14 percent own a wristwatch.

Bicycles are owned by 40 percent of village families. For the most part the villagers walk to central roads and go by bus when travel is required.





INCOMES

None of the villagers keeps records of income, sales or expenses, making the answers only estimates at best. They were asked:

How much do you earn each year by working for somebody else?

How much do you make each year through the sale of livestock, poultry and eggs?

How much do you make through the sale of fish, padek (fermented fish), fruit and vegetables, thatch, bamboo and rattan, game or any other source?

The average total cash income amounts to Kip 36,304 per year per family. I believe this figure is low, however, as it falls far short of the remembered cash expenditures each year. An additional cash value of Kip 40,000 can be included for their rice harvest, although most of it is consumed by the family and is not sold for cash.

The total average yearly income per family is as follows:

Rice	Kip	40,000
Buffalo		5,000
Pigs		6,000
Ducks and eggs		800
Cattle		5,000
Chickens and eggs		2,000
Outside jobs		6,725
Coconuts		100
Bananas		1,000
Mangos		250
Pineapple		40
Bamboo shoots		178
Mushrooms		70
Jungle game, roots, etc.		110
Fish		2,275
Padek		912
Thatch		610
Bamboo		25
Rattan		255
Kapok		1,000
Firewood		610
Charcoal		330
Timber cutting		2,004
Sale of goods		1,340
Total Kip		<u>76,634</u>

EXPENDITURES

The villagers seem to recall spending money much easier than they recall earning it. The average yearly total expenditures are listed below:

Food	Kip	47,076
Clothing		19,636
Tobacco		9,776
Lao whiskey		4,728
Medicine		8,495
Tools, fish nets, etc.		4,381
Transportation		19,800
Beer, soft drinks, candy		16,908
School		2,690
Kerosene and candles		6,705
Household articles		16,094
Bicycle and boat repairs		1,043
Gun powder and bullets		205
Temple donations		2,740
Rice (consumed)		24,760
Total Kip		<u>185,037</u>

Obviously, there is a discrepancy between the average income and the average total expenditure (amounting to Kip 108,373) per family per year. It is believed that the answers given are an honest attempt by the villagers to recall the true facts. But when no records are kept it is difficult to remember details correctly.

There seems to be a natural tendency on the part of most persons to exaggerate slightly the amount spent on temple donations, school supplies and luxury items for the family, including travel, especially so when giving the information in the presence of neighbors, as was the case in this survey. In any event, I believe we can safely say the average annual income of Vientiane Plain villagers is between Kip 76,634 and Kip 185,007, and most likely in the neighborhood of Kip 130,000.

AGRICULTURE

All villagers are involved in agriculture activities and receive approximately 85 percent of their income from agriculture sources.

RICE

The average villager claims to farm 1.7 hectares of paddy land on which he yearly produces 1.9 hoy (2,280 kg) of rice; 14.5 percent of the villagers claim to use fertilizer in some amount.

FRUIT

There are no large commercial orchards, but there are a variety of fruit trees scattered around the villages.

Averaged out, each villager was found to have the following number and kind of fruit trees and plants:

Coconut	1.5
Kapok	3.1
Banana	22.2
Mango	1.1
Pineapple	2.7
Guava	.62
Papaya	.5



FOREST AND STREAM

Ninety-two percent of the villagers own fish nets which they use at least occasionally. Thirty-eight percent of the families own boats and the average yearly catch of fish per group is 80 kg. Although this large percentage of villagers fish part-time to supplement their income and their diet, there are no full-time commercial fishermen. In view of the high price of fish on the market, this is indeed strange. It apparently points up the traditional feeling of the Lao villager of dependence on rice production although fish could bring in a better income.

It was also recorded that 46.6 percent of the village families own guns and participate to some extent in hunting. Very little game is sold for cash but a good deal of protein is added to diets.

RLG OFFICIALS IN AGRICULTURE EXTENSION

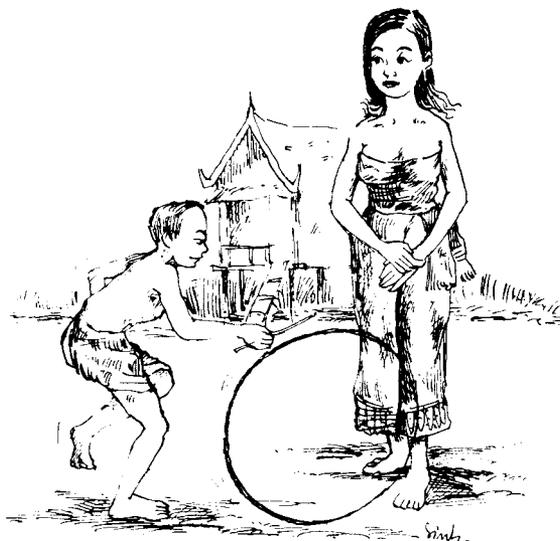
Each family head was asked if he knew the RLG Extension Agent by sight, if he had ever talked with him, and if he had ever been helped by him.

In one village, Kok Khieng, 80 percent of the people stated that they knew the agent, had talked with him and had received help from him. However, the other villagers responded with very low figures and the overall average follows:

- 25.2 knew agent by sight.
- 23.7 talked with agent.
- 21.6 received help from agent.

The same questions were asked concerning the Agriculture Development Organization field representative and the following results were compiled:

- 25.2 knew ADO agent by sight.
- 21.2 talked with ADO agent.
- 6.6 were helped by ADO agent.



EDUCATION

The average head of household is 46.9 years of age and has attended school for 2.1 years.

Villagers are unanimous in their opinion that educational opportunities for their children are better today than in past years. However, the average improvement does not seem to be great. There are 3.5 classrooms and three teachers in the average village school; unless the children go away to boarding school, the educational average will not improve dramatically over that of their parents.

The average family has 1.36 children now studying in school. Four percent of the families have one member who has completed six years of school and 33.7 percent of the families have a member who has completed three years of school. The literacy rate in Laos is estimated at 20 percent.

Many villagers are becoming aware that resettlement projects generally are provided with better schools and more grade levels.

HEALTH

The villagers were asked such questions as "How many times per year do you see a doctor, and how many days each year are you unable to work because of illness"? They were also asked if they boiled water for drinking and if they had had any inoculations.

The following health picture emerged: The average villager sees a doctor once each year and is unable to work 9.5 days because of illness. The ratio of doctor-to-people in Laos is placed at 1:24,000.

Only 3.93 percent of the families boil water for drinking. Only 4.5 percent of the families reported that one of their family members died this past year because of illness.

INOCULATIONS

Regarding smallpox vaccinations, 71.4 percent of the families reported that one of the members had been vaccinated and the same percentage reported that a family member had received a cholera shot. The average number of persons per household is 1.7, which indicates that the children in school plus a few more youngsters received inoculations, but that two-thirds of the family members received none. In addition, 45.2 percent of the families reported a member who received vitamin shots at an average of 2.7 shots each year per person.

The average family on the Vientiane Plain claims to spend Kip 8,495 per year on medicines. Since visits to the doctor are fairly infrequent, it appears that most of this money is for patent medicines and magic potions.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

The average villager has had limited contact with government officials and with government laws and regulations. He is fairly ignorant of officials above the level of the Chao Muong (the District Chief).

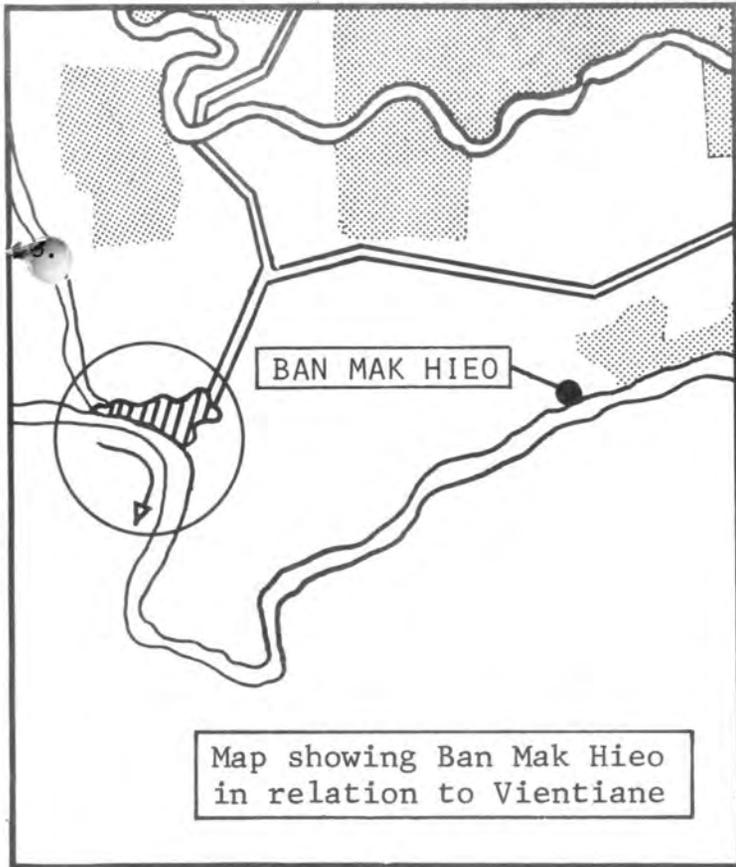
When questioned, 78.4 percent of the household heads said they would recognize the Chao Muong on sight, but only 55.7 percent said that they had talked with him. The Agriculture Extension Agent was recognized by 25.2 percent, and 23.7 percent had talked with him.

When asked if they knew the Chao Khoueng (Province Chief), 95.1 percent of the villagers in Kok Khieng answered in the affirmative. However, further investigation disclosed that they were speaking of a retired Chao Khoueng living in Kok Khieng and not the present Chao Khoueng. The five other villages responded that only 3 percent of the families had ever seen the Chao Khoueng.

RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS

Nearly all the villagers claimed to be generous in their donations to the temple and interested in temple affairs. The average village family claims to donate Kip 2,740 per year to the temple in cash plus food and labor, and 54.1 percent of the male heads of families had served in the temple as monks.

Each village has at least one well-kept temple that is the center of religious and social activity for the village. All villages have at least a few resident monks who officiate at weddings and funerals and on special occasions.



BAN MAK HIEO

Ban Mak Hieo is located on the north bank of the Mekong River approximately 45 kilometers southeast of Vientiane. It is an old village that for many years used the river as the primary means of communication with the rest of the world. Ten years ago the highway was improved and extended to reach the village. Since that time bus and taxi service has largely replaced boats as the means of transportation.

There are presently 88 houses in the village occupied by 88 families, totaling 486 persons. The main street has been graded by the RLG Highway Department.



Nai Ban's house.



Nai Ban's house and granary.

Below: Monk's Hall, used for dining and for festivals.



ECONOMY

The primary source of income is agriculture, predominantly paddy farming. The average villager also raises chickens, ducks, pigs and buffalo. He also raises a variety of fruit in limited quantities.

There are three small shops which sell soft drinks, beer, cigarettes and a variety of small items. There is one shop which sells "Pho" (noodle soup).

There is one rice mill, four charcoal kilns, one barber, one professional carpenter, and one sewing machine operator.

PUBLIC HEALTH

There are no drilled wells in the village, but there are two hand-dug wells. Very few villagers boil their water for drinking regardless of the source of water. Public health teams have provided inoculations for smallpox and cholera. The general health of the villagers is average for Laos.

EDUCATION

Ban Mak Hieo has a three-classroom school and two teachers to instruct the 68 village children now in school.

TEMPLES

There is one temple located in the village. It is a modest structure that presently provides living facilities for nine resident monks.

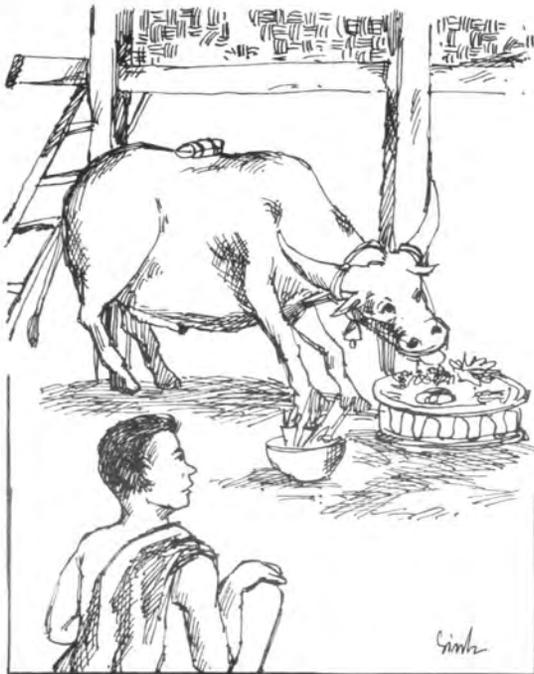


Typical village house with thatched roof.



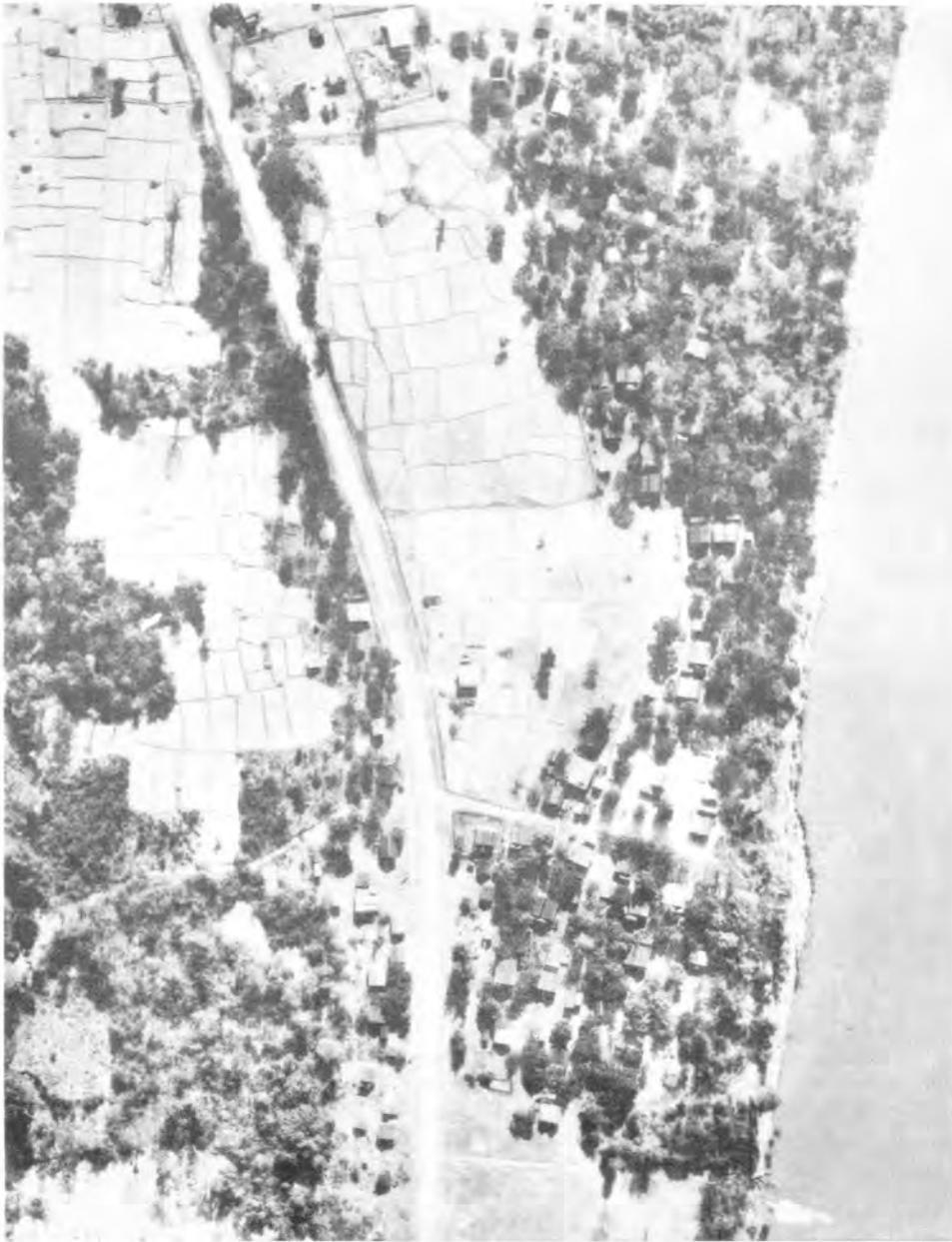
Typical village granaries.

Right: When animals are small or few in number, they are kept beneath the houses. This house has a large animal pen next to it.

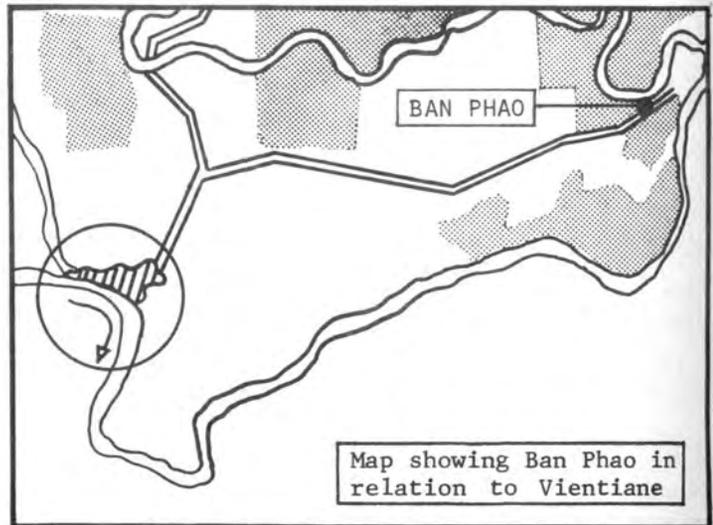
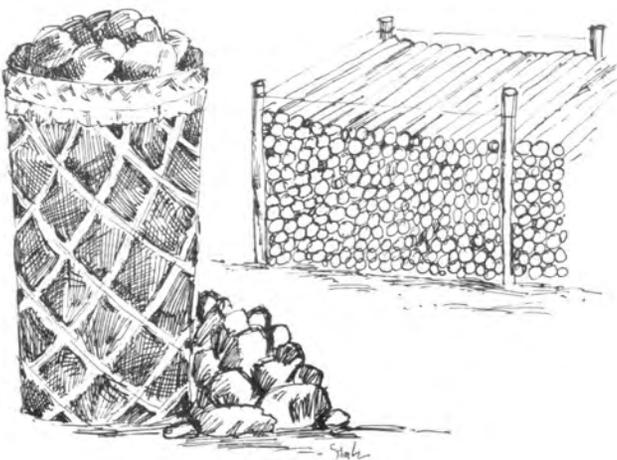


Below: Grouping of houses in the center of the village.





BAN PHAO



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Ban Phao is an old village located approximately 57 kilometers east of Vientiane on Route 13 near the Nam Ngum River crossing. The highway has been in existence 42 years and the villagers do not remember a time when they did not have communication with Vientiane and other road-connected areas of Laos.

The village is inhabited by 132 families consisting of 802 persons. There are 132 houses constructed primarily of wood and bamboo with sheet-metal roofs. Several streets are graded and kept in repair for vehicular traffic.

ECONOMY

The primary sources of income for Ban Phao are agriculture and forestry products; however, long access to the highway has resulted in development of other businesses. There are ten trucks operating out of the village. These vehicles are used as taxis and for hauling logs and lumber, but their income is not included in the survey because they are owned by wealthy families who are not typical village farmers.

The village has five small shops that sell soft drinks, beer, cigarettes and a variety of small items. Oddly enough there is no small noodle shop.

The village has four rice mills which annually mill 288 tons of rice. There are two professional carpenters, one blacksmith, and three sewing machine operators servicing the village.



Nai Ban's house.



Village elders pose with friends.

Below: House belonging to wealthy village family.





Back yards of village houses.

PUBLIC HEALTH

There are no drilled wells but there are two hand-dug wells which provide drinking water for the entire village. Because of the convenient roadside location of the village, public health teams and officials make routine visits. In emergencies, the villagers have convenient access by taxi to Vientiane.



Group of village houses.

EDUCATION

There is a six-classroom school building serving the village although there are only five teachers. One hundred eighty-two children are presently attending school.

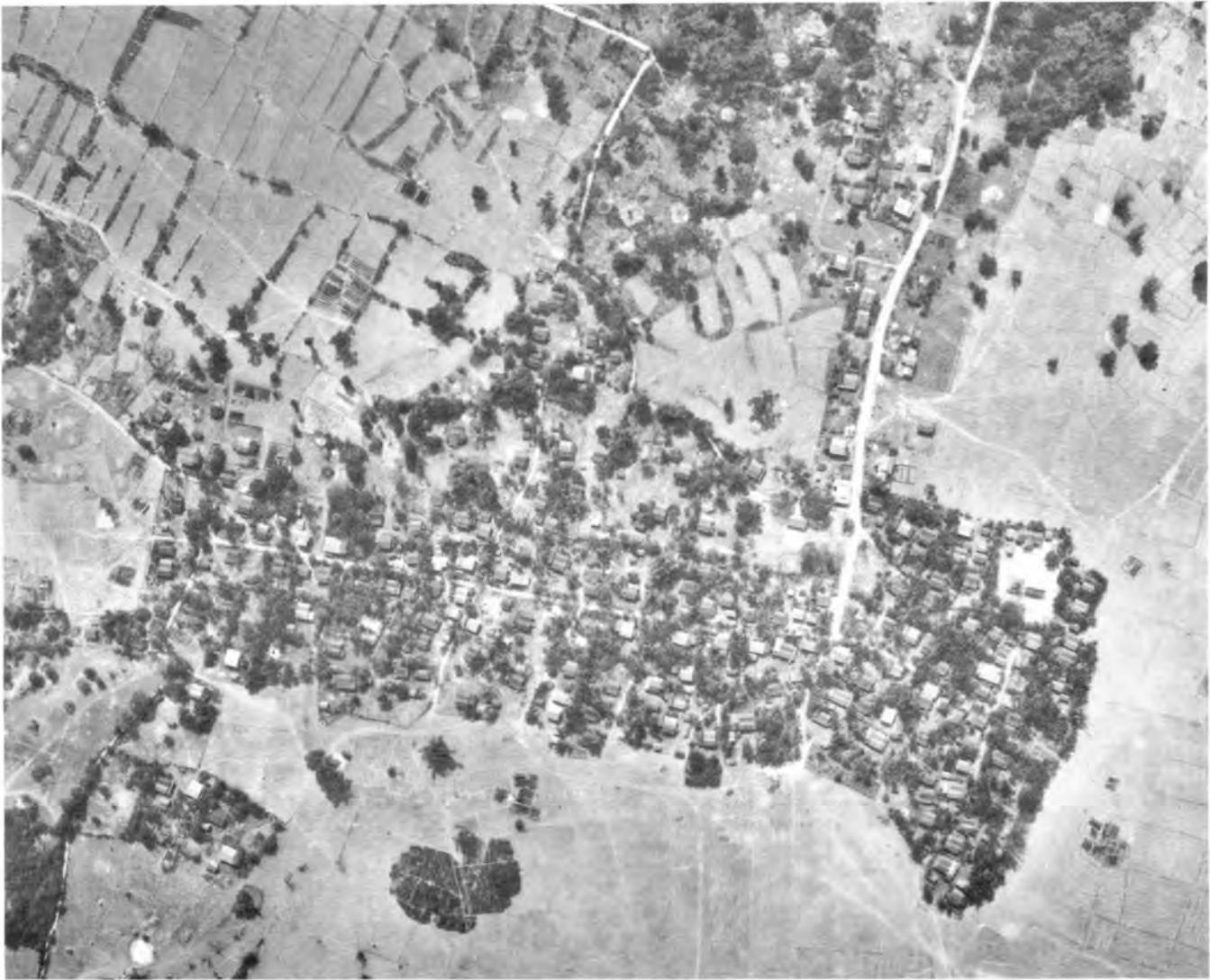
RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Ban Phao has two Buddhist temples, neither of which is very large. There are presently 15 monks living in and serving the two temples.

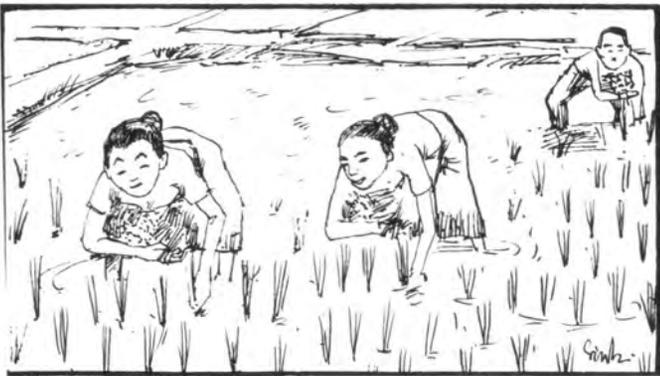
House with tile roof

Granaries where rice is stored.

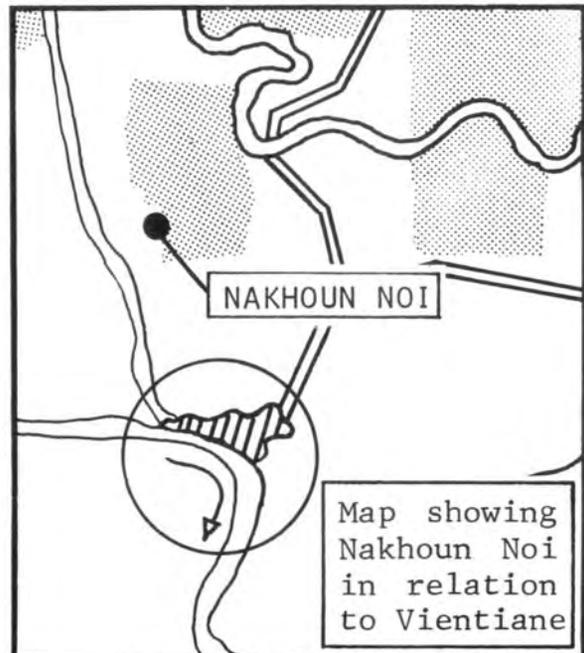




BAN NAKHOUN NOI



Ban Nakhoun Noi is located approximately 25 kilometers directly north of Vientiane. It is an old village which has had a connecting road to Route 13 for 30 years. The present population consists of 190 families or 1,820 persons.





Entry road to village.

The village has 190 houses constructed primarily of wood with sheet-metal or cement-tile roofs. For the most part, these houses are located on graded streets and the village is neat and orderly in appearance.

ECONOMY

Ban Nakhoun Noi, similar to most rural Lao villages, depends heavily on agriculture for its existence. Most villagers grow rice, and raise poultry and livestock. There are also a variety of fruit trees growing throughout the village.

Nai Ban's house.



Monk's Hall with Wat in foreground.

There are 15 shops which sell general items such as soap, matches, beer, soft drinks and cigarettes, and odds and ends. There is one noodle shop which serves meals.

There are seven small rice mills which mill approximately 1,200 hoy (1,340,000 kg) annually. There are two charcoal kilns. Nine blacksmiths and three carpenters serve the area of the village. There are ten sewing machines and operators who do a certain amount of commercial sewing.

Additionally, there are five vehicles in the village that serve as area taxis and make daily runs to Vientiane.

Granaries alongside houses.





The village blacksmith.



Thatch-weaver at work.

PUBLIC HEALTH

There are no drilled wells in the village but there are 50 hand-dug wells. Most of these wells are relatively shallow but the water supply is adequate.

The village is sometimes visited by public health teams and routine inoculations are given. In cases of illness and in emergencies, taxis are used to send patients to Vientiane.

A dug well in the village.



EDUCATION

A five-classroom wooden school building is located in the village. It has five teachers and presently serves 199 children. The school grounds provide the playground area.

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Three Buddhist temples are located in the village. The temples are well-built structures and are clean and well-kept. A total of 21 monks are living in and serving the temples.

Charcoal-wood storage area.





Village shopkeeper and wares.



The village restaurant.



Village boy tending cattle.



Evening roundup of ducks.

Elementary school with playground.



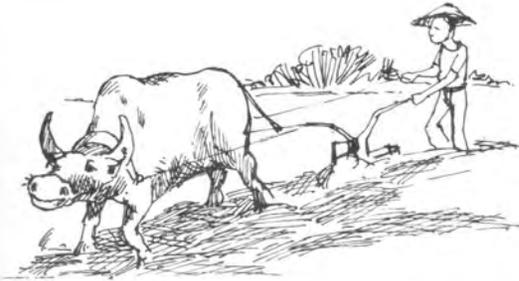
Youngsters in class.



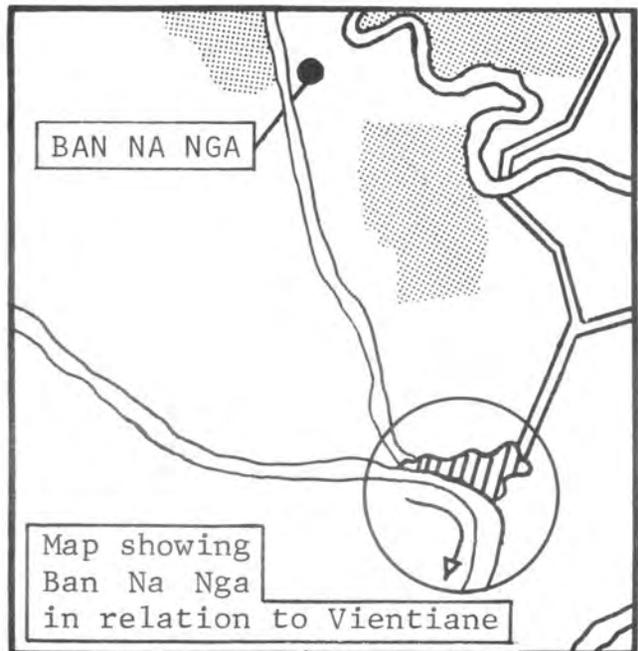
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BA NA NGA



Ban Na Nga is an old village and a small one. It is located north of Vientiane approximately 45 kilometers on Route 13. The villagers report that the road has been open to Vientiane for more than 50 years and that they have witnessed changes and improvements in highway travel. The village has never grown to any extent but has doggedly remained over the years.





Monks' residence and dining hall.



Nai Ban's house.

House and fence, with "step-over" opening in fence to keep out cattle.



The present population consists of 36 families of 197 persons living in 36 houses. Some houses are built of wood with sheet-metal roofs but some are bamboo and thatch. The village generally does not present a picture of wealth. There are no graded streets other than the main highway.

ECONOMY

The villagers of Na Nga rely heavily on agriculture to support themselves. They all have rice paddy fields and they raise poultry and livestock in modest quantities. Most families have a few banana plus a small number of other fruit trees.

There are five charcoal kilns in operation which produce about 1,200 kg of charcoal annually.

There are no merchants or shops selling goods and no noodle shops selling food. Neither are there carpenters or blacksmiths or sewing machine operators. There is not even a barber. One family produces and sells bamboo food trays.

Because of its proximity to the highway, the villagers travel elsewhere to obtain supplies or services. Occasional itinerant businessmen sometimes visit the village.

HEALTH

The village has two drilled wells and three dug wells, although most of the drinking water comes from one of the drilled wells.

The villagers depend on traveling health teams to provide inoculations and general health services, but they use taxis to send emergency cases to Vientiane



Pounding rice.



Drilled well in village.

EDUCATION

Ban Na Nga has a one-classroom school building staffed by a single teacher working with 34 students.

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

There is one small temple in the village. The buildings on the temple grounds are crude wood with sheet-metal roofs and are used by the three resident monks.



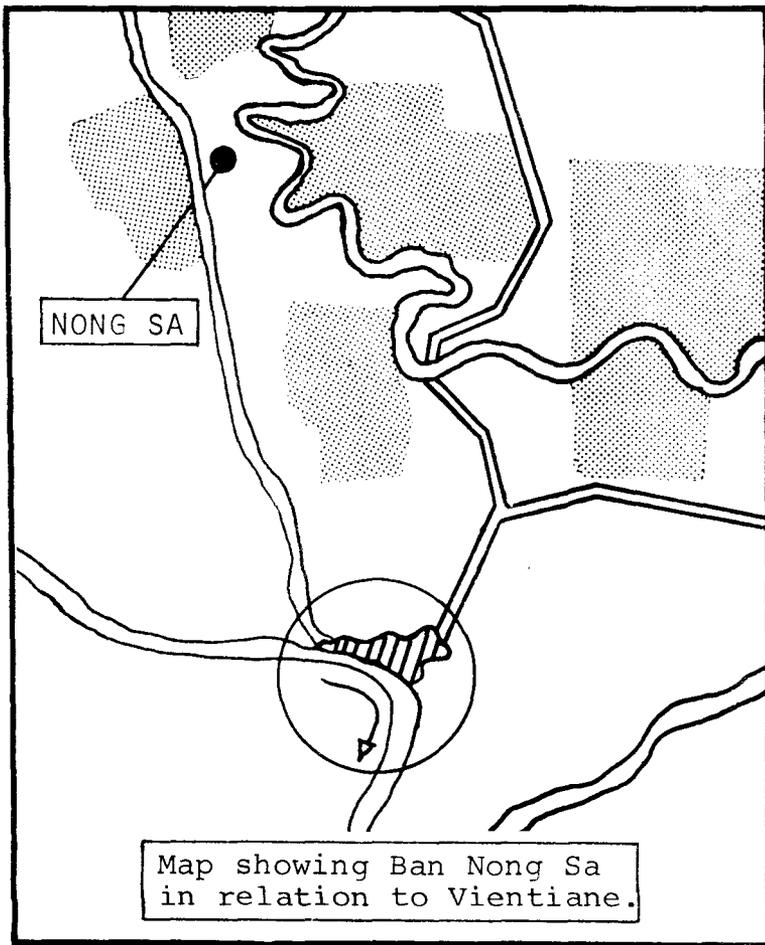
Well-built granary.

Making bamboo trays



Houi Nam Suang river.





BAN NONG SA

Ban Nong Sa is located on Route 13 directly north of Vientiane and approximately five miles north of Ba Na Nga. For over 50 years, the villagers have had a road connection with Vientiane.

The population presently consists of 108 families, totalling 648 persons. Each family maintains its own house.



ECONOMY

Ban Nong Sa also depends heavily on agriculture for its livelihood. All families maintain rice fields and most families raise some livestock and poultry. Nearly every family plot has a variety of trees and plants producing fruit for family consumption and a small amount for sale or trade.

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There is one rice mill in operation and there are eight charcoal kilns. There are two small shops selling beer, cigarettes, soft drinks, soap and matches, plus odds and ends of food, cloth, and household items.

Three village men hire out as carpenters and one man is a blacksmith. There are three sewing machines operating at least part time commercially, and there is one barber.

Six vehicles operate out of the village as local taxis and make frequent trips to Vientiane.

PUBLIC HEALTH

There are two drilled wells in the village and 11 hand-dug wells. No person reported boiling the drinking water.

The villagers rely on visiting health teams for inoculations. The highway provides easy access to Vientiane hospitals for emergencies or illnesses.

EDUCATION

Ban Nong Sa has a three-room wooden school building, but presently has only two teachers. There are 130 children attending the local school.

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

There are two temples of modest size in the village. One temple is presently engaged in a building program, and a cement structure is partially constructed. There are five monks living in the temples and serving the people.



Monks' Dining hall.



Wealthy villager's large house.



Houses and granary.



Well-built granary



Small village store.



Village rice mill.



Charcoal-producing kiln.

Elementary School.



Dug well and apron.



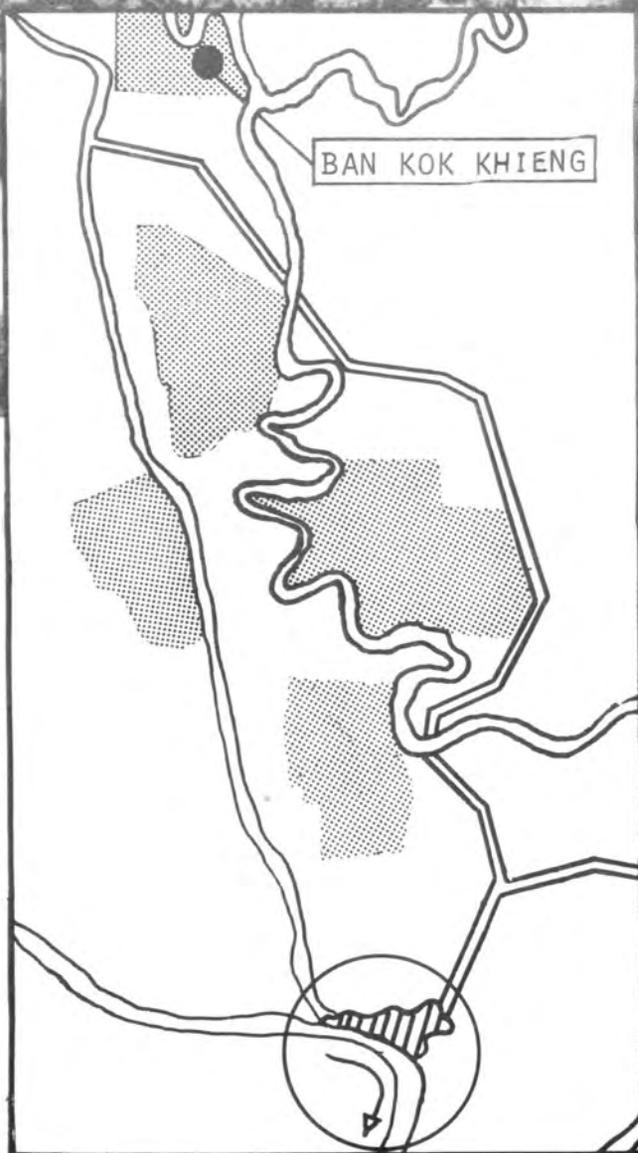


Map showing Ban Kok Khieng
in relation to Vientiane

BAN KOK KHIENG

BanKokKhieng is located approximately 75 kilometers north of Vientiane along the banks of the Nam Lik River. An all-weather road connecting the village with Route 13 was completed two years ago when refugees were relocated into the area.

The village consists of 65 families with a population of 270 persons.





Entry road to the village.



Centrally located Wat in the village.



Nai Ban's house.

House with sheet-metal roof.



ECONOMY

Agriculture provides the main source of income for the villagers and all families maintain rice fields. The villagers fish in the river and they also raise poultry and livestock. A variety of fruit trees are scattered throughout the village.

There are two rice mills which annually mill 3,000 tons of rice. There is one blacksmith and there are two sewing machines, but there are no vehicles and no professional carpenters.

There are no merchants or shops that sell goods or articles of any kind.

EDUCATION

There is a two-room school building. Teachers work in the school; they divide one classroom and provide teaching to the third grade level. There are 54 children now attending school.

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PUBLIC HEALTH

There is one drilled well and two hand-dug wells in Ban Kok Khieng to provide drinking water.

Since the road has been constructed, the children have been inoculated by a mobile health team. However, the villagers must depend on local medicine or travel to Vientiane to care for any serious illnesses.

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

There are two Buddhist temples in the village and both are in good repair. There are three resident monks presently in the village.



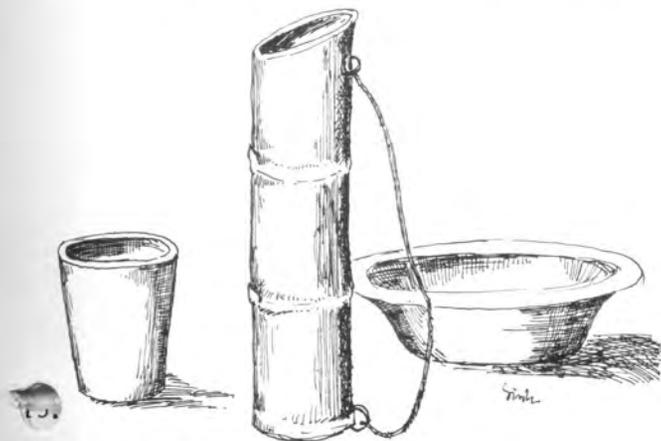
Carrying potable water from well.



Children working on kapok



Village rice mill.



Rice-mill owner.





Villagers' boats on Nam Lik River.



Villagers gather to build a house.



Wealthy villager's house.

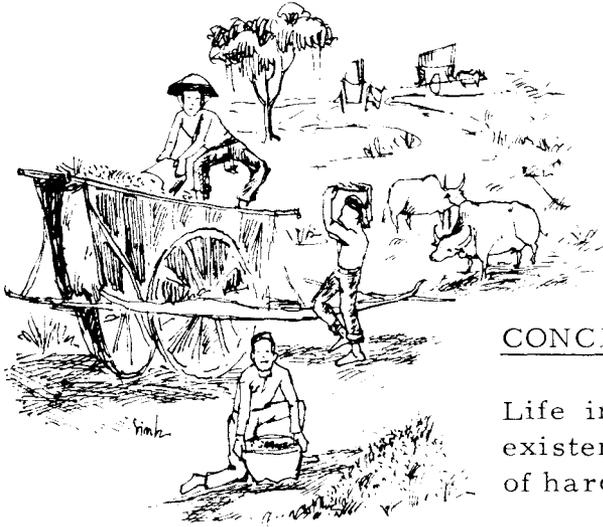


House with fenced-in granary.

Elementary school.

Children going to school.





CONCLUSIONS

Life in a Vientiane Plain Lao village is a spartan existence with a minimum of ease and a maximum of hard work.

The villagers worry about weather and crop failures. They worry about illness and evil spirits and unlucky omens. They are concerned with education for their children and with a harmonious relationship with the Buddha. They worry about land titles and government laws and regulations which they know so little about and feel so helpless to change. They worry about the hundred little things of everyday life.

And yet, they somehow manage to cope with it all and enjoy life. The people are quick to smile and eager for the chance to celebrate anything that can be made into a festive occasion. They are relatively unaware and unconcerned that they are residents in a war-torn underdeveloped country near the bottom of the world's economic ladder. The climate is kind to them and there is enough to eat. Nobody can complain too much as long as the river has fish and the jungle has game and nearly every kind of fruit or vegetable seed will produce something.

These attitudes prevail among the people of rural Laos and constitute a part of the economic profile of the farmer of the Mekong River valley.

Included in the Appendix is the complete list of questions asked the villagers together with the averaged answers. There is material here from which many more observations and conclusions could be drawn and discussed.

We leave it now for the reader to study as he wishes.

A P P E N D I C E S

HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE

POPULATION - BY AGE GROUP AND SEX

- 1.
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HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE

1. How many members of your family live and eat and sleep in your house? 6.5 persons
2. How many children under age fifteen live in this house? 3.24 persons
3. How many males above age fifteen live in this house? 1.6 persons
4. What is the age of the head of household? 46.9 years
5. How many females above age fifteen live in this house? 1.57 persons
6. How many years of school has the head of household attended? 2.11 years
7. Was the head of household born in Laos? 88% affirmative
8. How many years has this family lived in this village? 37.7 years
9. How many married couples live in this household? 10.7% more than one family
10. Has the head of household ever been in the wat as a monk? 54.1% affirmative
11. How many rai (plot 40 x 40 meters) of na (paddy land) do you have? 1.7 hectares
12. How many hoi (1,200 kg) of rice do you produce in a season? 1.9 hoi
13. How many boung (basket holding 12 kg) of highland rice do you usually plant? 1.16 boung
14. If you don't have floods or other misfortunes, how many mun (unit of weight: 12 kg) of rice do you sell a year? 10.3% have a small surplus
15. How much can you sell paddy rice for in this village per mun? 300 Kip
16. Do you ever sell any highland rice? .5% affirmative
17. Do you raise any Chinese rice at all? 30.3% affirmative
18. How many kilos of fertilizer do you use each year on your rice? 14.5% use small amount
19. How many boung of paddy rice do you usually plant each year? 5.2 boung

20. How many large pigs do you own?	1.3	animals	4
21. How many small pigs do you own?	1.3	animals	4
22. How many large chickens do you own?	9.5	birds	4
23. How many small chickens do you own?	11.6	birds	4
24. How many large ducks do you own?	1.8	birds	4
25. How many small ducks do you own?	.96	birds	4
26. How many large buffalo do you own?	1.5	animals	4
27. How many small, non-working buffalo do you own?	1.0	animals	4
28. How many buffalo have you sold in the past five years?	.45	animals	5
29. How many pigs have you sold in the past year?	.53	animals	5
30. How many large ducks did you sell this past year?	.5	birds	5
31. How many large cattle do you own?	.7	animals	5
32. How many small cattle do you own?	.5	animals	5
33. How many large cattle have you sold in the past five years?	.2	animals	5
34. How many small cattle have you sold in the past five years?	.08	animals	5
35. How many small pigs have you sold in the past five years?	.2	animals	5
36. How many small buffalo have you sold in the past five years?	15.0	total	5
37. How many oxen do you own?	.3	animals	5
38. Do you own an oxcart?	16%	affirmative	5
39. How much money do you earn each year by renting your buffalo to other people?: one farmer responded	12,000	Kip	6
40. How much money does your family earn each year by working for other people?	6,725	Kip	6
41. How many days each year does your family work for other people?	15.78	days	6

42. How many coconut trees do you have?	3.1	trees
43. How many coconuts do you sell each year?	1.1	coconuts
44. How many kapok trees do you have?	3.1	trees
45. How many <u>mun</u> do you sell each year?	3.1	mun
46. How many banana trees do you grow?	22.2	trees
47. How many <u>vii</u> (a hand of bananas) do you sell each year?	10.	vii
48. How many mango trees do you have?	1.1	trees
49. How many mangoes do you sell each year?	5.	mangoes
50. How many pineapples do you grow each year?	2.7	plants
51. How many pineapples do you sell each year?	40	Kip
52. How many guava trees do you have?	.62	trees
53. How many guavas do you sell each year?	0	
54. How many papaya trees do you have?	.5	trees
55. How many papayas do you sell each year?	0	
56. How much money does your family earn in a year by cutting and selling bamboo shoots?	178	Kip
57. How much money does your family earn in a year from finding and selling mushrooms?	70	Kip
58. How much money does your family earn in a year from finding and selling jungle foods, plants, animals and birds?	110	Kip
59. How many kilos of fish does your family catch in one year?	80.3	kgs
60. How much money do you get in a year from selling fish?	2,275	Kip
61. How much <u>padek</u> (fermented fish) does your family make in one year?	8.3	mun
62. How much money do you earn in a year from selling padek?	912	Kip

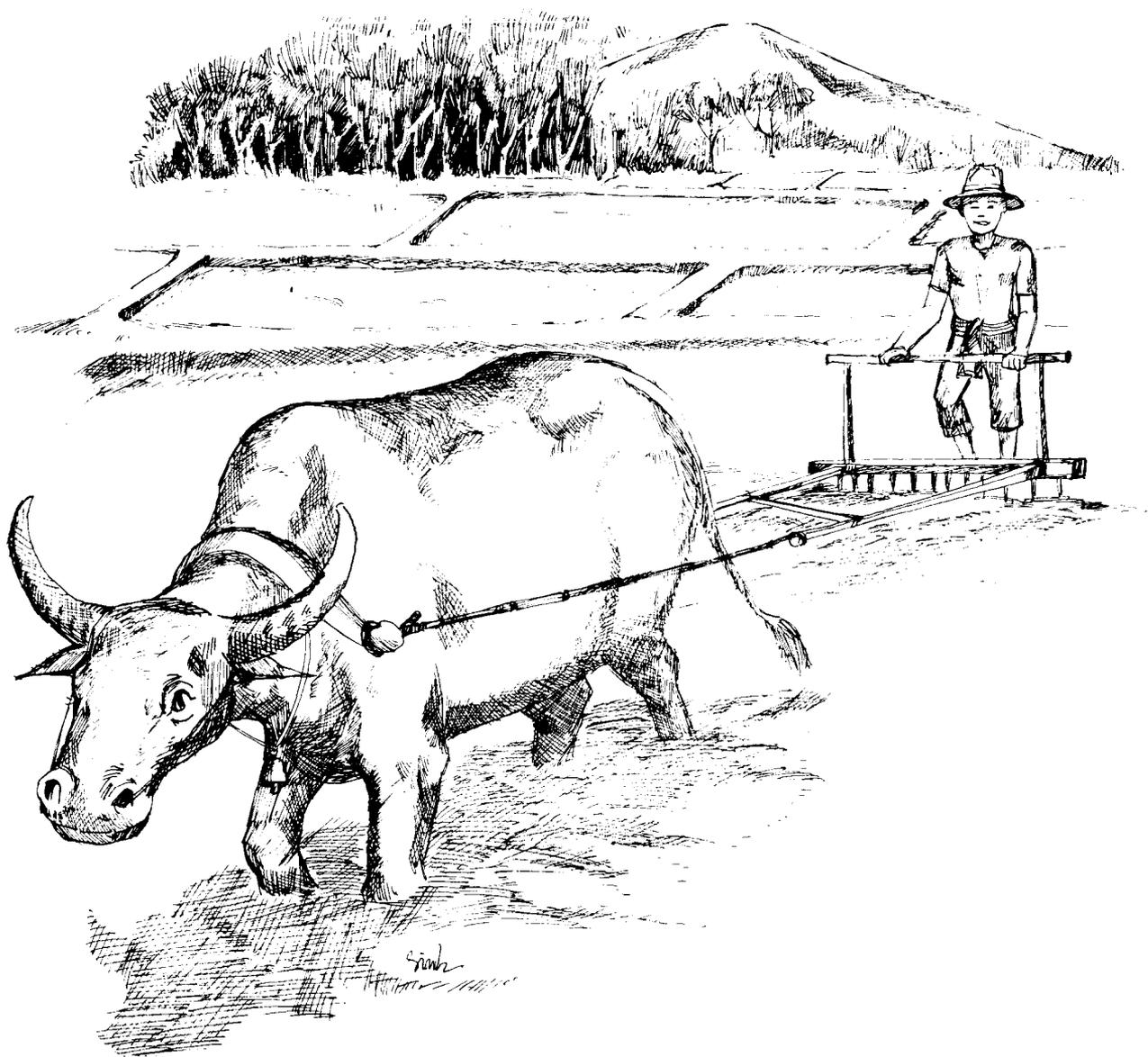
63. How much money does your family earn in a year from cutting and selling thatch?	610	Kip	83
64. How much money do you earn in a year from cutting and selling bamboo?	25	Kip	84
65. How many days per year does your family spend cutting and selling thatch?	6.1	days	85
66. How many grass mats does your family make each year?	1.2	mats	86
67. How many grass mats do they sell in one year?	0		87
68. How much money does your family make each year by collecting and selling rattan?	255	Kip	88
69. How many radios do you own?	.5	radios	89
70. How many wristwatches does your family own?	14.1%	families own one	90
71. How many <u>hoi</u> of paddy can you store in your granary?	343.5	hoi	91
72. How long ago was your granary built?	7.2	years	92
73. How much would your granary cost if someone else bought the wood, nails, roofing, and did the work?	31.888	Kip	93
74. How many guns do you own?	.41	guns	94
75. How much money do you spend on ammunition or powder yearly?	205	Kip	95
76. How many days a year do you go hunting?	8.3	days	96
77. How many years ago was your house built?	10.7	years	97
78. How much would it cost to build another like it if someone else bought the wood, nails and roofing and did the work?	213.495	Kip	98
79. How many bicycles do you own?	.45	bicycles	99
80. How old is your bicycle?	4	years	100
81. How many boats do you own?	.42	boats	
82. How old is your boat?	1.3	years	

83. How much would your boat cost if it were new?	3,128 Kip
84. How many boat engines do you have?	5 total reported
85. How old is your boat engine?	3.4 years
86. How many fishing nets do you own?	4.15 nets
87. How long does a net last before you must buy a new one?	2.4 years
88. Do you have a paper from the government which says you own the land which you farm and live on?	100% negative
89. If you wanted to sell your paddy land, how much would a buyer give you for each <u>rai</u> ?	55,100 Kip
90. How much money do you earn a year from cutting firewood for sale?	610 Kip
91. How much money does your family earn in a year from cutting trees for the log haulers?	2,004 Kip
92. How much money does your family earn in a year selling things to Vientiane or to other villages?	1,340 Kip
93. How many times a year does a member of your family travel to another village to buy or sell something?	4.9 times
94. Do people from other villages ever come to buy something from you?	49.1% affirmative
95. Do people from other villages ever come to sell things to you?	96.% affirmative
96. How many litres of <u>lao-lao</u> (native rice whiskey) do you make each year?	0
97. How many people in the family completed more than three years of education?	33.7% reported one person
98. How many people in the family completed more than six years of education?	3.8% reported one person
99. How many children in the family now go to school?	1.36 per family
100. How many times a year does a family member visit the doctor?	1 time

101.	How many days a year can you not work because you are sick? (asked of head of household)	9.5 days	119
102.	Does your family boil water before drinking?	4.5 affirmative	120
103.	How many members of your family have been vaccinated for smallpox?	1.7 persons	121
104.	How many members of your family have received protection against cholera?	1.7 persons	122
105.	How many vitamin shots does the head of household receive each year?	45.2% reported: 2.7 per house	123
106.	How much money does your family spend on food monthly?	3,922 Kip	124
107.	How much money does your family spend on clothing each year?	19,636 Kip	125
108.	How much money does your family spend on tobacco weekly?	189 Kip	126
109.	How much money does your family spend on <u>lao-lao</u> monthly?	394 Kip	127
110.	How much money does your family spend on medicine yearly?	8,495 Kip	128
111.	How much money do you spend each year on tools, fishing nets, etc..?	4,381 Kip	129
112.	How much money do you spend traveling to other villages each month?	19,800 Kip	130
113.	How much money do you spend on beer, pepsicola, candy, etc., each month?	1,408 Kip	131
114.	How much money do you spend on school supplies yearly?	2,698 Kip	132
115.	How much money do you spend on kerosene and candles each year?	6,705 Kip	133
116.	How much money do you spend on pots and pans, blankets, mattresses, lamps, etc., for the house each year?	16,094 Kip	134
117.	How much money do you spend on bicycle and boat repairs each year?	1,408 Kip	135
118.	How many <u>muns</u> of rice does your family eat each year?	103.2 muns	136

119. How much money do you give to the wat each year?	2,740 Kip
120. How many eggs does your family eat each month?	8.2 eggs
121. Do you know the Chao Muong when you see him?	78.4% affirmative
122. Have you ever talked with the Chao Muong?	55.7% affirmative
123. Do you know the RLG Agriculture Extension Agent when you see him?	25.2% affirmative
124. Have you ever talked with him?	23.7% affirmative
125. Has he ever been of help to you?	21.6% affirmative
126. Do you know the ADO (Agriculture Development Organization) representative when you see him?	23.3% affirmative
127. Have you ever talked with him?	21.2% affirmative
128. Has he ever been of help to you?	6.6% affirmative
129. Have you ever seen the Chao Khoueng?	3.0% affirmative
130. Is life better, worse, or the same as it was five years ago?	90% better
131. Do you grow more, the same, or less rice than you raised ten years ago?	more
132. Do you buy more, the same, or less than you did five years ago?	more
133. Do you use money more, the same, or less than you did five years ago?	more
134. Do you make (earn) more money, the same, or less than you did ten years ago?	more
135. Are prices for things you buy more, same or less than they were ten years ago?	more
136. Is education better or worse than it was five years ago?	better
137. Is transportation better or worse than it was five years ago?	better

138. Is the health of your family better or worse than five years ago? better
139. Are opportunities for your children today
better or worse than they were five years ago? better
140. Is the RLG more, the same or less responsive
to your needs than it was five years ago? more
141. Do you go to Vientiane more, the same or less
often than you did five years ago? more
142. How many chickens have you sold in the past year? 16.7 birds



POPULATION: BY AGE GROUP AND SEX

Royal Lao Government
Vientiane Plain Census, September, 1970

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Male (%)</u>	<u>Female (%)</u>
0 - 4	21.1	18.1
5 - 9	15.3	17.4
10 - 14	15.1	13.8
15 - 19	7.3	9.8
20 - 24	5.1	7.5
25 - 29	5.7	7.6
30 - 34	5.7	5.5
35 - 39	5.8	5.0
40 - 44	4.3	3.2
45 - 49	3.8	3.4
50 - 54	3.4	2.7
55 - 59	2.5	2.0
60 - up	4.3	3.4



LARRY

October 31. 1972

To: Hunter Fitzgerald

From: Norm

Subject: Bob Wulff's Report on Non-Refugee Villages, Vientiane Plain

Just for interest, I did a little analysis of Bob Wulff's figures in regard to elementary education.

There were 619 families in the six villages studied. He says 1.36 persons per family were attending school. $619 \times 1.36 = 842$ persons in school.

Note, however, that the enrollment figures for the schools in the six villages came to only 667. Some 175 students may be attending groupes scolaires or secondary schools outside these six villages. On the other hand, children from other villages are probably attending these six primary schools, so the enrollment figures are not very helpful.

Looking at the figures in another way, the total population in the six villages is 4223. The school age population, 6-14, is about 26% of the total population. (The 26% is a rough adjustment taken from the table in the back of the report. We have been saying the school age population is 23% of the total, which is a UNESCO figure for Thailand.)

26% of the total population of 4223 is 1098. If we say that the number of children aged 6 through 14 is 1098, and if there are 842 children in school, then the percentage of the school age children enrolled in school is 76.6%. That sounds about right for the Vientiane area. It will be interesting to see what his figures are for the refugee villages.

cc: Woodson