



FACTS

TWO RELOCATION PROJECTS
PAKSANE HIN HEUP
USAID Mission to Laos

PHOTOGRAPHS

PAKSANE



During the military action on and around the Plain of Jars in the spring of 1970, some 8,000 people left their villages in Xieng Khouang Province near the Plain of Jars and moved south into Borikhane Province. They moved by bamboo raft down the Nam Nhiep and Nam Sane Rivers about 75 km (47 mi) to Paksane on the Mekong River. They set up a camp on the outskirts of Paksane, a group of people of whom about 75 percent were Lao, 15 percent Lao Theung, and 10 percent Meo. In November 1970, they were joined by over 1,000 other refugees from Xieng Khouang Province. In October 1971, they began their move to sites on land which the Ministry of Social Welfare designated for their permanent relocation.

Borikhane Province covers an area of about 3,000 sq mi. The soil is good for upland crops, but the region is heavily forested and much of the land is uncultivated. The area reserved for refugee resettlement extends 50 km (31 mi) west from Paksane toward Vientiane and 27 km (17 mi) north to a long, low mountain--Phou Ngu or Snake Mountain. The land on the other side of the mountain is controlled by Pathet Lao and North Vietnamese forces. Within a heavily forested area between the Paksane-Borikhane road and the Nam Sane River, the refugees, with handsaw, ax, and machete, cleared land for 21 village sites. During the past eight months, they have built 1,585 houses, 19 classrooms, and six dispensaries with bamboo as construction material. They have planted 1,300 hectares (3,211 acres) of upland rice. With this year's harvest, these refugees will have enough food to meet their needs.

Resettlement costs total \$15,000 in dollar and local currency expenditures. These funds have been used to provide trucks to move the refugees to the village sites and to buy thatch roofing and nails for the construction of houses, classrooms and dispensaries. The table (next page) shows the cost of commodities which USAID provided this group of refugees from July 1, 1971 through June 30, 1972, a period in which the refugees were classified under the USAID category of Full Support.



Left: Refugees weave skirt borders to sell.
Above: Sections of thatch make up the roof.



Scenes in the various refugee villages in the vicinity of Paksane: Refugees built this schoolhouse of bamboo and thatch. The river provides food as well as a means of travel for the villagers who live on its banks. For extra income, the talented refugees weave items for sale in the marketplaces. After the rice crop is harvested, it is carefully stacked and covered with rice straw for protection against the rains.

COMMODITIES FOR REFUGEE RELIEF

Fiscal Year 1972

\$ Thousand

Rice	\$ 112.8
Salt	2.3
PL-480 foods	46.3
Medical supplies	22.5
Other <u>a/</u>	
Total	\$ 190.8

a/ Blankets, mosquito nets, tools, household utensils, clothing, and plastic sheeting.



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H I N H E U P

About 100 km (62 mi) north of Vientiane just past the mountain range that marks the boundary of the Vientiane Plain, the Hin Heup Valley stretches about 19 mi east and west. It is a relatively uninhabited region in which water, fish, mussels, game, bamboo shoots and fruit are plentiful. An old village, Ban Hin Heup on the Nam Lik River, emerged into brief prominence as the site of negotiations among neutralist, rightist and Pathet Lao forces preceding the Geneva Accords of 1962. Because of its location near the Vientiane Plain and its natural resources, the valley was chosen as a relocation site in January 1972 when, in the battle for Long Teng, over 7,000 people left their villages and moved south to the Vientiane Plain. Today, 725 families or 5,589 of these people live in 10 new villages built along the Nam Lik River.

Over a one-month period after their arrival in the Hin Heup Valley, the refugees constructed 825 houses of bamboo, 11 classrooms, and one dispensary. Each family cleared .5 hectares (1.2 acres) of land and planted rice. Their yield from this year's harvest will provide rice for three months until the next planting season. Unless there is further movement of refugees from the north, provision of PL-480 foods and rice to supplement local production until after the harvest of 1973 is the only further assistance that this group of refugees requires.

Resettlement costs total \$50,860 which covers the cost of construction of a 450-meter STOL airstrip and a 12-km (7 mi) all-weather road which links the relocation area with Route 13. In addition to resettlement costs, the table (next page) shows expenditures for the commodities which USAID provided this group of refugees from the date of their arrival in the Hin Heup Valley through September 1972.



Refugees build their houses out of locally available bamboo and thatch.





Top left: The hills at Hin Heup are planted to upland rice. Top right: A refugee girl weaves decorative strips for the traditional Lao skirts. Above: Road construction at Hin Heup. A 12 km (7 mi) all - weather road links the resettlement area with Route 13. Below left: Refugee houses in Hin Heup Valley. Below right: Refugee's rice planted alongside the airstrip at Hin Heup.



COMMODITIES FOR REFUGEE RELIEF

March - September 1972

\$ Thousand

Rice		\$ 39.6
Salt		.4
PL-480 foods	a/	22.
Medical supplies		1.
Other	b/	4.5
Total		\$ 68.

a/ Noodles, CSM, WSB, bulgur wheat.

b/ Mosquito nets, blankets, machetes, axes, sleeping mats, buckets, and plastic sheeting.

