

Republic of VIET NAM

COMMISSARIAT GENERAL
for LAND DEVELOPMENT

ACTIVITIES PERFORMED

BY

THE COMMISSARIAT GENERAL

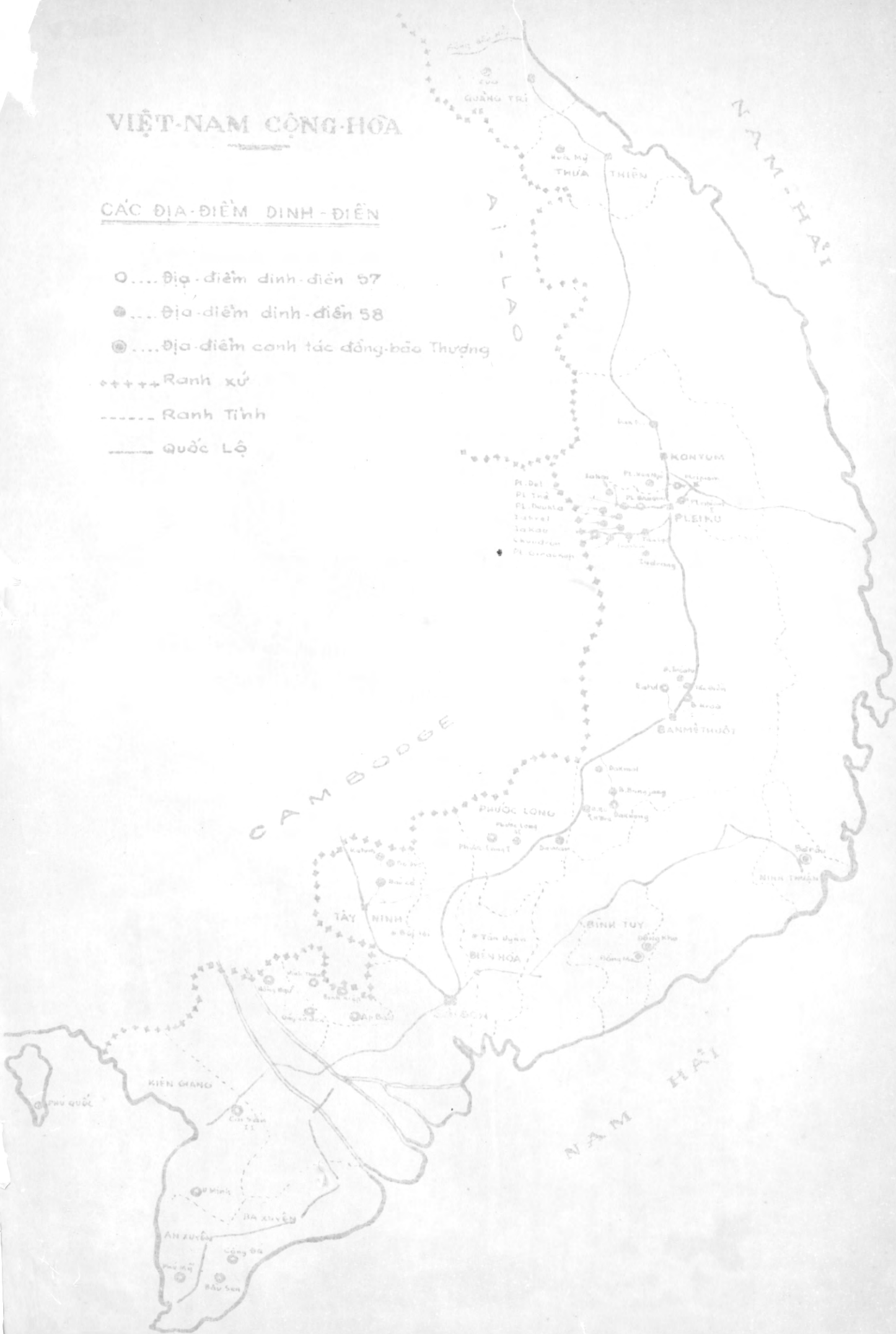
FOR LAND DEVELOPMENT

4

VIỆT-NAM CỘNG-HÒA

CÁC ĐỊA-ĐIỂM DINH-ĐIỂN

- Địa-điểm dinh-điền 57
- Địa-điểm dinh-điền 58
- ⊙.... Địa-điểm canh tác đồng-bào Thượng
- ++++ Ranh xứ
- Ranh Tỉnh
- Quốc Lộ



REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES
OF THE COMMISSARIAT GENERAL FOR LAND DEVELOPMENT



Conscious of the fact that our country has suffered almost a century of foreign domination and ten years of civil war, causing heavy losses in its natural resources and economy, President NGO DINH DIEM took it as one of his first tasks upon returning to his native land and assuming the responsibilities of Government to begin planning for a national economic rebirth. Because agriculture remains the principal economic base of the country, Land Development became an especially important means to this end, through developing uncultivated regions, improving agriculture, increasing production, and at the same time resolving problems of unemployment and overpopulation. On April 23, 1957, the Commissariat General for Land Development was established by Presidential decree 103-TTP.



Les techniciens étudiant sur carte les Zones qu'ils ont à prospecter en vue de la création des centres de D.A.

Technicians study on map prospecting lands for establishment of Land Development Centers.



Un long ruisseau près du centre de D. A. de Boun-Bum'Bré.

A long brook near Boun-Bum'Bré Center.

A. ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSARIAT GENERAL FOR LAND DEVELOPMENT -

I. SURVEYS OF LAND DEVELOPMENT CENTERS -

On the basis of careful land surveys of water and soil, land development centers were selected by teams of agronomists, agriculturists, and community development experts from several countries. Undeveloped lands in the swampy regions of South Vietnam and the highlands of Central Vietnam were selected for development as separate projects. Each settlement was studied to determine the maximum number of settlers to be transferred, the land area to be cleared, and credits to be advanced for implementation of each community project.

II. PREPARING LAND DEVELOPMENT CENTERS -

Clearing the land sometimes involved the removal of trees as well as the levelling of land surface for the construction of homes and public buildings. This was followed by the erection of temporary reception shelters including both tents and thatched dwellings. Although some of these have been removed to provide space for more permanent public buildings, 453 of these units still remain.

Wells had to be drilled, and pumps and piping installed to supply water to each area.

Headquarters, buildings, storehouses, dispensaries and maternity wards, information centers, and schoolrooms were then installed.

The projects were not considered complete until roads, dams, dikes, bridges, and canals were constructed for purposes of communication, irrigation, and protection of the rice-fields.



Un quartier du Centre de Pleipiom I aux Hauts-Plateaux.
A part of Pleipiom I Center on Highlands Area.



Un canal conduisant au Centre de D.A. de Găy-Cò-Den,
dans la Plaine des Joncs.
A canal leading to Găy-Cò-Den Center in "Plaine des
Joncs".

III. TRANSPORTATION -

Once the land development centers were ready, representatives of the Commissariat General for Land Development visited selected overcrowded areas to explain the land development program and invite victims of rural overcrowding, inadequate land resources, and of urban unemployment to resettle their families and begin a new life in the resettlement villages.

On April 23, 1957, President NGO DINH DIEM paid an official visit to Cat-Lai, to welcome the first volunteer settlers.

IV. RESETTLEMENT -

After arriving at the new centers, settlers were given several days' rest in the provisional reception centers before beginning the tasks of constructing their new homes. The Commissariat General for Land Development provided trucks, tools, and supplies when these were not available locally. The settlers were paid allowances in kind or in cash for the construction of their homes ; and during the first months of their resettlement, each person also received an allowance of 15 kgs. of rice per month and 4 to 6 piasters per day. This subsidy continued until their first crops could be harvested, usually a period ranging from five to nine months.

Each settler was also supplied with mosquito net, blanket, straw mats, water jars, and relief items from the National Government and foreign aid sources, including rice, wheat flour, kitchen oil, cheese, corn flour, powdered milk, beans, clothes, and textiles. Appropriate means of transportation were also supplied, including small boats, trucks, and jeeps.



Des logements provisoires sont érigés sur un terrain nouvellement déblayé pour l'accueil des transplantés.
Temporary reception centers for new settlers on land recently cleared.



Un tronçon de canal nouvellement creusé à Ấp-Bắc (Plaine des Jongs).

A portion of canal recently dig at Ấp-Bắc (Plaine des Jongs).

V. RESETTLEMENT OF ABORIGINAL HIGHLANDERS -

Some 500,000 mountaineers living in the Highlands of Central Vietnam constitute a major undeveloped agricultural resource for the nation. At the same time, improvement of their agricultural techniques will also raise their standard of living.

In cooperation with the Social Welfare Service for the Central Highlands, the Commissariat General for Land Development has begun educating the mountaineers in agriculture and village life. In the District of Tanh Linh, Binh Tuy Province, more than 2,000 mountaineers were resettled, where they have plowed, harrowed, and cultivated 400 hectares of land. Instruction in agricultural techniques and the development of new community centers have already brought new rewards of security and happiness to the settlers.

VI. ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS -

a. Small grants : Originally each family, averaging about 5 persons, was to be provided with one to three hectares of cleared and plowed land. Mechanical clearing was not able to prepare enough land for this purpose, however, and settlers were therefore encouraged to clear additional land by themselves. For this purpose and for cultivation of seasonal crops, they were given farm tools and work animals.

Land grants were made from public domains and from private lands distributed under the Land Reform Laws. Public lands were distributed free, and the Government guaranteed repayment of redistributed private lands, which could then be purchased by the settlers on long-term contracts.

b. Mechanical land clearing : The Direction of Agricultural Mechanical Equipment (created by Presidential



Défrichement à la main.
Clearing by hand.



Vue d'un quartier d'habitations d'un Centre de D. A.
View of a part of houses quarter in Land Development
Center.

decree 133 on February 28, 1958, as successor to the National Office of Agricultural Machinery) was made responsible for clearing virgin soils of the Highlands by means of bulldozers and other equipment and for plowing the abandoned rice lands of the south in preparation for planting.

c. Cultivation : Soil surveys were conducted in each area for purposes of classifying them and determining the most suitable crops and their most effective means of cultivation. Soil types range from the salty soils of the Camau region and the aluminous soils of Dong-thap-Muoi, to the red soils of the Highlands. Other research in climate, rainfall, and other factors has been developed to improve the technical cultivation of crops.

In addition to technical advice on soils and agriculture, the Commissariat General for Land Development has encouraged the development of community farming practices and services. Two plant nurseries have been established at Pleiku and Banmethuot to test soil qualities.

VII. OTHER ASSISTANCE -

In addition to technical advice, the use of mechanical equipment, the provision of farm tools, and the introduction of community services, the Commissariat has helped finance the introduction of buffaloes and other farm animals, and the National Agricultural Credit Office has lent 6,680,600 piasters to 3,389 settlers during 1957. Farm animals have been distributed for breeding purposes and to enable settlers to increase family income. The growing of tilapia and timbering operations have also been stimulated in suitable regions. A sawmill was established at Daksong to encourage the cooperative woodworking industry, and with the help of foreign aid a handicraft center was introduced at BounKroa for developing rattan and bamboo-



Une unité de tracteurs mécaniques en activité dans un Centre de D. A.

A group of tractors in operation in Land Development Center.



Défrichage à la mécanique pour la création d'un Centre de D. A.

Clearing with mechanical equipment for establishment of a Land Development Center.

processing handicrafts, and for the teaching of new trades to supplement farm incomes.

VIII. COMMUNITY SERVICES -

Most of the personal activities of the settlers represented a continuation of former practices in a new environment which carefully preserved valuable traditions. But additional community services were also necessary to assist the development of the new villages.

The internal security of the centers was entrusted to the Civil Guard, augmented by groups of self - defense recruits. Communal life was further enhanced by the formation of Consumer Cooperatives initiated by the settlers themselves.

Special sanitary service teams visit each settlement periodically for medical consultations, administering inoculations and distributing drugs and medicines. These teams also support the activities of the local dispensaries and maternity wards established at every center.

Churches and pagodas were built at many land development centers at the initiative of the settlers in conformity with their own religious beliefs and preferences. Many radios were provided to afford the settlers a sense of continuity with the regions they have evacuated and with the outside world. Local information centers and mobile units have also arranged the presentation of traditional dramas and documentary motion pictures explaining governmental policies.

Some centers have organized competitive work plans with prizes to stimulate settlers in the performance of such tasks as home building, land clearing, the cultivation of crops, and other center projects.

The land development centers will eventually be integrated into existing hamlets and villages, some independent



Soins aux cultures vivrières.
Care of food crops.



Buffles nouvellement importés pour être distribués aux réimplantés des Centres de D. A.
Buffaloes recently imported for distribution to settlers in Land Development Centers.

villages will be established as circumstances warrant. In some centers, self-government has already been established in readiness for conversion of the communities into separate legal entities. In others extensive study has been initiated to facilitate their eventual integration into the existing governmental structure.

B. RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In the 14 months after its inception, the Commissariat General for Land Development has overcome such difficulties as the lack of facilities, organizational problems, the paucity of technical knowledge, and adverse weather conditions.

The most important result of the project from the economic point of view has been the establishment of 44 land development centers, covering 23,086 hectares of land and providing homes for 74,473 new or aboriginal settlers. The centers occupy areas ranging from 100 to 500 hectares, with some great projects covering between 3,000 and 4,000 hectares. Most of the settlers were landless and needy citizens from the provinces of Central Vietnam, including both farmers and unemployed city workers who were willing to engage in agriculture. Many of these settlers would have become an economic burden rather than an asset to the national economy if these projects had proven unsuccessful. Farmers who were removed from overcrowded areas also left behind them prepared land which will improve the prospects of those who remained behind.

During the course of these projects, 23,086 hectares of land were cleared, of which 14,687 have already been put into cultivation. The economy has been enriched by the cultivation of 12,984 hectares of rice, 519 hectares of fruit



Machine pour fendre le bambou au Centre d'Artisanat de Bounkroa.
Slitting-mill of bamboo at handicraft Center of Bounkroa.



Culture de ramie à Eatul, Banmethuot.
Cultivation of Ramie at Eatul, Banmethuot.

trees, 288 hectares of other commercial trees, and 890 hectares of vegetables.

Individual families have been assured of their possessions and have even begun to store excess rice for next year's seedings. They have also begun to adopt new agricultural methods as a result of the demonstration of equipment originally brought in for reclaiming and preparing lands.

The rise of prosperous villages in previously uninhabited swampy areas or wild mountainous regions has also begun to stimulate transportation and trade, thus benefitting the established centers of commerce. It is clear that the standard of living total population of Vietnam as well as those who were resettled has been improved as a result of the land development projects ./.
