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Author(s): Y. L. Lee

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COMMUNITY SCALE	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII	XIV	XV
EXISTIC UNITS	MAN	ROOM	DWELLING	DWELLING GROUP	SMALL NEIGHBOURHOOD	NEIGHBOURHOOD	SMALL TOWN	TOWN	LARGE CITY	METROPOLIS	CONURBATION	MEGALOPOLIS	URBAN REGION	URBANIZED CONTINENT	ECUMENOPOLIS
NATURE															
MAN															
SOCIETY						41									
SHELLS						1									
NETWORKS															
SYNTHESIS															

PLANNED VILLAGES AND LAND SETTLEMENT SCHEMES IN SARAWAK

Y. L. Lee

Y.L. Lee is Senior Lecturer in Geography in the University of Singapore, and this paper was prepared with the assistance of Enche Amin Haji Satem (Divisional Development Officer, Sibiu), Mr. Yee Kong Yeow (Sibintek Scheme Manager), Mr. Frank Apau (Development Officer, Kuching), and Enche Abang Yusuf Puteh (Establishment Officer, Kuching).

One facet of "settlement as a process" is well illustrated in Sarawak by the creation of planned villages in the Land Development Schemes. This aspect of settlement is often referred to as "land settlement" and is usually related to the need for accelerated settlement in places where there is rapid population growth and population pressure on land resources.

Under the 1964-68 Sarawak Development Plan (now incorporated into the First Malaysian Development Plan 1966-70) Land Development Schemes are now being set up in the rural areas of Sarawak. Apart from the general aim to raise the social and economic standards of the rural areas, such schemes will help to satisfy demands for land by some of the Chinese. The demand for land is greatest near the main centres of the Chinese agricultural communities where there is much under-employment despite the availability of local capital for opening new lands. These schemes may also encourage the indigenous peoples, now practising shifting cultivation, to adopt more permanent systems of cultivation, and, perhaps, in this way, make available extra land.

The present development effort in Sarawak is concentrated on schemes within selected "Development Areas." One of the reasons for it is to make sure that such schemes are directed to areas with fertile soils.

Other factors are land tenure obstacles and accessibility. Planners have found it difficult to find unencumbered land for the Land Development Schemes. Such schemes have to be on State land or land that has been donated.

Some of the areas of unencumbered land are far from existing centres of population. This is

true of some of the most promising areas with good soil, which are likely to become in time some of the most prosperous parts of the country. In order that farmers can be encouraged to settle on this new land, facilities will have to be provided for them in advance. Access to sizable areas of unencumbered State Land can only be gained by constructing roads. The Government has given this top priority in the 1964-68 Development Plan and out of the \$110.6 million allocated for transport \$105.2 million will be for road building. This is about 30% of the total investment for the period and comes a close second to the amount allocated for agriculture \$108.6 million (31.7%).

Schemes in Progress

At present, seven schemes are in progress in various parts of the country. Several others are in the planning stage. These Land Development schemes will group together both indigenous peoples and the Chinese to form communities large enough to justify the necessary social services, such as schools, dispensaries and water supplies. When all the schemes are completed the total acreage opened up for cultivation (mainly rubber) will be about 22,000 acres and will benefit about 1,700 families.

The table opposite sets out the stage of progress of the seven Land Development Schemes in Sarawak. As yet, none has reached an advanced stage of development.

Although there is no hard and fast rule regarding the composition of the settlers, there seems to be a majority group in each of these Schemes. Triboh is now mainly Land Dayak; Melugu and Skrang have Ibans; Sibintek and Maradong are

TABLE 1. — SARAWAK LAND DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES, AUGUST, 1967

Name of Scheme	Eventual No. of Families	Houses Completed and Occupied	Houses Being Built	Total Eventual Acreage	Acreage Planted
1. Triboh	98	64	—	858	783
2. Melugu	350	123	77	4,560	1,569
3. Skrang	236	124	60	3,300	2,100
4. Maradong	300	60	145	3,360	3,140
5. Sibintek	200	54	76	1,666+	1,666
6. Lambir	200	34	66	3,140	1,730
7. Lubai Tengah	210	—	—	2,000	—
	1,594+	459	424	18,884+	10,988

(Source: State Development Office, Kuching).

mainly Chinese; Lambir is mainly Iban and Lubai Tengah is too new to have any ethnic majority. In the last two cases, not all the land is State Land, and part of it was donated by natives who owned the land under customary tenure. Such natives are allowed to participate in the scheme without going through the normal procedures of selection. In local planning parlance, such native 'land donors' are called the 'insiders,' whereas settlers who are not 'land donors' have to apply for places and conform to selection procedures. Such settlers are known as 'outsiders.' In the Lambir and Lubai Tengah schemes, 50% of the settlers in each of the schemes will be 'insiders.' As in the case of the F.L.D.A. schemes in Malaya, a 'Points System' has also been worked out for the selection of settlers who are not land donors. Such a system will normally take into account such factors as occupation (farmers are preferred), ownership of land (landless given priority), age, number in family and degree of poverty.

Settlers moving into these Land Development Schemes are introduced to a concept of living foreign to them. Whereas the Dayak formerly lived in scattered longhouses in the remote vastness of forested hills, they now have to adapt themselves to living in a compact and planned village community with all the modern social amenities. The Chinese, on the other hand, have to leave their individualistic and isolated way of life in scattered homesteads to settle in a compact settlement area with a certain amount of official supervision at least for the initial years. It is, however, the radical change in living of the Dayak that has to be noted. In this case, one sees a shifting cultivator becoming a sedentary farmer virtually overnight, a process which usually takes many generations. Hence, in this process of change, the transitional stage which usually accompanies the evolution of a shifting cultivator to a settled farmer is bypassed.

His entry into such villages, not only brings

him closer to the administration but will allow him to earn an income from a cash crop and to wield more effective political influence in local government matters, a position which would have been difficult had he continued to live in his remote longhouse. In the same way, bringing together the Chinese from isolated homesteads into these compact village areas will also allow the Chinese farmer to enjoy the same advantages.

In the following sections an attempt is made to set out a sample study of one of the new Development Schemes.

Sibintek Land Development Scheme

The characteristic planned pattern with houses in neat orderly rows is best seen by examining the Sibintek Land Development Scheme, 25 miles from Sibiu, in the Sibiu District.

This scheme was started in June 1965 and its siting was aimed primarily at alleviating the lot of the land-hungry Chinese in the congested Sibiu district—an area with little unencumbered land for individual private development. Fortunately, some State land was available around the Sibintek river, a small tributary of the Pasai river: 35 per cent of the land was State land and 66 per cent was purchased from the Dayaks. This is hilly land just behind the swamp belt. Apart from land tenure considerations, the hilly nature of the terrain was an important siting factor for the project.

Sibintek will be developed in three phases. In Phase I, which was started in 1965, 600 acres of rubber land were cleared and planted and 54 houses were erected. (Fig. 1). In 1966, Phase II was started and 1066 acres of rubber land were cleared and planted, but the 70 houses for this phase were to be built only in December, 1967. Work had also commenced on part of Phase III and more than 500 acres had been terraced for rubber to be planted in 1968. The houses for this third phase will be built only in 1969.

By August, 1967, 54 settler families (387

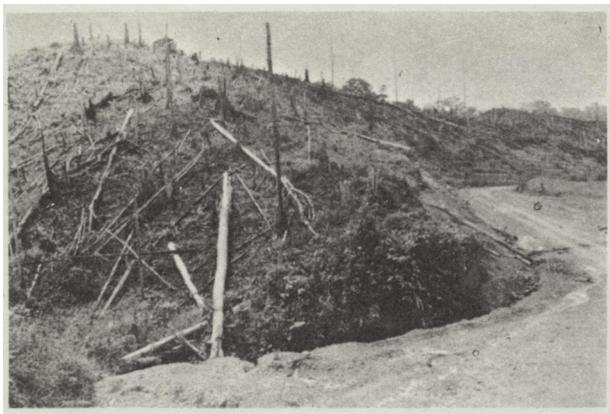


Fig. 1 Clearing the forest

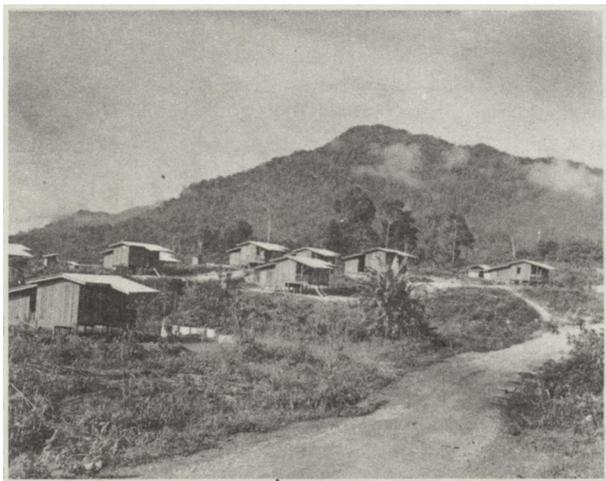


Fig. 2 House Types

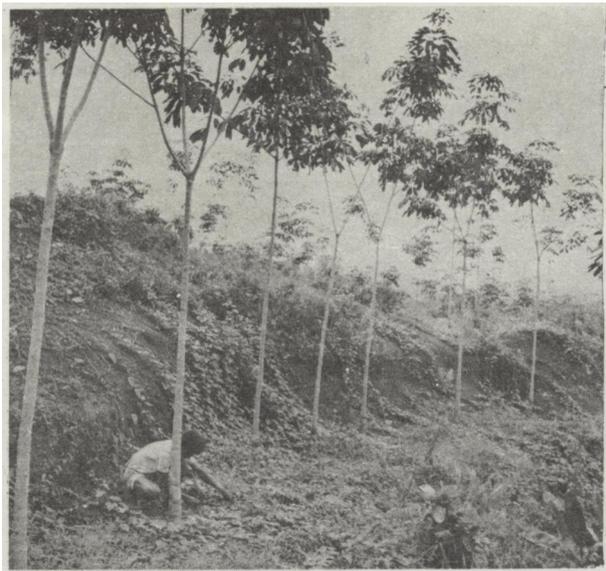


Fig. 3 Year old rubber trees

persons) had moved into the settlement, comprising 38 Foochow Chinese, 8 Iban and 8 Malay families. They are mainly from the Sibuh district and the Third Division. Each settler family is allotted 8 acres of rubber land, 2 acres of 'dusun' land for mixed farming and 1/4 acre for his house lot. Subsidies are provided for each family at the rate of \$40.00 p.m. for the first year, \$20.00 p.m. for the second year and \$10.00 p.m. for the third year.

Houses are built for the settlers by the Sarawak Development Finance Corporation at a cost of \$2,030,000 each. These are pre-fab. houses, each with a verandah, bedroom, living room, dining room/kitchen, a bathroom and a bore-hole W.C. in the backyard (Fig. 2). The Corporation which is a semi-government institution, makes a \$ 500.00 subsidy to each settler towards the purchase of the house. The remaining sum is loaned to them and settlers are required to start repaying the loan over a period of 10 or 15 years after the rubber reaches tapping age. Since all the houses are built by contractors and assembled at the site, there is a uniformity in the house-types. Cultural influences normally evident in house-types elsewhere have no role to play in such planned villages. All the house lots together with the community buildings such as schools, dispensaries, etc., will eventually occupy a village site of about 600 acres.

Similarly, the clearing and terracing of the hills, forested land, and the planting of the rubber are done for the settlers (Fig. 3). In addition to the free planting and free surveys, the settlers are given 99-year leases to their land free of land tax. Loans for fertilizers are also made available to settlers who want them. During the first two years, the rubber is looked after by the Agricultural Department, and it is only after this period that the settlers are allowed to move in and take over the maintenance of the two-year old rubber. In Sibintek, the "handing over" of Phase I (i.e. the rubber lands) to the settlers took place in May, 1967. The rubber is now about 2 1/2 years old and the settlers have been in the settlement for the last six months.

The table overleaf summarises the present situation. At this stage there is usually a resident manager who supervises the general administration of the scheme.

With so much of the arduous preparatory work done for them, the settlers will have time to adjust themselves to the new life in the settlement and also to look after their own house-lots and dusun land. The pattern of the settlement is such that the dusun lands are in separate lots a little away from the rubber lands with the houses in between.

It is envisaged that eventually the village will be a self contained one with all the social services and other amenities. The village is already linked by the new earth road from Sibuh and is served

TABLE 2

Total Acreage and No of House Lots handed over to Settlers in Phase I

Name of Scheme	Acreage	No. House Lots	Date Handed Over
1. Triboh	559	64	April, 1967
2. Melugu	600	56	June, 1967
3. Skrang	770	70	December, 1966
4. Maradong	642	60	April, 1967
5. Sibintek	600	54	May, 1967
6. Lambir	290	34	December, 1966
	<u>3,461</u>	<u>338</u>	

(Source: State Development Office, Kuching).

by buses which come in hourly. Although the settlers still depended on rain-water and water from the river for their domestic needs, eventually every house will have piped water. The building of the pumping station and the water tank to make such a piped supply of water from the Pasai River possible is in progress and scheduled for early completion. The Government has plans for a co-operative shop within the settlement and as a start has contributed \$10,000,000 towards its establishment. All the settlers will be asked to be members of this co-operative shop.

Conclusions and Problems

Apart from resettling landless Chinese, such land settlement schemes, when completed, will transform many semi-nomadic peoples into settled farmers. But because of the difficulties encountered in clearing forested country, the difficulties of transport and communications, and the difficult job of persuading a conservative hill people to leave their traditional homes and way of life for a different one, the actual process of establishing each of the schemes will take several years. At present, the neat rows of houses in these planned villages seem to appear a little incongruous and artificial, the usual characteristics and atmosphere associated with a well-established kampong or longhouse village being entirely lacking here.

Associated with this new pattern of living is the fact that such Land Development Schemes have led to a re distribution of population. It has also brought together both the Chinese and Ibans into close propinquity within one settlement area. This is an interesting social experiment because the peoples involved are of different stock, speaking different languages and of varying economic and cultural backgrounds. Some people believe that stresses and strains will inevitably arise if two peoples with such differing backgrounds are brought together. This is perhaps an unduly pessimistic opinion in view of the fact that both peoples have been living harmoniously for over a hundred years in many parts of Sarawak. In the

rural areas of the First Division, for example the Chinese have been living in close propinquity with the Dayaks for a long time and there has, in fact, been much intermarriage between the two peoples. This has been facilitated by the fact that the Ibans and the Land Dayaks are not Muslims and with no religious restrictions, it seems easier to bring these two peoples together. In Sibintek, it will not be necessary to segregate the two peoples. It is hoped that the agricultural development and redistribution of population as a consequence of planned land settlement will bring about a parallel social development.

The intention is for a new living community, with roots in the new soil, to be formed as soon as possible. Planners in Sarawak are therefore creating new farming communities in the rural areas in the same way that new urban communities are being developed in urban areas. Sibintek is perhaps the agricultural equivalent of Petaling Jaya Town in Kuala Lumpur or Toa Payoh satellite town in Singapore.

Such a settlement pattern also means that for the first time, the Chinese are being asked to live in a compact village area. This is quite a departure from the existing situation in Sarawak and other parts of Malaysia (except the New Villages of Malaya) where Chinese dispersed homesteads form the usual pattern. This new pattern of settlement for the Chinese is also different from that in the Sabah Land Settlement Schemes of the late 1950's. In these latter schemes, Chinese settlers were each allotted a plot of land varying between 5-13 acres within which they planted their crops and also built their houses. The resultant pattern was dispersed. On the other hand, there are disadvantages in living within a compact settlement area with a central village site. In Sibintek, for example, the allocation of rubber and dusun lots are not related to homestead units. Instead, rubber lands are in one part of the area, the house plots in another and the dusun lands in yet another. In terms of accessibility and distance between house and farm lands, this will not be the most convenient pattern for the farmer.

For the first time too, one sees the Land Dayaks and Ibans moving from his longhouse into single-unit pre-fab. houses. It is still too early to know how they will adjust themselves to life in this new type of dwelling. They come from a longhouse where there is much community life, to single-unit houses in their own house-lots. Despite the fact that there will be a general village area, they will definitely find life in the Land Development Schemes more lonely than the Chinese. Planners are fully aware of this social problem and have not therefore put any obstacles in the way of Ibans or Dayaks who wish to continue living in longhouses. In the Skrang Land Development Scheme for example, 44 settler families

expressed the desire to continue living in long-houses and five longhouses were therefore built within the village area for them.

As in the F.L.D.A. schemes in Malaya, the State Development Authorities build all the houses and plant the rubber by contract, leaving the settlers free to look after their house plots, dusun and rubber lands. From experience in Malaya, it is now known that to require a man, who most probably is not used to regular working hours, to plant and look after 8 acres of rubber, build his house, cultivate his residential and dusun plots, and, in addition, to do co-operative work on roads, drainage, etc. is expecting too much from him. In the Ayer Lanas Scheme in Malaya where the settlers were asked to do everything themselves, the speed of development depended on the capacity of each family. Since felling of jungle and planting of rubber were skilled jobs, it was found that development was slowed down considerably and the rubber could not be planted until the third year. Whereas in the case of the Sarawak schemes, it has been possible, with contract land clearance, to plant all the rubber for the settlers within the first year. Such concentration of planning and development is of course economical of effort and should result in better agriculture, better yields and a higher standard of living for the farmer. In setting up the schemes, planners were fully aware that to allocate holdings too small for full employment would be the way to perpetuate poverty and create new agricultural slums. The size of the holdings in the present schemes is therefore large enough for a family working full time. However, the average family size is already relatively large, for example, 7 at Sibintek. With improved standards of nutrition and health facilities in the Schemes, the mortality rates are likely to decline sharply, especially for the Dayaks. There will be a tendency towards internal population pressures and this may have adverse repercussions on levels of living and the economic viability of each scheme in the future. Although it is true that some of the surplus population in future can be absorbed into profitable ancillary occupations as the schemes attain economic production, some of the young and educated people from the schools may have to find work outside the schemes. It should be noted here that 53% of the population at Sibintek are below 15 years of age.

The question of economic viability is of course related to the crop grown in the settlements schemes. Planners in Malaysia believe that rubber is the crop considered likely to bring the settler the highest revenue and standard of living, sub-

ject to an assurance of food supply. If incomes from rubber are assessed on yields of 1,000 lbs per acre, a level attained only by the more efficient plantations in Malaya so far) the potential annual income from the average Sarawak Scheme holding of 8 acres at a market price of 52 cents per lb. with the farmer getting 39 cents per lb. would be \$3120.00 or \$260.00 per month.

This income will be true only if marketing and production are as efficient as in private commercial units, and is dependent on overall management, processing and price fluctuations. This last factor is beyond the control of both planners and settlers, and in some schemes it was seen fit to introduce another cash crop, the oil palm. Such diversification of crops has not been introduced as yet in the Sarawak schemes, but, in view of the very low rubber prices in recent months (second half of 1967), it is imperative that the plan to have rubber as the sole cash crop in the schemes should be reconsidered.

One of the criteria used to measure the success of such schemes is not only whether, it will yield a satisfactory income to the settler farmer, but whether the current fertility of the land and the marketability of its produce will be maintained long enough to justify the expenditure of capital on its exploitation.

Each settler family is subsidised to the tune of about \$6,000.00 although a large part of it is on loan and will eventually be repaid. Will the final costs for all these Schemes be reasonable?

On the other hand, economic factors are not the only reasons behind the establishment of settlement schemes.

In Sarawak, it is not only the indigenous peoples who have to be resettled and taught a more lucrative form of agriculture but also land-hungry Chinese. The Government was fully aware that unless measures were taken to satisfy this demand, land would become a major political issue. Few situations are potentially more explosive than unused (or badly used) land kept out of reach of land-hungry people. One of the aims of the Schemes is therefore to give land to the landless Chinese and, at the same time by resettling Dayaks and Ibans and persuading them to cultivate cash crops it may be possible to release extra land.

When the schemes are completed, 22,000 acres of good rubber land will be added to Sarawak and 1,700 families will be resettled. However, it seems clear that more Chinese will have to move into these Schemes if the Chinese population problem is to be alleviated. At the moment, of the 346 families who have moved into the various schemes, less than one-fifth are Chinese.