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THE GOVERNMENT OF MALAYSIA
THE STATE OF SARAWAK

MIRI-BINTULU

REGIONAL PLANNING STUDY

SUPPORTING REPORT

No. 4

SOCIOLOGY
PART II
FIELD REPORTS

—1974—

HUNTING TECHNICAL
SERVICES LTD. LONDON

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This part is intended as a partial summary of the empirical findings of the sociologists and is meant to lend support to the general recommendations, conclusions and planning guidelines contained in Part I of the Sociology Supporting Report.

The task of the sociologists, as set out in the Terms of Reference, is to "determine how many people of various background and categories will or can be attracted to settle in the new area as farmers or in other occupations". The new area defined, in this context, is sections of the Miri-Bintulu Region identified as capable of intensive development. The Terms of Reference also require assistance to the government "in designing realistic policies with respect to recruitment and transfer of settlers, possible training programmes and types of settlement to be planned in the new area in order to achieve an orderly establishment of a harmonious, integrated society" (Para.20.7).

For the purposes of the Study, this task was divided into three major parts:-

a) identification and recruitment of potential migrants and the design of programmes to insure their orderly transfer to the Study Area;

b) planning for appropriate new settlements or for the enlargement of existing communities in order to accommodate the new comers and the anticipated future growth in the local population and

c) making provision in these designs for the successful integration of migrant groups within the existing population and structure of established communities and institutions in the development area.

The Terms of Reference further advise the sociologists that sufficient information already exists in the form of published materials, government reports, records and memoranda concerning the potential migrant population resident in other parts of Sarawak, mainly in the First, Second and Third Divisions. Thus no new studies were said to be required to provide information on this aspect of the sociological task. Therefore all of the studies undertaken by the sociologists, with one exception, were limited to the Study Area and concerned aspects of the task related mainly to settlement design, the integration of possible migrant groups and the consequences of development on new and established communities.

Like the Malays, the Kedayans are Muslims; but there are cultural differences between the two ethnic groups. Where the former prefer to live mainly near the coast or along the lower reaches of the Sibuti river, the Kedayans have settled away from the coast and major rivers; they are found mainly on smaller streams, further inland. The Kedayans have been and still are padi cultivators, depending mainly on the cultivation of this single crop for their livelihood.

2.2.2 The Paya Selanyau Drainage and Irrigation Scheme

As one of the intentions of the study is to examine a land development scheme and assess the villagers' response to it, the Kedayan community of Kampong Selanyau best serves the purpose. Kampong Selanyau is situated about three miles off the Bekenu feeder road, and from the road junction is about three miles to Bekenu town. The village is not directly accessible by car; from two points which are joined to the feeder road by sand-surfaced tracks one has to walk for about 30 to 45 minutes along hilly footpaths to reach the village.

Village houses are built along the slopes and crest of a low hill that overlooks the valley drained by Sungai Selanyau in which the villagers' principal rice fields are situated. A major part of the valley floor, including the villagers' fields, has been, or is being, developed as part of an extensive drainage and irrigation scheme. When completed in late 1974, The Paya Selanyau scheme will contain 1 500 acres of irrigated rice land suitable for double cropping. The projected total cost of the project is $1.25 mn.

Surveying work for the project started shortly after the Brunei Rebellion (1963) and continued into 1966. Planning was done in 1966-68 and construction of Phase I took place in 1968-70. Phase I is now in operation and contains three irrigation blocks (A, B and E) with a total acreage of 224. It was completed in 1970 at a cost of $300 000. Phase II contains six irrigation blocks (C, D, F, G, H and I) with a total acreage of 1 300. Of this total, the earth works for blocks C and D (314 acres) was completed in April 1972 at a cost of $250 000. That for blocks F, G, H and I was scheduled for completion by the end of 1972.

Blocks A, B, and E are currently supplied with water from Sungai Selanyau a small tributary of the Setap River by means of an impoundment gate and drainage and irrigation canals that extend around the outer perimeter of each block. These feed into, and are drained by, secondary field canals. There is also a by-pass canal that can be used to divert water directly into Sungai Setap in the event of flooding. Ultimately Sungai Setap will

supply the water to all parts of the scheme, including Phase I blocks, but at present only padi plots of villagers of Kampong Danau and Selanyau are supplied with water by the scheme.

A big area of land in blocks A, B, D, E and F is Native Customary Land; while a big area of block G, and almost half of the area of blocks C and D is State Land, as shown in Figure 2.1. According to an official source, about 300 acres of the entire scheme lands are State Land. Only a small acreage of the scheme land is held under individual title. Land in blocks A and B is held by members of Kampong Selanyau and in E by members of Kampong Sepurau in block I.

Originally, the land owned by individual farmers was highly fragmented and scattered in small lots about the scheme area. Such scattering is the prevailing situation in respect to lands owned by the Kedayans. The scheme, for one thing, attempts to do away with such fragmentation and rearrange land ownership so that a farmer has his entire acreage in a single piece of land. This has been done successfully in blocks A, B and E. All of the land included in the scheme has been, or will be, re-allocated in two acre plots. It is felt that a two acre plot is big enough to be worked by a single adult.

The arrangement, therefore, is that every family works on at least two acres of land; and if there are more adults in the family and that family also owns more acreage within the scheme, it can work a bigger acreage. A farmer who owns a bigger acreage than his family can work, can lease the excess acreage to other farmers who have inadequate land or are without holdings in the scheme area.

2.2.3 The Padi Test Station

A test station was started in April, 1971 by the Department of Agriculture. It occupies a 20 acre sawah land within the scheme. Formerly the land was owned by the villagers under customary right, and compensation was paid to the villagers for its acquisition by the Department of Agriculture. The Department has constructed several buildings on the land, including a padi drier, store, temporary garage and staff quarters. Under construction is a building for an electric generator. Each year, the Department uses eight acres of land for padi growing on an experimental basis. Double-cropping has been attempted using several varieties of short-maturing padi. The shortest matures in about three and a half months after planting.

The station is run by two permanent staff members of the Department of Agriculture. They are assisted by five more or

less permanent daily-paid workers. However, additional workers are recruited during the peak seasons of padi-growing. During the planting and harvesting seasons about 36 and 40 workers respectively are employed in the padi field. For weeding, only ten workers are employed. The workers are mainly youngsters, both young men and women, from the neighbouring participant villages of Selanyau, Danau and Satap. The youngsters are paid $4 a day.

The test station serves two main purposes. Firstly, it is a testing plot in which the Department of Agriculture carries out tests on the different varieties of padi seedlings and double cropping of padi. Secondly, it serves as a demonstration plot which aims to show the participants in the scheme that double cropping is possible and that the use of modern techniques of farming, is not damaging to the farm as is commonly believed. Moreover, the use of youngsters from the villages as workers in the station is an effective method of extension in itself. The youngsters, being employed at the scheme are made to practise the new farming techniques and the use of fertilisers and insecticides. It is hoped that they will be convinced that the methods employed at the station are superior and more economical than these traditional practices employed by their parents. It is also hoped that they will put into practice, what they have learned at the station, on their families' plots.

2.3 METHODOLOGY

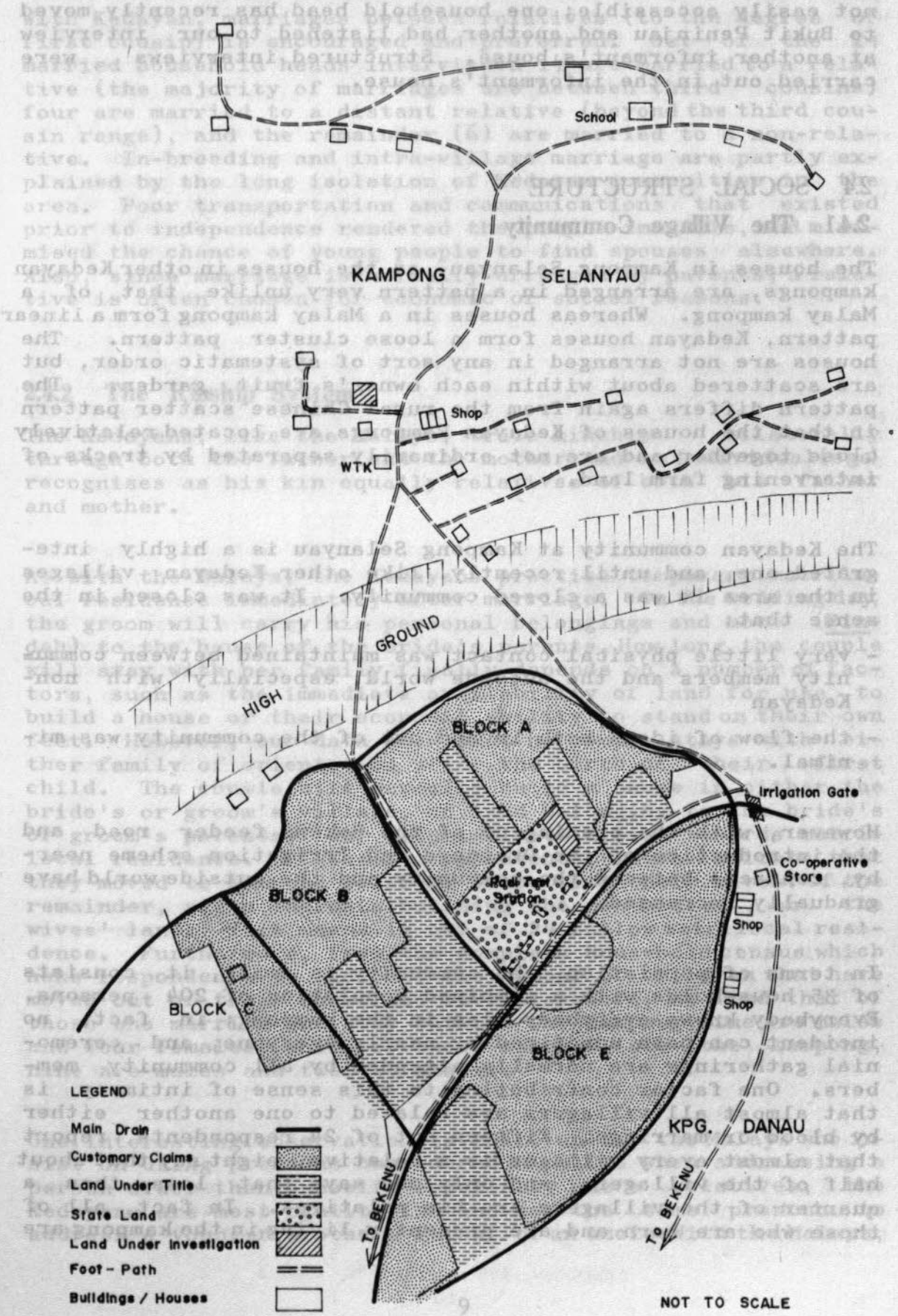
The present study was conducted during the months of November and December, 1972. This is the time when the farmers are finished with the major work in the padi field, and not being so heavily occupied are available for interviewing. Both structured and unstructured interviewing techniques were used to gather information. The latter technique was used with community leaders, not only of Kampong Selanyau, but also of the other Kedayan villages in the Sibuti area. Structured interviews were carried out with the heads of individual households.

The information was gathered in two stages: the first stage was a complete household census. This was conducted by an enumerator engaged from the village. The second stage was a series of structured interviews with the heads of individual households. This was conducted by the author with the aid of a school teacher from the kampong.

Census data were gathered for all households; but for the structured interview, only 24 out of the 35 household heads in the community were interviewed. The intention was to interview every household head, but it was found that seven

FIGURE 2.1

SKETCH MAP OF KAMPONG SELANYAU and the DRAINAGE SCHEME



were over 70 years old; the villagers said it would be useless to interview them as they can neither speak nor listen properly. Of the remainder not interviewed: two houses are not easily accessible; one household head has recently moved to Bukit Peninjau and another had listened to our interview at another informant's house. Structured interviews were carried out in the informant's house.

2.4 SOCIAL STRUCTURE

2.4.1 The Village Community

The houses in Kampong Selanyau, as the houses in other Kedayan kampongs, are arranged in a pattern very unlike that of a Malay kampong. Whereas houses in a Malay kampong form a linear pattern, Kedayan houses form a loose cluster pattern. The houses are not arranged in any sort of systematic order, but are scattered about within each owner's fruit garden. The pattern differs again from the rural Chinese scatter pattern in that the houses of Kedayan kampongs are located relatively close together and are not ordinarily separated by tracks of intervening farm land.

The Kedayan community at Kampong Selanyau is a highly integrated one, and until recently, like other Kedayan villages in the area it was a closed community. It was closed in the sense that:

- very little physical contact was maintained between community members and the outside world, especially with non-Kedayan
- the flow of ideas both in and out of the community was minimal.

However, with the opening up of the Bekenu feeder road and the introduction of the Drainage and Irrigation scheme nearby, contacts between the community and the outside world have gradually increased.

In terms of population, the community is small, it consists of 35 households with a combined population of 204 persons. Everybody knows everybody else in the kampong; in fact, no incident can pass unnoticed by nearly everyone, and ceremonial gatherings are normally attended by all community members. One factor contributing to this sense of intimacy is that almost all villagers are related to one another either by blood or marriage. Fifteen out of 24 respondents report that almost every villager is a relative, eight say that about half of the villagers, and only one says that less than a quarter of the villagers are his relatives. In fact, all of those who are born and are presently living in the kampong are

descended from six old men (still living) who in turn are related to each other either by blood or marriage.

With Kedayan, marriages between relatives (to the degree of first cousin) is encouraged and preferred. Out of the 24 married household heads interviewed 14 are married to a relative (the majority of marriages are between third cousins) four are married to a distant relative (beyond the third cousin range), and the remainder (6) are married to a non-relative. In-breeding and intra-village marriage are partly explained by the long isolation of Kedayan communities in the area. Poor transportation and communications that existed prior to independence rendered the people immobile, and minimised the chance of young people to find spouses elsewhere. Also, since marriage is normally arranged by parents, a relative is often chosen for economic or social reasons.

2.4.2 The Kinship System

The Kedayans, like the Malays, trace kinship bilaterally through both the father and the mother and an individual (ego) recognises as his kin equally relatives of both his father and mother.

As with the Malays, the Kedayans practise temporary matrilocal residence immediately after marriage. On the wedding day, the groom will carry his personal belongings and move (Pindah) to the house of the bride's parents. How long the couple will stay with her family finally depends on a number of factors, such as the immediate availability of land for use to build a house or their economic ability to stand on their own feet. However, our data show that no couple stays with either family of orientation after the birth of their first child. The couple will normally build a house in either the bride's or groom's village, on land belonging to the bride's or groom's parents. Our data indicate a bias towards matrilocal residence. Of the 24 respondents, seven indicate that they moved to Kampong Selanyau to be with their wives. Of the remainder, seven indicate building the new houses on the wives' land. This means 14 out of 24 follow matrilocal residence. Furthermore, from the complete household census which asks respondents to indicate the number of children that have moved out of their house and live elsewhere, we find that of those who married and stay outside the kampong, nine are males and four females, while of those married into the kampong, nine are males and twelve females.

One interesting observation is that, unlike the Malays who insist on using pronouns considered as polite when addressing a person older than oneself, especially one's relatives, the Kedayans are most egalitarian and use the same pronoun to address a younger brother, father or an uncle. With the Malays,

it is considered impolite and an act of disrespect for an individual to use the pronoun kau when addressing one's father or anyone older than oneself, and the pronoun kita must be used. But with the Kedayans, the pronoun kau is universally used. Similarly, other polite terms, for example Pa chik (uncle) and abang (older brother) are not used by the Kedayans and a non-relative is normally addressed by his personal name regardless of his age.

Another observation is that inequality between the sexes does not exist to the same extent as it does in a Malay household. In the course of conducting interviews, we noticed that wives and children (including unmarried daughters) gathered around us and the wives at times gave the answers. In most Malay houses, the children, especially the daughters, are discouraged from listening to adult conversation; it is considered as improper behaviour especially for the daughters(who are supposed to stay away in the kitchen or rooms) to listen to adults when they talk. A partial explanation of this is that females in a Kedayan farming community work as hard as males in the padi fields, and that they are equally entitled to own land. Role differentiation along sexual lines is not as significant as in a Malay community.

2.4.3 Household Structure

There were 35 houses in Kampong Selanyau at the time of the study. Each house contains a separate household.Every household consists of a single nuclear family, or a modified form of it, reduced by marriages or expanded by the inclusion of a divorced or widowed daughter and her offspring. Four cases of divorced daughters and one case of a widow with their offspring living with their families of orientation are found to exist in Kampong Selanyau (see Table 2.1).

TABLE 2.1 HOUSEHOLD TYPES

Types of households	Frequencies of occurrence
Nuclear family	22
Expanded nuclear family	5
Reduced nuclear family(1)	8

Note (1) This consists of old people either alone or as couples living separately from their married children.

The family of orientation starts to break up as each daughter or son marries and builds his/her own house. The process of breaking up continues until every child is married, and ends

with the aged parents left by themselves. As long as the child is not married he/she continues to stay with h s/her parents. There are eight cases of such families in Table 2.1 referred to as reduced nuclear families. In all cases the original head of household is over 70 years old. The eight reduced families are as follows:-

a) a man (in the 40 to 50 age group) living with both his aged parents;

b) an unmarried daughter (in her thirties) living with her father;

c) a divorced daughter (with her offspring) living with her parents; and

d) two couples and three single men (referred to as reduced nuclear families in Table 2.1) who live by themselves in houses separate from their married children

The pattern is that the old parents have small houses (built by their children) close to the houses of one or several of their married children. The children collectively maintain them by supplying them with rice and other essential commodities; otherwise the old people are independent. Informants say they choose to live by themselves.

The total population of Kampong Selanyau is 204. This gives an average household size of 5.8 persons, with modes of five and eight, and a range of one to ten (see Figure 2.2 for frequency distribution of household size). Average household size is higher than the overall average for the Sibuti sub-District which is 5.1 (Census 1970).

FIGURE 2.2

HOUSEHOLD SIZE (FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION)

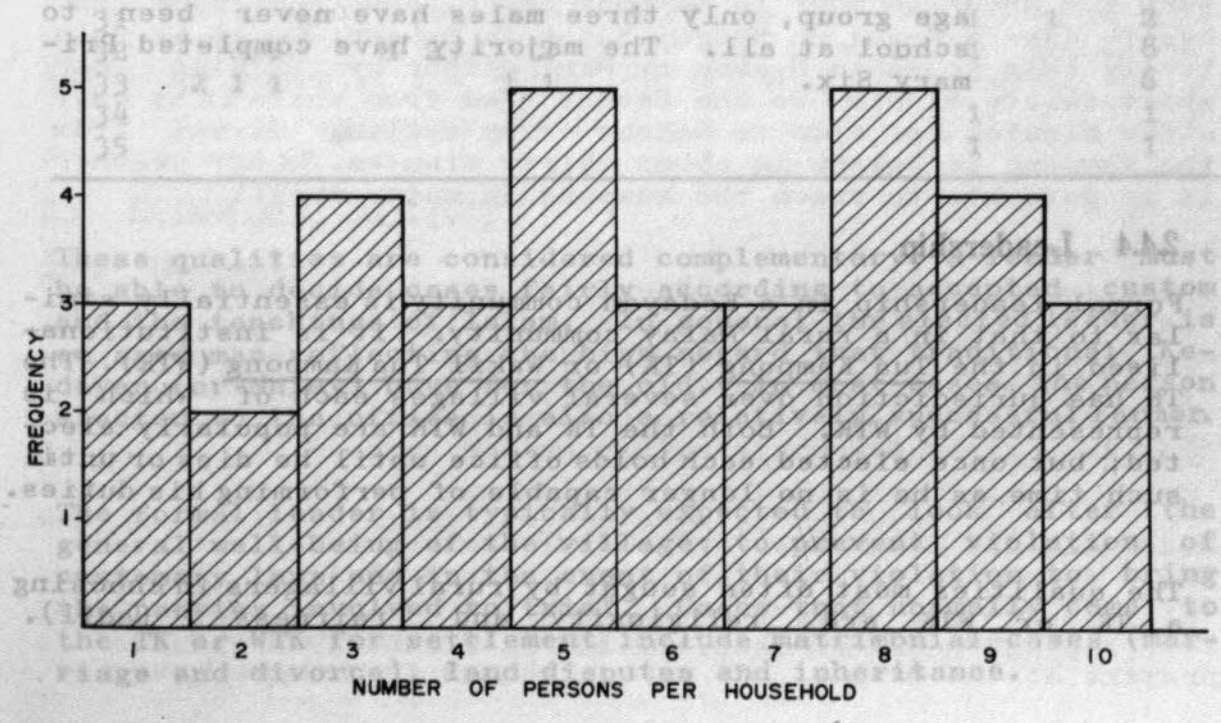


TABLE 2.2 AGE STRUCTURE OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS AND THEIR WIVES

Age group	Household heads(1)	Wives	Dependents(2)		Total	Per cent of total population
			Male	Female		
18 - 29	6	7	12	15	40	19.6
30 - 39	5	8	-	3	16	7.8
40 - 49	7	7	1	-	15	7.3
50 - 59	8	5	-	1	14	6.8
Over 60	9	3	-	-	12	5.8
Total	35	30	13	19	97	47.3

Note (1) The youngest household head is 22 years old;
(2) Dependents refers to others in the house excluding the wives. They are mainly unmarried children.

TABLE 2.3 CHILDREN BY SEX, AGE GROUP AND EDUCATION STATUS

Age group	In school		Not in school		Total	Per cent of total population
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
0 - 5	-	-	22	18	40	19.6
6 - 12	12	11	8	4	35	17.1
13 - 17	5(1)	4(1)	13(2)	10(2)	32	15.6
Total	17	15	43	32	107	52.3

Note (1) All the nine children in 13 to 17 age group classified under the "In school" column are in secondary school;
(2) Of the 23 children not in school in the 13 to 17 age group, only three males have never been to school at all. The majority have completed Primary Six.

2.4.4 Leadership

Formal leadership in a Kedayan community is essentially similar to that in a rural Malay community. It is institutionalised in the Tua Kampong (TK) or Wakil Tua Kampong (WTK). The TK has jurisdiction over several villages each of which is represented by WTK. Both the TK and WTK are popularly elected; but once elected each holds office until he dies or until such time as he is no longer capable of performing his duties.

The qualities most often sought by rural villagers in choosing a TK or WTK are religiosity and fairness (adil).

TABLE 2.4 HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION BY SEX AND AGE GROUP

House No.	0-5		6-12		13-17		18-29		30-39		40-49		50-59		Over 60		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1											1				1	1	3
2															1		1
3	1	1					1	1									4
4					1			1							1	1	4
5		1	1	2		1	1			1	1						8
6			1			1	1	1					1				5
7				1	1	1	2	2				1	1				9
8	1	2	1		2			1	1								8
9					1								1	1			3
10	1						1	1									3
11	1	1	1	1				1	1								6
12		1				1				1					1	1	5
13	2	1	1	1			1	1									7
14		1						2					1	1			5
15	2		2		3				1		1						9
16	1			2		2			1	1							7
17	2				2	1	3	1				1					10
18		1	2	1		1				1	1						7
19						1		1				1	1				4
20		1	2		2		2				1	1					9
21	1	2	2	1	2				1	1							10
22	2		2		2			1		1	1	1					10
23	1	1	1				1	1									5
24	2	1		2		1				1	1						8
25	1		1		2						1	1					6
26					2		2	2					1	1			8
27								1				1	1				3
28	1	2	1	1	1	1			1	1							9
29			1				1	1				1	1				5
30									1						1		2
31															1	1	2
32			1		1	2		2						1	1		8
33	2	1	1				1	1									6
34															1		1
35															1		1

These qualities are considered complementary; a leader must be able to decide cases fairly according to accepted custom and the teachings of Islam. In general the elected leader is an aged man reflecting the high regard that traditional Kedayan (or Malay) have for the old. In most cases, the person elected to the office is also a relatively successful farmer.

The formal leader is typically expected to look after the general well-being of the village; to prevent violation of customary laws and in the event of their violation to bring the parties involved to trial. Cases that normally come to the TK or WTK for settlement include matrimonial cases (marriage and divorce), land disputes and inheritance.

Kampong Selanyau has a Wakil Tua Kampong. The office is held by an elderly man who is somewhat pious and comparatively successful in farming. He has a likeable personality, he speaks softly and is willing to listen to others, and he is well liked and respected by the villagers. He occasionally leads the villagers in prayer in the surau, and is the leading shareholder in the village shop. The WTK is an influencial figure in the village, and likely to be a good leader for extension purposes.

With the establishment of the scheme, a new position of leadership was introduced by the DID. This is the office of the Ketua Sawah who heads a four-men committee in an irrigation block.

The Ketua Sawah task is to liaise between the participants and the authority on matters pertaining to the operation of the scheme. He is expected to inform and discuss with the members of his block any instructions received from the DID and Agriculture Department as well as to bring to the attention of the local staff requests or complaints from the participants. Specifically, it is the task of the Ketua Sawah to see that farmers construct bunds where necessary and clear the drains within their padi lots, and in fact, he is there to see that everything within the block goes on well.

2.4.5 Contacts and Mobility

With the opening of the Bekenu feeder road, members of Kampong Selanyau enjoy an improved transport system. Before the existence of the road, the villagers had to trek over a jungle footpath for about an hour to Kampong Satap, and from there, they had to take a canoe on Sungai Satap to Bekenu. Now it is relatively easy to reach Bekenu or Miri either by walking for about thirty minutes to the feeder road from where it is only a few minutes car ride to Bekenu or by cycling direct from the kampong to Bekenu in about thirty minutes. In dry weather it is possible to reach the kampong on motor cycle.

These improvements have obviously increased the frequency of visits by the villagers to towns, especially Bekenu. For the majority of villagers visits to Bekenu are a weekly affair - eight respondents indicated they visit Bekenu once a week, nine say they go there more than once a week, while only seven say that they visit Bekenu less than once a week.

Bekenu is the commercial and social centre for the entire Kedayan community in the Sibuti area. Every Friday, Kedayans (of both sexes, young and old) from the various villages travel to Bekenu. Originally, this was to perform their Friday prayers at the mosque; but now, although the original purpose

is still retained by the elder generation, the Friday visit to Bekenu is more of a social visit. People converge there from every village to meet friends and relatives, as well as to do some shopping and selling. Favourite meeting places are coffee shops; where groups of friends will sit in one coffee shop after another for hours over cups of coffee. Film shows are shown in the cinema on Fridays.

Visits to Miri are not frequent. Except for the WTK, who goes to Miri once a month, the rest indicate they visit Miri only a few times a year. Because of the limited availability of cash, visits to Miri are not made except for special purposes. Many informants say they went to Miri to accompany their pregnant wives to the maternity clinic for examination.

Apart from these two towns, visits to other towns are seldom, if ever made. Only two respondents indicated they ever visit Batu Niah; the trips were made to visit children attending secondary school there. Nine respondents, mainly the old people, indicate they had been to Brunei, but only once or twice since they moved to Sibuti. Since the opening of the roads, relatives from Brunei visit Selanyau quite frequently. Every respondent who has relatives in Brunei (all except one respondent) has visitors from Brunei almost every year. They come during festive occasions and the fruit season.

Generally the Kedayans are relatively immobile. Visits to relatives in neighbouring villages (all of them have relatives in nearby villages) are seldom made except on festive occasions. Their immobility is partly explained by their long state of isolation (because of poor transport) and the closed nature of their community. Their immobility mainly explains the high concentration of Kedayans in the Sibuti area and the Fifth Division and their non-existence in other parts of Sarawak. With the opening of roads and more youths going to secondary schools, the situation is changing rapidly.

2.5 ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

2.5.1 Occupation

The Kedayans are traditionally farmers and not many have left their traditional occupation. In Kampong Selanyau, only two households heads report working full time in non-agricultural occupations; one as the gate-keeper with DID, and the other as mandor at the padi test station. Another two report working part-time at the agricultural station; the length of time depends on the availability of work at the station.

In addition, a number of youngsters (6 males and 12 females) are working as labourers at the station. They work seasonally

and are paid $4.00 a day. Also two youths reportedly work at Bukit Peninjau Oil Palm scheme. It must be noted that these young workers help on the family farms when they are not working at the station.

2.5.2 Padi Cultivation

Apart from those mentioned above, all other household heads are farmers who rely mainly on padi cultivation both for cash and food. The Kedayans traditionally practised shifting cultivation, but their movements never extended as widely as the Ibans. Today they grow both swamp and hill padi; the latter is normally grown on a smaller scale and serves mainly as a security measure in the event that floods destroy th ir swamp padi.

With the introduction of the drainage scheme, shifting cultivation is no longer practised by the villagers of Kampong Selanyau and they now work the same plots of irrigated land year after year. However, not much change in farming methods has occurred, and traditional methods with the help of elementary tools, are still in use. Fertiliser is not used, because informants say the soil is fertile enough without their use; experiments at the padi station tend to verify this view. The starting of the padi cultivation season is still decided by the sighting of stars. Weedicides, however, have taken the place of traditional methods of hand weeding. The Agriculture Department donates to every ten participants a sprayer for spraying the padi fields with weedicides.

(a) Acreage planted

All but two of the 24 farmers interviewed are growing padi on the scheme in Blocks A and B. The other two grow padi in Block C, an area which has not yet been reached by water, as the drainage system in that part of the scheme is under construction. Nobody reports growing padi outside the scheme area.

A total of 84 acres of scheme land is currently planted with padi. Each family uses between 2 to 6 acres, with a mode of 4 and an average of 3.5 acres. Twenty-two out of 24 respondents own plots of land within the scheme; the size of plots owned range from 2 to 11 acres with a mode of 2. Total acreage owned is 102 (this includes 11 acres in Block C) and irrigated scheme land is therefore in surplus.

Land within the scheme is sub-divided in two acres plots. The arrangement is that a household in which the working force

consists of only the husband and wife is restricted to the use of only two acres of land, and any extra acreage must be rented out to others. Several informants say they are using land belonging to other villagers. It was agreed between the villagers that rent for the use of scheme land is to be fixed at $5 per acre per year. However no one indicates actually paying land rent, and it is a common practice among Kedayans to allow close relatives or friends to use surplus land for growing padi without compensation.

(b) Padi Production

Informants are pleased to say that since the introduction of the scheme, padi yields from single cropping have greatly increased. They report obtaining from 500 to 800 gantangs of padi per acre. This is significantly higher than other farmers obtain from working sawah land off the scheme. According to the crop cutting survey conducted by the Statistics Department for 1969-70, more than 80 per cent of the farms surveyed in the Miri District have yields of between 200 to 500 gantangs per acre.

Padi is first and foremost for home consumption. Every household knows roughly how must padi it requires for annual consumption and any surplus will be sold. Many informants estimate about half of the total production is for consumption. It is an uncommon practice for a Kedayan to sell any padi if his total production is insufficient for the year's consumption. In the village studied, only one farmer reports a shortage of padi for his own family's consumption. According to other farmers, this particular farmer is lazy and does not mix with other villagers and there are indications that he sells part of his padi.

According to local Islamic practice, every family with surplus padi has to set aside roughly 10 per cent of the surplus for zakat or tithe for the needy. This is paid to the officials of the Mosque and/or surau, old people and other needy villagers.

Padi is sold through local agents to a Chinese dealer in Bekenu. There are two agents to serve the people of Kampong Selanyau. One is the Selanyau village shop owned by 14 village shareholders. It is a retail shop selling groceries to members of the kampong. The shareholders take turns in manning the shop in the evenings and all work is done voluntarily with a minimum of record keeping. The shop, in addition, operates a small storehouse at the end of a lorry track that passes neighbouring Kampong Danau. Members transport their padi to this storehouse where it is weighed and stored until the Chinese dealer from Bekenu arrives with his lorry to take delivery. Everyone selling padi is paid by the shop immediately. The village shop acts as a middleman mainly for the convenience of the dealer and the members, and receives a commission of $1.50 per picul from the dealer for the service.

The other agent is a privately owned shop(Asbar's shop) which is also situated near the end of the lorry track in Kampong Danau. The shop buys padi from the villagers and stores it until the Chinese dealer from Bekenu comes to fetch it. The price given by the two shops is identical.

The villages at Kampong Selanyau sell their padi a little at a time whenever the need for cash arises. What partly stops them from selling their padi in large quantities is the problem of transport. They must either carry the bags of padi on their back or push them on a bicycle, (only 10 villagers own bicycles), from their padi huts to the store-houses at the end of the lorry track. Furthermore, the price of padi fluctuates from month to month, and ranges from a low of $17.50 per picul after harvest to the present price (December 1972) of $21.00 per picul. There is indication that most of the padi is sold towards harvesting time.

Padi for home consumption is milled at the Kampong S tap Co-operative Mill. The cooperative deducts five katis of padi from every picul that is milled and retains the bran. Padi is milled a little at a time and is transported to Asbar's shop (the owner is a shareholder of the Cooperative Mill) where transport is arranged to the mill.

TABLE 2.5 APPROXIMATE PADI PRODUCTION

Gantangs	No. of families receiving this amount
500 - 1 000	10
1 001 - 1 500	5
1 501 - 2 000	4
2 001 - 2 500	1
2 501 - 3 000	1
Over 3 000	3

Note: There is an apparent slight under-reporting of padi production.

Of those receiving between 500 to 1 000 gantangs, only one reports receiving about 600 gantangs; this is a young person who spends about eight months working with the Padi Test Station. The rest report receiving about 900 to 1 000 gantangs. The majority in this group are young men who cultivate about two acres only. They lack an adequate labour force and, moreover, their wives are generally too busy looking after small children to be able to spend much time in the fields.

(c) Labour

Padi growing is an entire family affair; all members of the family except for young children, are involved in one way or

another for about seven to eight months of the year. With only a few exceptions, there is no strict division of labour along sexual lines and males and females do almost the same tasks. Off the scheme, most of the initial clearing of temuda land for hill padi cultivation was traditionally the man's work; but on scheme land, where very little heavy clearing is required, both men and women participate in the work of preparing fields for planting. Other heavy work, like transporting household padi from the fields to the individual store-houses, and later from the store-house to the buying agent is entirely men's work. Apart from this exception and certain ritual performances before clearing and planting, other work in the padi fields is mainly the women's task and men help only occasionally, and are generally free to do other work.

To a Kedayan family, a daughter is as valuable as a son in so far as working in the fields is concerned. In the 24 households surveyed, it was found that 30 members of the village adult work force are males and 37 females. This gives an average labour force size of roughly three persons per household. Every household has at least two adult workers, the husband and the wife, while grown children (above 13 years old and not schooling) are additional. No hired labour is used.

The practice of helping one another during the padi season, known locally as bedurok, is common. However, in the village studied not all households engaged in the practice; only 13 out of 24 respondents indicate they engaged in the mutual exchange of labour during the current agricultural season. Arrangement for such exchange is normally made between farmers whose farms are adjoining or close to each other.

2.5.3 Pepper

Pepper is the second most important crop grown by the villagers. Out of the 24 persons interviewed only three report not growing pepper at the moment; all of these, however, indicate an intention to start planting pepper very soon. Table 2.6 gives the estimated number of vines (as reported by respondents) planted by the farmers of Kampong Selanyau.

TABLE 2.6 ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEPPER VINES PLANTED

Number of vines	Incidence
Less than 100	6
100 - 199	10
200 - 299	2
300 - 399	1
400 - 499	1
500 - 599	1
Total	21

It can be seen that the majority are growing pepper on a small scale - with 50 to 200 vines. Seven report that they just started to grow pepper this year. To the Kedayan at Kampong Selanyau, pepper growing takes secondary importance to padi cultivation as an economic activity. Work on the pepper garden is normally done only after the major work in the padi fields has been completed. However, if anything urgent has to be done in the pepper garden such as when the berries ripen during padi planting time, the farmer willhave to divide his time and/or labour between planting padi and harvesting the berries. Normally, during major work in the padi fields, work in the pepper gardens is almost completely avoided since the same work force is involved.

Pepper is a subsidiary cash crop. Thirteen respondents report they sold some pepper this year (1972).

TABLE 2.7 ESTIMATED QUANTITY OF PEPPER(1) SOLD

Quantity	Incidence
picul	
2	2
3	5
4	2
5	2
6	1
8	1

Note (1) This is white pepper.

Pepper is sold directly to two Chinese dealers in Bekenu, Ban Seng and Moi Heng (the former is also the dealer to whom the villagers send their padi). According to members of the village, the current price is $140 per picul.It is only in their pepper gardens that the farmers use artifical fertiliser.

2.5.4 Rubber and Other Cash Crops

Eighteen out of the 24 respondents report owning rubber gardens which were planted in 1958 under the government rubber planting scheme. The average acreage owned is 4.3 acres with a mode of five acres. All, except one, are not tapping the trees and the majority have not tapped for at least three years. Respondents say that they would tap if the price rose to about 50 to 60 cents per kati.

Kampong Selanyau is rich in fruit trees. The houses are, in fact, surrounded with coconut trees and other local fruit. In

walking around the kampong one can see coconuts lying on the ground almost everywhere, many germinating. According to informants, coconuts are never sold mainly because of the transport problem and the low price of coconuts in the area. It is not worth the effort to carry say ten coconuts, from the kampong to a point which is accessible by car when the price of a coconut is only about 10 to 15 cents each. Any traveller to the kampong will soon appreciate their reasoning. Similarly local fruits, like durian (a small variety), rambutan, langsat, terap etc. are plentiful, but difficult to market. Except for langsat and some durian (which fetch better prices), most of the other fruits are not sold and many are left to rot. To sell the fruits the villagers would have to carry them to Asbar's shop where the Chinese traders would come and purchase them. Ten respondents indicate that they sold some fruits in 1971. Except for three respondents, seven of them obtained less than $100 from selling fruits. The three respondents who say they own about 100 trees of langsat each report obtaining about $200 to $300 from selling fruits.

Apart from the crops discussed above, no other crops of economic significance are grown. Vegetables are planted around the edge of the padi fields, but are grown only for home consumption. Eighteen respondents indicate that they have to occasionally buy vegetables from Bekenu, and only one indicates that he sold some vegetables in the previous month. He obtained $15 for their sale. A great quantity of the vegetables that are required for food are obtained in the form of wild leaves and shoots from the bush nearby. Padi fields are left empty after harvest. Respondents say that they do not plant any crops in the padi fields, because they are too soft and wet.

Except for chicken, no other form of livestock is kept by the villagers. Twenty respondents indicate they keep chicken varying in number from five to twenty. Chickens are kept for home consumption, to supplement the diet, and are especially important on festive occasions. Nobody in the village owns a fish pond; fish for food are mostly obtained from small streams and drains. Fish are also bought in Bekenu but only infrequently. Meat is a luxury and is very seldom found in the diet of the villagers. No villager reported going hunting mainly because prey is scarce and difficult to find, and very few villagers own guns since most of their guns were confiscated by the Government after the 1963 rebellion.

2.5.5 Expenditure

Many indigenous farming communities in Sarawak have only recently entered the cash economy. Many still subsist with the minimum use of cash and live mainly on their own produce and

that provided by their immediate surroundings. The Kedayans of Kampong Selanyau are no exception and very small amounts of cash are used by the villagers. Table 2.8 gives a rough estimate of the monthly household expenditures of the villagers of Kampong Selanyau.

TABLE 2.8 MONTHLY EXPENDITURE

Amount in dollars	Incidence
20 - 39	6
40 - 59	9
60 - 79	7
80 - 100	2

It can be seen that the great majority of families spend less than $70 per month. The two who indicate spending about $100 a month are full-time wage earners and the amount includes the cost of buying all essential household commodities, food items, kerosine oil and cigarettes, but exclude expenses for clothing which are rarely purchased. Also excluded here is the cost of purchasing fertilisers for pepper. Fifteen respondents indicate that they buy fertiliser; the value ranges from $20 to $100 per year.

2.6 LAND TENURE

As with the other Sarawak people rights of use to a piece of land were vested in the person (male or female who first cleared the land of virgin forest. In the past, bamboo or fruit trees were often planted on newly felled land or around its edge to indicate that it was occupied land (temuda). Rights of use pass upon the death of the original feller to his children or other kin. Except for cemetary reserved land, the community as a whole does not own any land.

In a Kedayan community, customary rights of use coincide to a large extent with rights of disposal; in practice, he who holds the rights of use has also the right to dispose of the land or transfer rights to its use to any of his children or other kin. The community as a whole, as represented by its headman, can only advise and put social pressure on a land owner to present him from carrying out undersirable land transactions with someone from outside the community, but it has no authority to prevent the owner from disposing of the land as he chooses.

Rights to dispose of any piece of land during the life time of its owner is the owner's prerogative with a minimum of interference from the community. Normally, an owner who owns a

large acreage of land would, before he dies, pass his rights to certain plots to his children in almost equal shares regardless of their age and sex. Such transfers are done orally with the knowledge of all the children and are later communicated to the village leader to safeguard against future disputes.

However, upon the death of the owner (father), all of his land, in theory, passes initially to his wife who acts as the administrator of the land for the children. No formal land transaction takes place. She has no right to alienate any land at this stage without the consent of the children. On the death of both parents all the property they own, including land, is divided (in theory) equally between their children regardless of sex and age. Here Kedayan practise departs from the Islamic system for the division of property Islamic law dictates that upon the death of parents, property should be inherited by the children in the proportions of two for the males and one for the females. The Kedayans do not follow this practice because informants say it is not fair to do so, since in a farming community both males and females work the land.

Rights of disposal to the deceased's land may be temporarily transferred to the community. The TK and other members of the village committee may exercise these rights to ensure that rights in land (both of disposal and use) are passed to the heirs in accordance with the community's accepted practice. Normally community leaders only act to legitimise divisions of property among siblings, as the latter have, in most cases, agreed among themselves as to how the land should be divided. However, in cases of disagreement, community leaders may act to settle disputes within the boundary of the village. If a dispute cannot be settled by the community leaders, the issue is brought to the District Officer for settlement.

As far as possible, the estate is divided among the siblings so that each receives one or several complete undivided plots; Only if it is unavoidable, are plots divided. When the estate is too small to be divided among the heirs the following courses of action are possible:-

a) The plot may be jointly owned by the heirs, so that none can sell the land without the consent of the others. In the case of padi land, co-owners normally use the plot in turn. How long each sibling enjoys the right of use are agreed upon mutually. In the case of fruit orchards, all the owners and their children have the rights to enjoy the fruits of the orchard either for their own consumption or for sale. It is a preferred practice among the Kedayans that fruit orchards are not divided; but that all the children and their children after them should enjoy the fruits which their fathers and grandfathers planted.

b) One of the heirs may acquire absolute rights of use to the plot, after it has been agreed mutually that he compensate the others; compensation is merely a token in this case.

The Kedayan system of inheritence reserves an equal share of the estate to a child, no matter where he resides at the time of his parents' death. A child who has left his parent's village or has taken up a non-farming occupation is equally entitled to a share of his parents' property. Such a child is ordinarily summoned back to his village to participate in the division of the estate. Once land has been divided, an heir who does not plan to use it immediately, may delegate its use to any of his siblings or other relatives living in the village. Such an arrangement does not involve rent payment; nor does it involve a contract indicating the length of time that the user may enjoy the land. The arrangement is merely verbal and is based on personal trust between the parties concerned. Such a practice is common among the Kedayans and many surplus plots of padi land are lent out in this way to relatives and friends for temporary use.

A plot of land owned jointly by the father is no different from land individually owned in as far as its inheritence is concerned. Anyone of the surviving children is eligible to take the place of the father as a co-owner of the land.

The division of property following divorce is similar to that of the Malays. Each partner retains his/her property acquired before the marriage, and such property is never divided between the spouses when they separate. But property acquired jointly during their marriage (known as pencharian) is divided equally between them. In practice, its division upon divorce takes into consideration the number of children who accompany the mother or father, so that each child receives his/her fair share of the parent's property according to traditional practice.

Until recently the Kedayan community in Sarawak was a closed one. Land belonging to members of the community was strongly guarded from encroachment by members of other ethnic communities. Normally, land dealings were only carried out with members of the same community, although transactions may also cross village boundaries. Apart from inheritence two other types of land transactions may take place between members of a Kedayan community:-

a) The sale of land by one owner to another. The price for the land is usually nominal.

b) A farmer who owns excessive acreage may delegate rights of use to specific plots to his relatives/friends who are in need of land. The user is allowed to make use of the plots for as long as the actual owner has no need of it. In most cases, rent payment is not a condition to such transactions which are common with the Kedayan, especially in cases where a person owns land in a villages other than the one where he resides.

In Kedayan traditional land adat, a strong sense of community is evident. Members who have excessive plots of land are obliged to share or even to give a portion of what they have to others, especially relatives, who have none. Such a practice is advantageous to any development programme which involves the re-allocation or re-distribution of native customary rights land. As long as the project does not involve members of another ethnic group, and certain conditions can be arranged, attempts at re-division of land between members of the community will not be strongly resisted, as such action is in line with traditional practice. Paya Selanyau Padi scheme, where land was successfully re-distributed among the Kedayan participants without too much problem provides a good example of this practice.

2.7 DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION SCHEME

2.7.1 Effects

There are both immediate and long term effects. Immediately, the participants here realised a substantial increase in their padi yields. This increase is obtained by putting in less or at the most an equal amount of, effort than formerly. Though no one reports of a shortage of rice for consumption, even before the scheme, the increase is significant in as far as it provides a major source of cash.

The introduction of the scheme has lessened the effort that farmers need to put in on their padi fields. It is not necessary to clear virgin forest every three or four years. Clearing now involves only cutting grass on the sawah. Also, it is not necessary to move from one area to another and the introduction of the scheme has turned the villages into sedentary wet padi-growers. Moreover, it is not necessary to construct drains to supply or drain away water. In fact, the scheme eliminates the major problem caused by the lack or surplus of water in the padi field. Most important of all is that farmers have no longer to worry about floods destroying their padi fields as in the past. Weeding is now done with weedicides. The use of weedicides lessens the work considerably, and farmers, therefore, have free time to look after their pepper gardens.

There is evidence that the participants are slowly changing their methods of padi-growing. Though they still adhere to major traditional practices, beliefs and rituals in padi-growing, there are signs that these are changing slowly. With the lessening number of pests, especially wild boars and rats, in the padi fields and the elimination of the fear of floods, it is not necessary to observe certain taboos and rituals as strictly as before. Their observation according to informants, was originally thought necessary to keep away the enemies of padi (flood and pests).

The Padi Test Station is a demonstration plot; it also indirectly tries to inculcate and socialise the youths (who are employed there) to adopt modern methods of farming. The result of the work of the Test Plot as an extension agency will only become evident in time to come. There is evidence that farmers are willing to try double cropping of padi. Only two respondents give a definite negative answer to the question "are you willing to do double cropping?" One of them says he is too old, while the other says he prefers to grow pepper instead of doing double cropping. The majority (20 in all) indicate they are willing to do double cropping if a network of roads is constructed around the padi fields so as to enable them to transport the padi easily to be marketed. Two gave a specific "yes" answer.

2.7.2 Problems and Needs

The following are problems reported by the villagers (in order of importance):-

a) transporting of padi and other farm products. They request that a network of roads be constructed around the padi fields and possibly be extended into the village. With the increased output of padi, the farmers feel the impact of the non-availability of a proper road system, and they anticipate that the problem of transportation will be greater if double cropping is undertaken. Transportation problems also create unwillingness on the part of the farmers to market their fruits and coconuts;

b) water supply. The villagers report that they are often without drinking water during the dry season;

c) midwife. The Sibuti Sub-District does not have a trained midwife at the moment. Villagers say that this is a problem of great concern to all the married men. If the wife becomes pregnant, they have to go to Miri for examination, usually they have to go to Miri several times until delivery. This is a heavy financial burden in this semi-subsistence community. Moreover, cars are not readily available whenever an urgent need arises.

The villagers' desperate needs for a modern trained midwife to be stationed in Bekenu reflects their awareness that modern medicine is superior to their traditional medicine. There is a traditional midwife in the village, but she is rarely consulted, except when the pregnant woman is about to give birth and there is no time to bring her to Miri. This, like the other two needs discussed earlier, indicates a change of attitudes in the direction of modernity.

2.8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Change is taking place in Kampong Selanyau. Change in behaviour and attitudes is slow to occur but is under way. Rituals, prayers and other ceremonies are performed before and during the planting and harvesting seasons in order to hasten the growth of padi, and to ward off evil spirits from the fields, and to ensure good harvests. Such activities are practised because the farmers lack technological control over nature. Therefore, if they can be shown and convinced that modern technology can assume such control, there is every reason to believe that such traditional practices will be abandoned. The drainage and irrigation system introduced by the scheme has to an extent made the farmers aware that modern technologies can control nature better than their traditional practices. No longer do they have to worry about inadequate water supply or floods destroying their padi fields. This has obviously brought about changes as far as padi-growing is concerned. Changes in cropping patterns have occured and hill padi cultivation is no longer practised. A change in cropping pattern as far as the native people of Sarawak is concerned, will take place only side by side with structural change. The drainage and irrigation system has introduced a major structural change. Therefore, changes in agricultural techniques must be expected. The Padi Test Station, with its demonstration plot, is aiming at long term change, mainly in farmers' attitudes.

There is little doubt that any new project which aims to bring about changes in the agricultural practices and to improve income levels should best start in the padi fields. Farmers in this country (with the help of a proper extension service) will accept any kind of improvement scheme which aims to improve their padi yields, and there is sufficient evidence that interest in similar scheme has already spread to neighbouring Kedayan areas.

e) midwife. The Sibuti Sub-District does not have a trained midwife at the moment. Villagers say that this is a problem of great concern to all the married men. If the wife becomes pregnant, they have to go to Miri for examination, usually they have to go to Miri several times until delivery. This is a heavy financial burden in this semi-subsistence community. Moreover, cars are not readily available whenever an urgent need arises.

The villagers' desperate needs for a modern trained midwife to be stationed in Nokuma reflects their awareness that modern medicine is superior to their traditional medicine. There is a traditional midwife in the village, but she is rarely consulted, except when the pregnant woman is about to give birth and there is no time to bring her to Miri. This, like the other two needs discussed earlier, indicates a change of attitudes in the direction of modernity.

CHAPTER 3

FIELD REPORT NUMBER TWO

SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY OF THE RIAM ROAD CHINESE COMMUNITY

3.1 PURPOSE

The following report describes the socio-economic organisation of a Chinese farming settlement. Chinese farmers occupy a particularly important place in the rural economy of Sarawak;

a) their outlook and farming methods are generally more modern than those of other groups; and,

b) as a community, they are the principal suppliers of commercial export crops and produce grown for urban consumption.

In Sarawak, the Chinese very largely pioneered commercial cropping, most notably of rubber and pepper, and their example has had as great, if not a greater, impact on native groups than Government extension services. Moreover, as the principal intensive farming community in the State, the Chinese are important in their own right.

Chinese farmers are virtually all small-holders and farm operations are typically geared to market production. Our purpose here is to describe the composition and structure of family farm units, patterns of land use, ownership, and market and community relations in a single rural settlement.

3.1.1 Method

The investigation reported here was carried out between December, 1972 and mid-February, 1973.

During the early part of December, visits were paid to the main areas of Chinese farming settlement adjacent to Miri: Lopeng, Tukau, Loak, Bakam and Riam. Farmers were interviewed in each area and general information was collected on the basis of which a decision was made to conduct a detailed survey of the Riam Chinese community, as the largest and most varied settlement of this type in the Study Area.

As an initial step, a complete census was carried out of all households in Riam. On this basis 30 households were selected as proportionately representative of variation within the community in terms of dialect, household composition, income source and type of land use, and detailed interviews were carried out with the heads of each of the households selected. Comprehensiveness was sought and both agricultural and non-agricultural households were included in our sample.

In addition, shopkeepers and officers in six dialect assoications, in the Riam Cemetery Committee, the Miri Pig Breeders' Association and in the local primary and secondary school committees were interviewed. Mr. Bong Chin Miaw, Kapitan China and a District Councilman from Riam, gave constant advice and assistance throughout all stages of study, and the former Kapitan, Mr. Chia Gan, provided valuable background information on the history and early development of Riam.

Interviews were conducted with the assistance of Mr. Wong Tung Ming, a recent graduate of the Kolej Tun Dato Tuanku Hj. Bujang.

3.1.2 Background

According to the 1960 census, slightly more than half of the total Chinese working population in Sarawak was employed in primary industries (52.2 per cent) - very largely agriculture. There are no comparable figures available for 1970, nor is it possible to break the 1960 figures down by Division, but it is likely that the Study Area is representative in this regard, and that roughly half of its 34 543 Chinese residents depend in part, or wholly, on agriculture for their livelihood.

The largest single concentration of Chinese farm holdings in the Study Area is located in and around Miri town. Other concentrations are at Batu Niah, Bintulu, Sebauh and Puyut (the latter south of Marudi). Foochow predominate at Bintulu, Sebauh and Puyut, while Hakka, speaking mainly the Hoppu' dialect, form the principal rural group elsewhere.

3.1.3 Chinese Farming Settlements in the Vicinity of Miri

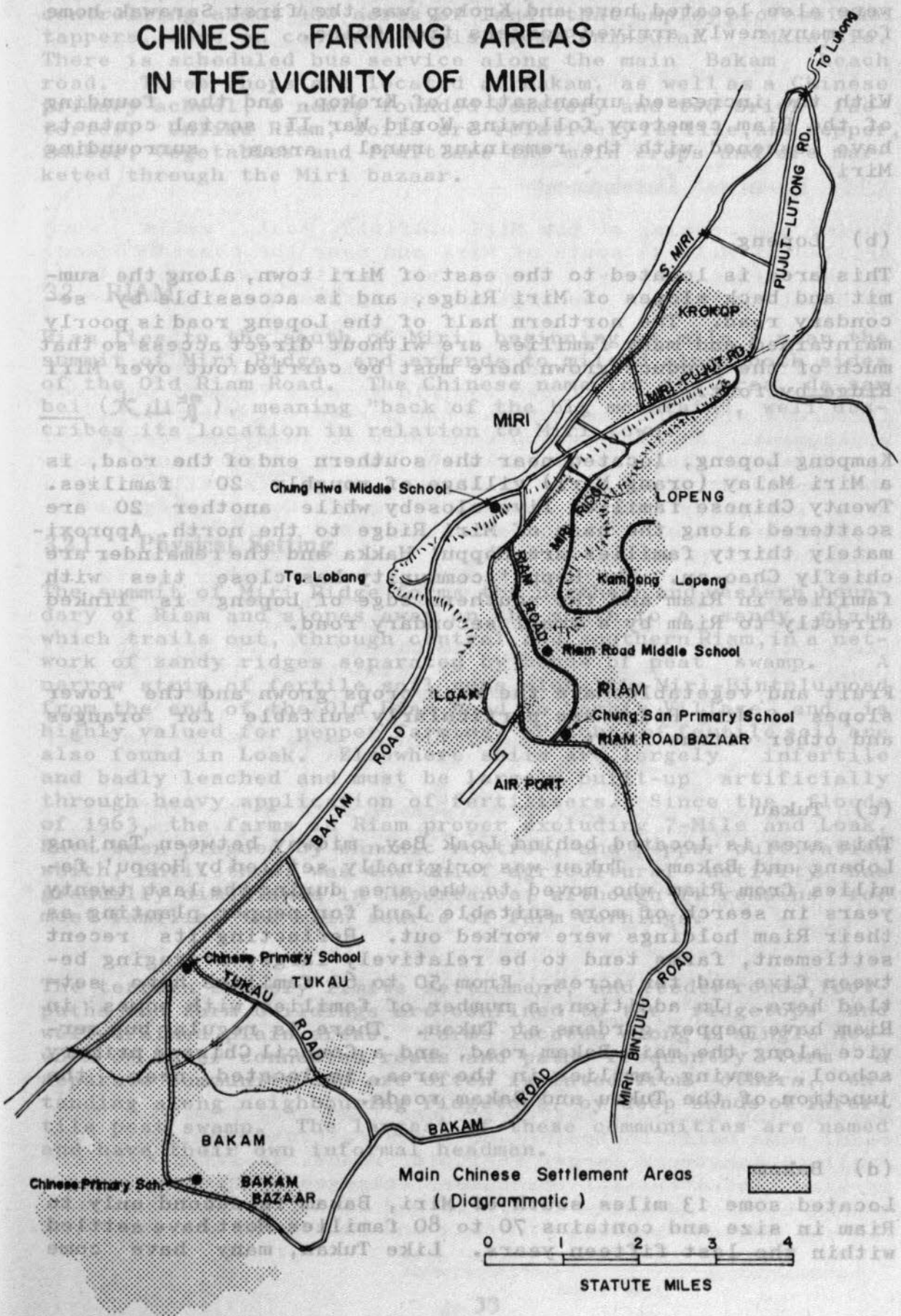
There are six main settlement areas bordering Miri: Riam, Tukau, Loak, Bakam, Lopeng and Krokop, shown in Figure 3.1. Lopeng and Krokop are located within the boundaries of Miri town. Loak is generally considered as part of Riam and is described, as such, in the main body of this report.

(a) Krokop

Located to the north of the Miri bazaar, this area is now heavily urbanised and most land is taken up by residential dwellings, workshops and other industrial and commercial establishments. Krokop was the earliest centre of local Chinese farming and remains linguistically the most diversified and distinct of these communities. Originally the area was settled

FIGURE 3.1

CHINESE FARMING AREAS IN THE VICINITY OF MIRI



mainly by Sinon and Leong Chun Hakka, who engaged chiefly in pig breeding and vegetable production, and was the site of the first Chinese cemetery and temple. Early Shell labour lines were also located here and Krokop was the first Sarawak home for many newly arrived workers from China.

With the increased urbanisation of Krokop, and the founding of the Riam cemetery following World War II, social contacts have lessened with the remaining rural areas surrounding Miri.

(b) Lopeng

This area is located to the east of Miri town, along the summit and back slopes of Miri Ridge, and is accessible by secondary road. The northern half of the Lopeng road is poorly maintained and many families are without direct access so that much of the produce grown here must be carried out over Miri Ridge by foot.

Kampong Lopeng, located near the southern end of the road, is a Miri Malay (orang Miri) village of roughly 20 families. Twenty Chinese families live closeby while another 20 are scattered along the base of Miri Ridge to the north. Approximately thirty families are Hoppu' Hakka and the remainder are chiefly Chao-an. The Hoppu' community has close ties with families in Riam and the southern edge of Lopeng is linked directly to Riam by a small secondary road.

Fruit and vegetables are the main crops grown and the lower slopes of Miri Ridge are particularly suitable for oranges and other citrus fruit.

(c) Tukau

This area is located behind Loak Bay, midway between Tanjong Lobang and Bakam. Tukau was originally settled by Hoppu' families from Riam who moved to the area during the last twenty years in search of more suitable land for pepper planting as their Riam holdings were worked out. Reflecting its recent settlement, farms tend to be relatively large, averaging between five and ten acres. From 50 to 60 families have settled here. In addition, a number of families with homes in Riam have pepper gardens at Tukau. There is regular bus service along the main Bakam road, and a Council Chinese primary school, serving families in the area, is located near the junction of the Tukau and Bakam roads.

(d) Bakam

Located some 13 miles south of Miri, Bakam is second only to Riam in size and contains 70 to 80 families. Most have settled within the last fifteen years. Like Tukau, many have come

from Riam, although there are also families from other parts of Sarawak, mainly the First Division. Land holdings are larger than at Riam; five to ten acres on the average. In addition, there are three privately-owned rubber estates, each controlling about 400 acres of land, that employ professional tappers, some on contract basis from Peninsular Malaysia. There is scheduled bus service along the main Bakam beach road. Three shops are located at Bakam, as well as a Chinese primary school, a newly founded cemetery and two brick factories. Unlike Riam, soils are relatively fertile, and pepper, rubber, vegetables and fruit are the main crops and are marketed through the Miri bazaar.

3.2 RIAM

Riam lies to the south of Miri, beginning at mile 2 near the summit of Miri Ridge, and extends to mile 8 along both sides of the Old Riam Road. The Chinese name for the area, da san bei (大山背), meaning "back of the big mountain", well describes its location in relation to Miri town.

3.2.1 Physical Setting

The summit of Miri Ridge forms the northern and western boundary of Riam and slopes away on the south to a sandy plain which trails out, through central and southern Riam, in a network of sandy ridges separated by bands of peat swamp. A narrow strip of fertile soil runs along the Miri-Bintulu road from the end of the Old Riam Road to Lambir Village and is highly valued for pepper farming. Patches of fertile soil are also found in Loak. Elsewhere soils are largely infertile and badly leached and must be largely built-up artificially through heavy application of fertilisers. Since the floods of 1963, the farms in Riam proper excluding 7-Mile and Loak, have been plagued by chronic rootrot, and pepper cultivation which, until then, was the chief agricultural activity has gradually diminished in importance, although it remains for most families the main source of farm earnings.

The terrain sharply limits settlement, and feeder roads, footpaths and farm buildings are confined to the ridgetops and well-drained plain areas. Farms located along a single network of inter-connected roads and paths frequently form a separate community and are often isolated from others, extending along neighbouring ridgetops, by deep bands of infertile peat swamp. The largest of these communities are named and have their own informal headman.

Running north to south they are: 3½-Miles (三哩半區), Fishpond Village (魚塘區), Waterpond Village (水塘區), Lusui Interior (魯述內山), Lusui Exterior (魯述外山), 5-Miles (五條石區) and 7-Miles (七條石區). A ninth community, Loak or Sechuan (四川), is located to the west of the Miri-Bintulu road close to the present Miri airport, as shown in Figure 3.2.

3.2.2 Historical Development

During the opening of the Miri oilfield, test wells were drilled at Mile 24 south of Miri and near the coast at Bakam. Neither drilling proved successful, but the access roads built by Shell opened the two regions for agricultural settlement.

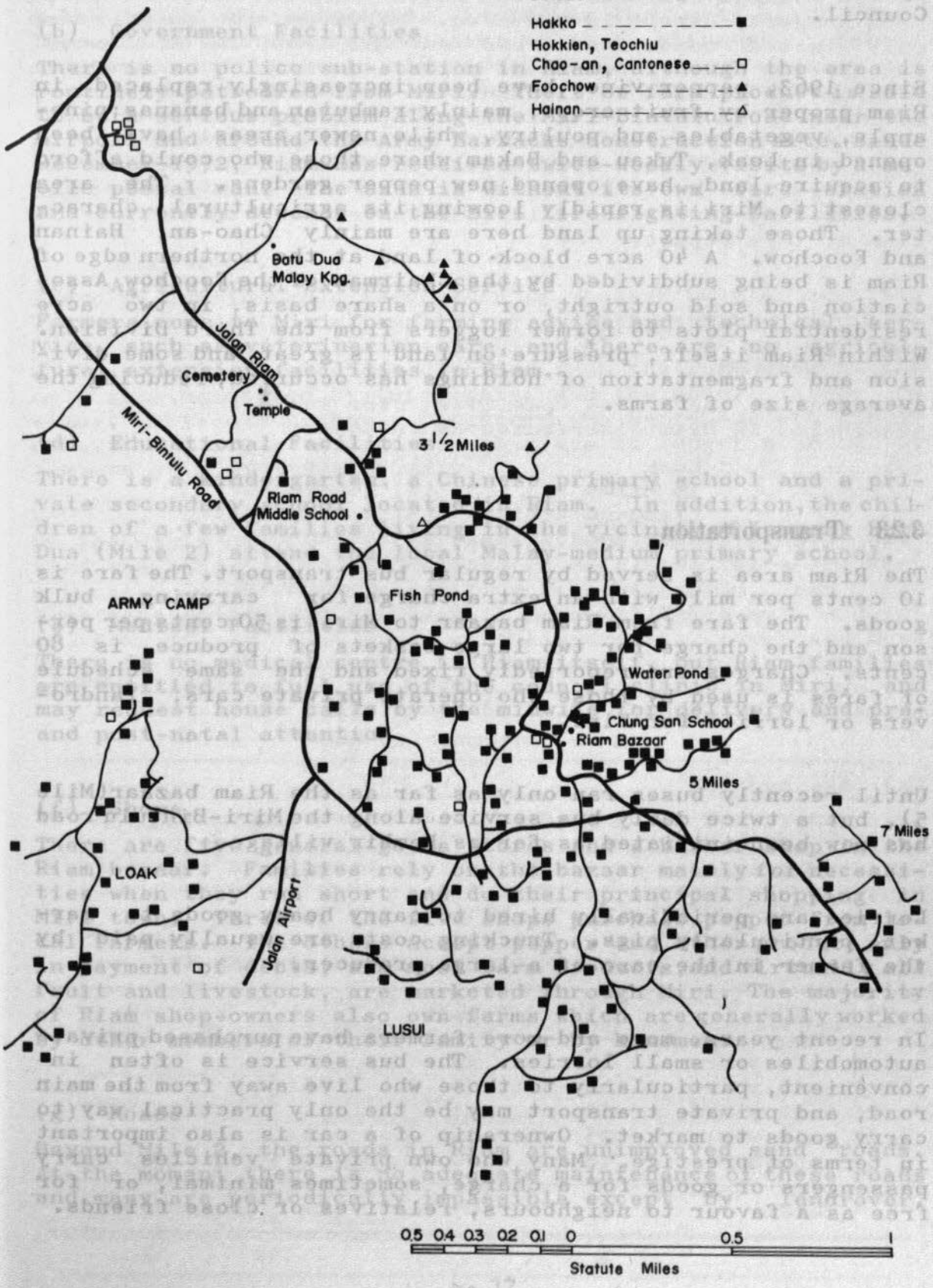
As land was released by Shell, settlers were allowed to take up claims and many of those who did so were former contract labourers with the company who had served out their term of employment. An early group consisted of labourers recruited by the agent Yong Kao to build the Lutong airport and road. The senior Mr. Yong, many of whose descendants still live in Miri, initially brought clansmen from his home village in the Hoppu district of Kwangtung Province, and the Yong surname continues to predominate in Riam. Additional Hoppu came to Miri to work for Shell, recruited by Yong or other agents, or arrived on their own from the First Division in search of jobs or land for farming. A number took up holdings in Riam and the settlement continued to grow throughout the British Colonial period. At the beginning of World War II, Riam was still sparsely populated and most existing farms were established in the two decades that followed. The last areas to be settled, mainly since Independence, were 7-Mile and Loak.

When Riam road was first constructed, much of the land between Mile 2 and Mile 5 was occupied without title by Malay farmers. The region was planted mainly in fruit trees. The Brooke Government reportedly relocated the Malays, paying compensation for their orchards, and allowed newcomers to settle, mainly on plots of five to six acres. Settlers were allowed to take up land in Riam proper anywhere they wished, provided only that theypaid to have their claim surveyed and registered. Pepper planting is said to have been encouraged and land-tax collection was deferred for three years until the settlers could realise their first harvest.

Many of the original settlers chose land away from the main road; some built footpaths while others rented equipment from Shell to construct larger vehicular roads. As later settlers arrived, these initial roads were enlarged, lengthened or extended by the addition of branch and feeder lanes. In this way the present network of roads and lanes came into existence.

FIGURE 3.2

LOCATION OF CHINESE SETTLER GROUPS IN THE RIAM AREA



Farmers living along a common roadway commonly shared the cost of its construction and worked together to keep the road in repair. As a result, a strong sense of community developed among neighbours whose farms are linked by a common roadway and to some degree this sense still persists. Communal road work remains a prevailent practice, even though responsibility for road maintenance is now shared with the local Miri Council.

Since 1963, pepper vines have been increasingly replaced in Riam proper by fruit crops, mainly rambutan and bananas; pineapple, vegetables and poultry, while newer areas have been opened in Loak, Tukau and Bakam where those who could afford to acquire land, have opened new pepper gardens. The area closest to Miri is rapidly loosing its agricultural character. Those taking up land here are mainly Chao-an, Hainan and Foochow. A 40 acre block of land at the northern edge of Riam is being subdivided by the Chairman of the Foochow Association and sold outright, or on a share basis, in two acre residential plots to former loggers from the Third Division. Within Riam itself, pressure on land is great, and some division and fragmentation of holdings has occurred, reducing the average size of farms.

3.23 Transportation

The Riam area is served by regular bus transport. The fare is 10 cents per mile with an extra charge for carrying bulk goods. The fare from Riam bazaar to Miri is 50 cents per person and the charge for two large baskets of produce is 80 cents. Charges are reportedly fixed and the same schedule of fares is used by those who operate private cars, landrovers or lorries for hire.

Until recently buses ran only as far as the Riam bazaar(Mile 5), but a twice daily bus service along the Miri-Bintulu road has now been initiated as far as Lambir village.

Lorries are periodically hired to carry heavy goods to market, particularly pigs. Trucking costs are usually paid by the farmer in the case of a large producer.

In recent years, more and more farmers have purchased private automobiles or small lorries. The bus service is often inconvenient, particularly to those who live away from the main road, and private transport may be the only practical way to carry goods to market. Ownership of a car is also important in terms of prestige. Many who own private vehicles carry passengers or goods for a charge, sometimes minimal, or for free as a favour to neighbours, relatives or close friends.

The most youthful age categories are under-represented in Riam in comparison with the Study Area as a whole, and the population is relatively mature by Sarawak standards, with nearly two-thirds age 15 years old or older.

Despite the maturity of the population, males outnumber females in all age categories, including the most youthful. There is no adequate explanation of this, although female adoption, which appears widespread in Chinese rural areas such as Riam, may be a factor. Also sons of farm families are often forced to postpone their marriage - and remain dependent members in their father's household - because of the reluctance of many parents to marry their daughters into farming families.

(b) Migration

There is considerable emigration of younger people from Riam. The households in our sample have lost an average of 1.6 members through emigration (see Table 3.2). It is probable that not all children who have departed from their parents' household were mentioned by informants, and the actual figure is almost certainly higher. Daughters who marry out are particularly difficult to trace as they are no longer counted as members of their natal family.

On the other hand, the older generation, who originally settled the land, is too entrenched to move, and there are very few cases in which whole families have left Riam. Some families have opened new holdings in Bakam or Tukau, but, in doing so, few, if any, have given up their original farm; and most go on living in Riam, even though they may do the bulk of their farming elsewhere.

TABLE 3.2 EMIGRATION FROM RIAM

Current place of residence	Males		Females	
	Number	Employment or reason for migration	Number	Employment or reason for migration
Miri urban	8	Mechanics, stone workers, sawmill and general labourers	7	Marriage (5), adoption and dressmaking student
Bakam	5	Farming	1	Teacher
Tukau	1	Farming	-	
Other Fourth Division	1	Teacher	1	Marriage
Kuching	2	Labourers	2	Marriage and dressmaking student
Kuala Lumpur	1	Student	-	
Brunei	5	Electricians, mechanics, machine operator, labourers	4	Marriage (3) and typist
Singapore	2	Labourers	-	
Hong Kong	1	Student	1	Marriage
China	1	Teacher	-	
Total	27		16	

Emigration is thus restricted to younger people. Daughters leave their parents' households at marriage and most emigration of women takes place in consequence of their joining their husbands' household. Sons may leave before marriage, as well as afterwards, and most depart for Miri or Brunei (Table 3.2). Dividing land is generally avoided, and most farms are inherited intact by a single son. Acquiring additional land is difficult and few families can afford to set up more than a second son with a farm of his own. As a result, less than a fifth of those leaving Riam do so to establish new farms, and the great majority depart to look for wage work off the land. Moreover, finding work is often difficult, as few youngsters leaving the farm have special skills or training, and some of those who are unsuccessful rejoin their families and form a category of disguished unemployed.

It is widely believed in Riam that while the daughters of farm families may marry into towns, few town families will arrange their daughter's marriage to a farmer's son. As a result, there is a shortage of marriageable women in the countryside and a net inflow of females to the towns.

Our findings support this belief. Half of the households in our sample contain unmarried sons 20 years of age or older, and a third of these contain two or three such sons. In addition, there is a tendency for daughters of Riam families to marry into towns, mainly Miri and Brunei. On the other hand, daughters-in-law come largely from Riam, Batu Niah or the rural areas around Kuching - all Hoppu agricultural settlements - and are primarily from farm families (see Table 3.3).

TABLE 3.3 IN-MARRIAGE OF WOMEN

Place of birth	Number	Occupation of father	Dialect
Riam	3	Farmer	Hakka (Hoppu)
Batu Niah	1	Farmer	Hakka (Hoppu)
	1	Petty hawker	Hakka (Hoppu)
Kuching(rural)	3	Farmer	Hakka (Hoppu)
Sibu	1	General store owner	Teochiu
Miri	1	Labourer	Hakka (Sinon)

There is an interest among those with little or no land in Government development schemes, and at least one family from Riam has moved to Lambir Land Development Scheme. This particular family, however, has since left the scheme, reportedly disillusioned by the poor income they received and the failure

of the Sarawak Land Development Board to grant them title to their land. In general, such schemes have an unfavourable reputation, and there is much more interest in development that makes land available for independent farming or is designed to improve road and market connections on already occupied land.

3.3.2 Household Structure

Households are large in Riam. The mean size is 7.5 persons for the households in our sample and 7.15 persons for the total population based on our census survey.

The majority of households contain a simple nuclear family of a man, his wife and their dependent children (see Table 3.4). The remainder consist either of expanded or reduced nuclear families or of patrilocal stem or extended families. An "expanded nuclear family" consists of a nuclear family plus one or several additional kinsmen, while a "reduced nuclear family" consists of a nuclear unit minus the husband, wife, and/or children. A "patrilocal stem family" includes at least three generations and is made up of one or both grandparents, a married son, his wife and grandchildren. A "patrilocal extended family" also includes three generation, but contains, in addition to grandparents, the families of two or more married sons.

TABLE 3.4 HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE

Type of household composition	Number	Percentage of total
Nuclear family	17	57
Expanded nuclear family	3	10
Reduced nuclear family	3	10
Patrilocal stem family	4	13
Patrilocal extended family	3	10
Total	30	100

Although atypical, the frequency of stem and extended families is relatively high (see, for comparison, Newell, 1962), 10 and 13 per cent of our sample respectively.

In addition there are farms containing two households headed usually by a father and son or by two brothers. The expectation is generally that the land on which the two houses are built will be divided upon the death of the farm founder between the surviving heads of the two households with each thereby becoming a fully independent farm unit. However, such cases are exceptional.

TABLE 3.5 HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION BY AGE AND SEX

Household	0-6 yr		7-14 yr		15-22 yr		23-54 yr		55 and over		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	2	1					1	1		1	6
2					1	1			1	1	4
3	1	2	2	1	3	2	1	1			13
4	2	2		3	2		2	1	1	1	14
5	2		1	1			1	1		1	7
6										1	1
7			1				1		1	1	4
8			2	1			1	1			5
9	1		3	1	2	3	1	1			12
10			1	1	1	1	2	1	1		8
11					1		1	1			3
12									1	1	2
13	1		1		1	1	1	1	1		7
14	1		4			2	1	1			9
15		1	1	1			1	1			5
16			1	1	3		1	1			7
17			1	1	2	1	1	1			7
18	1	1		2	1	1	1	1			8
19			1	1	1	2	1	1			7
20	3		1	1			2	3	1		11
21	1	2	2		1		5	3	1		15
22		1	3	3			2	2		1	12
23					1	1	2	4	1		9
24			2	1	1	1	1	1			7
25			2	2	1	1	1	1			8
26			1		2	1	2	1	1		8
27	1	2				1	1				5
28			1	1	2		1	1	1		7
29				2	2		2	1			7
30						1	2	1	1	1	6

Families are typically mature units and the senior members are frequently those who originally settled the land. Households made up of newly married couples with small children are unusual, as many younger people are clearly leaving Riam to establish their families elsewhere. The mean age of family heads is 50.3 years, and only six of the 30 households in our sample are headed by men under 40 years of age.

3.3.3 Clanship

Kinship ties outside the family are traced patrilineally and in the original home areas of Kwangtung and Fukien Provinces such ties formed the basis of organised descent groups. The term "clan" refers to a kin group based on presumed, but not actually traceable, common unilineal descent. In this sense the widest clan consists of all of those who share the same surname. Surname groups are obviously not "groups" in an organised sense, but in southern China localised sub-clan and lineages with common surnames formed corporate groups with common land, tombs and ancestral halls, and their members often occupied entire villages or town wards.

Corporate descent groups in this sense are lacking in Sarawak. However, ties of clanship are of considerable significance. The fiction is that all of those who share the same surname must be patrilineally related, however remote the degree. Surname relations are important in Riam, and even when no known relationship exists the sentiments of kinship are generally present.

A small number of surname groups predominate in Riam and many of the older generation are related patrilineally or come from the same or neighbouring villages in China. While there are no real clan villages - and surname groups are interspersed - Yongs tend to be heavily concentrated in Loak and Chais in Waterpond Village and 5-Miles. Three surname groups (Yong, Chai and Lee) comprise 51 per cent of families in Riam; and one (Yong) more than 20 per cent. The distribution of surnames is shown in Table 3.6.

TABLE 3.6 DISTRIBUTION AND TYPE OF RIAM SURNAMES

Number	Chinese character	Hakka or other dialects	Mandarin
37	楊	Yong	Yang
31	蔡	Chai	Chai
22	李	Li	Lee
11	張	Chong	Chang
10	陳	Chen, Tan	Chern
7	黃	Wong	Huang
6	温	Voon	Vern
5	劉	Lau	Liew
4	林	Lim, Lam	Ling
3	古	Ku	Koo
3	貝	Pui	Pei
3	羅	Lo	Loh
2	呂	Leu	Leu
2	江	Kong	Jiang
2	鄭	Tay	Jern
2	賴	Lai	Lai
1 each	于	Yu	Yu
	石	Siak	Tze
	余	Yee	Yee
	亞	Ah	Yah
	朱	Choo, Chu	Choo
	沈	Sim	Shen
	梁	Leong	Liang
	吳	Ng. Goh	Hwu
	邱	Chew	Chew
	洪	Hong	Hoong

TABLE 3.6 DISTRIBUTION AND TYPE OF RIAM SURNAMES (cont'd)

Number	Chinese character	Hakka or other dialects	Mandarin
1 each	潘	Phang	Pun
	范	Fam, Fan	Fun
	許	Kho, Chee	Sheu
	莊	Chong	Chuong
	陶	Toh	Taw
	孫	Soon	Suoon
	魯	Loo	Loo
	葉	Yap	Yeh
	藍	Nam	Lan
	韓	Han	Hun
	蕭	Siaw	Siew
	謝	Sia, Chia	Sheih
	蘇	Su, Soo	Shu
	鄧	Thien, Teng	Teng
	徐	Chee	Shee
	趙	Chow	Chao

There is only one formal clan association in the Miri area, the Sim Association and its members are mainly town-based Chao-an.

3.3.4 Dialect

Riam is basically a Hakka or Kheh settlement. Most settlers speak the Hoppu dialect of Hakka and came originally from the same or neighbouring areas of Kwantung Province. Many belong to the same surname group. Consequently ties of dialect, locality, clanship and occupation coalesce to create a strong felling of community identity. This feeling, and the ties on which it is based, extend outward to other Hoppu farming settlements at Bakam, Batu Niah and in the rural areas around Kuching.

Table 3.7 shows the distribution of dialect groups in Riam based on our census survey.

TABLE 3.7 DISTRIBUTION DIALECT GROUPS RIAM COMMUNITY

Dialect	Number of families
Hakka - Hoppu	132
Hakka - Taipu	4
Hakka - Sinon	3
Hakka - Wuhan	3
Other Hakka	2
Teochiu	4
Cantonese	3
Hokkien	2
Chao-an	5
Hainan	2
Foochow	10
Total	170

The Foochow, Hainanese and Chao-an families are relatively recent settlers and occupy a block of land along the northern edge of Riam close to Miri. A small number of Cantonese were among the original settlers of Riam but very few Cantonese families remain on the land. The Hokkien and most of the Teochiu families are employed in retail trade as hawkers, shop employees or owners and are therefore only peripherally a part of the Riam farming community, and there is only a small amount of intermarriage between members of different dialect groups.

3.3.5 Formal Associations

In addition to familial ties, relations of marriage and clanship, ties between neighbours, friends, farmers and shop-owners, and bonds of identity based on common dialect and shared economic interests, a number of formal associations have membership in Riam and play a significant part in the social life of the community. The more important of these are described below.

(a) The Hakka Association

Dialect is a central dimension of social structure in Riam, and, not surprisingly, the most important formal organisation is the dialect or community association.

Reflecting the large size of the local Hakka population, and the social significance of subdialect groups within it, there

are four Hakka community organisations in Miri: the Taipoo Association, the Leong Chon Community Association, the Kaying Community Association and the Hakka Association. Of these, only the latter has a significant following in Riam.

The Hakka Association is the largest dialect organisation in Miri and differs from the other three mentioned in that its membership is open to all Hakka, regardless of subdialect, and its officers include members of all of the main local Hakka groups. Its founding chairman is currently Chairman of Taipu Association, while the present Chairman is a Kaying Hakka. The vice-chairman is President of the Kaying Community Association, the Treasurer and vice-Treasurer are both Taipu businessmen, and the officer in charge of English correspondence is a Sinon clerk. Six of its remaining officers, four of its six Committeemen, and the bulk of its membership are Hoppu Hakka, and the rank-and-file composition is basically Hoppu and Sinon.

All Hakka living in the Miri and Subis Districts are eligible for membership. A second, much smaller Hakka Association is located at Marudi, serving the Baram District. The only other Hakka Associations in Sarawak are at Sibu and Kuching. All four Associations are nominally members of a central Hakka organisation located in Singapore. Total membership in the Miri Hakka Association is 602. The largest single block of members are from Riam and over a third of the families in the area belong to the Association.

Historically a strong cleavage has existed in the local Chinese Community between the largely rural Hakka and the town-based Cantonese and Hokkien. In the past each group maintained a separate middle school. Following World War II, the rise of Malay and native nationalism and the increased politicalisation of Sarawak in the post-Brooke era, efforts began to create greater unity within the Chinese community. The two middle schools were consolidated and the present Chung Hwa School was founded with a Management Board that includes representatives of all the main dialect groups. In the same spirit, the Hakka Association was founded in 1956 in an effort to create a common community organisation to which all Hakka might belong. The leadership structure of the present Association continues to include persons of each subdialect group and officers from the three smaller, longer established Hakka Community associations in Miri.

The present Hakka Association building in Miri was erected in 1960 and contains a main meeting, reading and recreation hall and four rooms where guests or newcomers to Miri can be accommodated.

The Association participates in a number of charitable and civil activities, organises a procession on National Day and provides scholarships to primary and secondary school students. A representative of the Association automatically sits on the Chung Hwa Middle School Management Board. Association officers, particularly the Chairman and secretary, are often called upon to arbitrate disputes. For the most part disputes brought to the Association concern marital problems or conflicts over property, money or debts, and those involved, while mainly Hakka, are not necessarily Association members. Non-Christian Chinese marriages are also formalised and registered by the Association.

The Hakka Association, like the other main dialect groups in Miri, has its own orchestra. Musical instruments are kept in the main hall where the orchestra practices every Saturday. During 1970 the orchestra performed twice-weekly operas on the occasion of the anniversary of the completion of the Association's hall. Its main function, however, is to perform during funerals and to give fund-raising concerts at Chinese New Year.

Perhaps the most important service of the Association, in the view of its members, is to organise funerals. Funeral arrangements are made through the welfare section of the Association. This section has 420 members and whenever a member or one of his relatives dies, a collection is taken of minimally $2 per member to pay for the cost of the funeral. Ordinary membership dues are 50 cents per month.

The significance of the Association is clearly evident in our survey. Forty per cent of the Hoppu Hakka families interviewed are members of the Association. Even this figure underestimates the Association's importance, since many of those who are not members have a kinsman, a father, an elder brother or son, who is, and feel themselves, as a result, represented in the group. Three additional households or 10 per cent of our sample, were members of the Association until recently when a large defection of members occurred mainly as a result of rivalries for leadship within the Hakka community involving the Chairman and the Riam Councillor. That this rivalry was played out in the Association is, again, evidence of its importance. All but two of the non-Hoppu families in our sample are members of one of the other dialect associations in Miri, two belong to the Hokkien Association (Chao-an) and one each to the Foochow, Taipu, Kaying and Hainan Associations.

(b) Chung San School Management Board

The Board consists of a supervisor and eight managers elected to two year terms, one or two from each community in Riam. Every family head is eligible as both a voter and board member. Elections are held in two phases. First a list of

eligible voters is distributed to all families wishing to take part in the election. Voters circle the names of 20 persons they prefer to see elected. Balloting is not secret, as voters must sign their names to validate their ballots. Vote counting is done publicly by former Board members. The 20 persons who receive the most votes are then eligible as voters and candidates for the second phase of balloting. Each of these chosen during the first balloting names the person he would prefer to see in each office - supervisor, vice-chairman, secretary, etc. - and those receiving the most votes are elected.

In general, those elected as board members are the wealtheir members of the community, shop-owners, businessmen and the more prosperous farmers, and members of the main surname groups predominate.

The Board has only limited powers, as the school, although, technically, a District Council School, is under the direct authority of the Education Department which sets curriculae, assigns teachers etc. Primarily the Board meets when special problems arise, such as complaints against teachers, student discipline, etc., or when funds are needed for new equipment or construction.

(c) Riam Road Middle School Management Board

Board members are elected in essentially the same way as those of the Chung San School and, in fact, six of the nine members belong to both boards. The vice-chairman, for example, is chairman of the Chung San School management board.

As a private school, the management board has greater powers, and interviews, hires and dismisses teachers; decides on courses to be taught; budgets expenditures and raises funds. Salaries are fixed according to qualifications and experience, but the scale is set by the Board and is generally lower than that paid by Government schools. Decisions on hiring and curriculae must be referred to the Education Department for approval and the Department determines the textbooks used for any particular subject. The Board leads all fund raising efforts and its members are expected to make the first contributions.

(d) Riam Cemetery Maintenance Committee (Pao Kwan Wei Yuen Hui)

The present committee was founded two years ago, after the original Committee was dissolved under charges of mismanagement. The new committee has not yet been registered with the Government. Committee members are elected for two years by procedures similar to those used to elect school management boards, and two committee members are elected from each of the nine communities in Riam.

The function of the committee is to maintain the Riam cemetery and temple. Just before Ching Ming, the two committee members visit farms in the community from which they were elected and collect contributions, generally $2 to $5, from each family. The money is used to cut grass on the graves, pay for drainage construction and the wages ($1 per day) of a temple caretaker. Basically, the task of cutting grass on the tombs, shaping the grave mounds, etc., is a responsibility of the deceased's descendants, and for most Chinese families in Riam the ritual cleaning of the graves at Ching Ming is an important family celebration in which the dead are honoured. The significance of the committee in this respect is mainly to assure proper cleaning of the tombs of those whose descendants have moved away or for other reasons cannot care for their graves. In addition the committee is responsible for making a public offering at the cemetery temple during the Ching Ming festival. On the evening of Ching Ming the committee sponsors a public banquet at one of the restaurants in Miri to which larger contributors are invited.

The cemetery is located near Mile 3 on the old Riam Road. Land in the section of the cemetery now being developed is divided into plots of varying size. Those requiring a plot must go to the Committee Treasurer to register and pay a fee for surveying, clearing, etc. Prices vary according to the size of the plot; a 25 by 25 feet plot costs, for example, $125. Until the new committee took over the management of the cemetery, graves could be located on any unoccupied area within the cemetery grounds. Now, however, plots are laid out in rows and issued consecutively by number so that it is not possible, as a rule, to choose a particular location close to the burial place of other kinsmen. However, geomancy is used as new rows of tombs are constructed to determine the most auspicious orientation. Most tombs contain a double grave for a husband and wife.

The committee takes no responsibility for grave-digging, tomb construction, etc., which is left to the deceased's family, surviving clansmen, or his dialect association to arrange. Death rites are expensive and it is not unusual for from $4 000 to $10 000 to be spent on a tomb.

Anyone may be buried in the Riam cemetery, and it is used by the entire Chinese community in Miri, with the exception of the Christian cemeteries close to Miri town. Nevertheless, Hakka clearly predominate, and many towns-people, speaking other dialects, prefer to be burried at Krokop despite the congestion of the cemetery. Recently the Chairman of the Foochow Association applied for land for a separate Foochow cemetery.

(e) The Miri Pig Breeders' Association

This is the only association to which Riam families belong that is meant specifically to promote their economic interests as farmers. The association supplies its members with feed at a reduced cost, approximately $1 per bag below the retail price, and assures them a market outlet for their livestock by running its own market stall and maintaining a business office to deal with potential buyers in Miri. Only a few Riam farmers are members of the association, partly, it is reported, due to the opposition of Miri shop-owners, out of fear of an irregular supply of feed, or because the association deals in feed only on cash terms. The association has sought to expand its membership to chicken breeders, but with little success.

3.3.6 Political Organisation

(a) Formal

Until the 1970 elections, the only directly elected office-holders in Sarawak were District Councillors. Councillors selected members to the Council Negri, who in turn chose national members of parliament (MPS). With the 1970 elections, Council Negri and national MPS were directly elected for the first time. The present Miri District Council is divided into 14 wards with 19 elected Councillors. The majority - 10 - and the Council Chairman (from Miri town), are members of Sarawak United Peoples Party (SUPP). Riam consists of one ward with two Councillors both SUPP members and the area as a whole, with the exception of the small Malay enclave at Batu Dua, is a SUPP stronghold. The present Riam Councillors are a highly regarded Riam farmer who is also the local Kapitan China, and the chairman of the Hakka Association who is a self-employed businessman and lives in Miri.

The Council Negri member from Miri District is a Miri businessman and Chairman of the Taipoo (Hakka) Association. He is a member of the Sarawak Chinese Association (SCA), a party supported mainly by wealthy Chinese businessmen, and narrowly won the 1970 election, due largely to the fact that the Chinese vote was split between the SUPP candidate and a highly-regarded Chinese Sarawak National Party (SNAP) candidate. The decisive vote came from the Malays; and the SCA candidate would have lost had he relied only on Chinese support.

(b) Political Activity

Until 1966, SUPP maintained a highly active political organisation in Riam with a permanent office and meeting hall near the bazaar. In 1966, following the suspension of elections in Sarawak, the Government closed the Riam office and detained three SUPP District Councillors, including one of the two from Riam, and a number of local party workers. Since then the Riam

The school has a staff of eight teachers and a principal and the student enrolment is 304 shown as follows:-

Class enrolment	Boys	Girls	Total
Primary 1	23	19	42
Primary 2	17	28	45
Primary 3	24	12	36
Primary 3	22	13	35
Primary 4	30	19	49
Primary 5	33	17	50
Primary 6	26	21	47
Total	175	129	304

All but a few students are from Riam. The exceptions are youngsters who are staying with relatives while they attend school. There are no boarding facilities. Students must provide their own transportation and most walk or come by bicycle.

The school has been Government-funded since 1956 and students pay only a small sum, 40 cents per month, to an amenities fund that is used to purchase tea, library books, play equipment, etc.

About 40 per cent of those who complete Primary Six are chosen to attend Government-aided middle school. Most choose the Chung Hwa Middle School in Miri. Transportation is difficult for Riam students; most go by bus, and those who live far from the road, must get up as early as 5 in the morning to be able to arrive at school in time for classes. Roughly the same percentage attend private secondary schools the majority choosing the Riam Road Middle School. For the remainder, primary school completes their formal education. Most apprentice themselves to tradesmen, stoneworkers, mechanics carpenters, etc., or return to help their parents on the farm.

(b) The Riam Road Middle School

The Riam Road Middle School was established in 1967. It started with a single Junior one class and a new class has been added each year since then. The first Senior three class graduated in 1972. At present there is a staff of eight and a students

of 147:

		Male	Female	Total
Senior	3	14	10	24
	2	7	0	7
	1	10	1	11
Junior	3	14	4	18
	2	33	8	41
	1	38	8	46
Total		116	31	147

Two-thirds of the students come from Riam; most of the remainder come from Batu Niah and, in smaller numbers, from Subis, Baram and Miri. Forty-three students and three teachers are boarders. Boarders pay a $3 per month boarding fee and eat their meals in the school canteen. Though well-maintained, living quarters are Spartan, and are without electricity or running water.

The school is supported by tuition and private contributions. Tuition is modest: for junior students $14 per month, senior students $18 per month; plus $2 per month amenity fund. The Middle School Management Committee has responsibility for raising private contributions. Contributions are collected mainly during Chinese New Year by a student lion dance troupe that tours the Riam area and Miri bazaar under the guidance of the Committee Chairman, a Riam shop-owner.

At the end of Junior three, a number of students transfer to English-medium schools in Miri. Most of the remainder continue to Senior level classes in which vocational courses are offered in typing, book-keeping, accounting and commerce, in addition to standard academic courses.

(c) Educational Background

The general level of education is modernately low. Even so many families are willing to make heavy sacrifices in order to send their children to school as long as possible. Most of the older generation have had only a few years of primary schooling. Most of their children, on the other hand, complete at least Primary Six. Chung San students do relatively well in their Lower Certificate Examinations; 42 per cent passed in 1972. However, a number drop out before completing Primary six or do not sit for their examinations. Some return to the farm, apprentice themselves to tradesmen or seek unskilled daily wage work. Nearly all of those who pass their exams go on to the Chung Hwa Middle School in Miri, while another 40 per cent of those who continue schooling attend the Riam Road private school. The willingness of parents to

pay their children's tuition to a private school reflects their interest in education, but very few students complete secondary education and almost none go beyond. Table 3.8 shows the general educational pattern in Riam.

Educational opportunities are particularly restricted for girls and few go beyond primary school. However, those who do are often highly capable and one of the two university educated in our sample is a woman. The other is her husband. Significantly, the husband's father, while having little formal education himself, had insisted that all of his children receive at least middle school education and two of his sons are teachers and two others are studying for higher degrees outside Malaysia. On the family altar is a picture of a scholar ancestor many generations removed.

TABLE 3.8 GENERAL EDUCATION PATTERN IN RIAM

Working Population	Number	Percentage
No formal education	10	14.1
Primary level education	39	54.9
Lower secondary education	13	18.3
Middle secondary education	6	8.5
Higher School Certificate	1	1.4
University	2	2.8
Total	71	100.0

Schooling Population	Number	Percentage
In kindergarten	2	2.8
In primary school	37	52.1
In lower secondary	23	32.4
In middle secondary	2	2.8
Of school age but not attending school	7	9.9
Total	71	100.0
Under school age	28	

3.4 ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

While Riam began as a farming settlement, the area has become increasingly less agricultural over the years. Large numbers of young people have left or are leaving Riam to find work in

town. Those who succeeded often remain with their parents or visit their families on the weekends; and a large proportion contribute part of their earnings to support their family. Those who fail to find work, or are temporarily unemployed, generally return to the farm to assist their parents, although most prefer - and intend to take - other jobs as soon as the opportunity arises. Nearly half (14) of the household heads in our sample hold full- or part-time jobs outside of agriculture.

In all, less than half (46 per cent) of the families in Riam depend on farming as their main source of livelihood, and outside of Sechuan and 7-Miles, true farming households are in the minority.

While this pattern undoubtedly reflects the growing urbanisation of Riam caused by the expansion of Miri town it may also reflect a more general pattern in the Chinese rural population in Sarawak generally. The same pattern of growing dependence on outside employment among the rural Chinese was found in the First Division (University of Wageningen, 1971), and a similar pattern seems to exist in other communities in the Study Area. It is obviously premature to predict the disappearance of Chinese farming from Sarawak, but it appears that under existing circumstances many, perhaps most, Chinese farming settlements are unable either to absorb their own natural growth or to generate sufficiently high levels of income to meet the expectations of a large proportion of the younger generation. As a result many younger people are leaving the countryside and abandoning farming in favour of town-related employment.

3.4.1 Farming

Farming continues to be the main source of livelihood for 78 of the 168 families in the Riam census population; and for an additional 25, it is a major contributing source.

The farming done in Riam, and in other Chinese small-holder areas, is of a very special nature. While virtually all Riam families grow produce or raise poultry for their own table, farming is not, in any significant sense, a subsistence activity. Like town families, those in Riam must purchase most of their essential staples, such as rice, fish, pork, sugar, etc. from the bazaar grocery. The crops they grow are commercial cash crops, and Riam farmers are part of an intrgrated local economy with regular, often daily, contacts with urban and national economic life. For this reason, it is misleading to think of them, in any ordinary sense, as rural peasants, except insofar as the holdings they cultivate are small and their methods labour intensive. Farming is directed towards market production and this fact shapes all aspects of farm life in Riam.

3.4.2 Land Tenure

Land is considered vitally important. Most established holdings have remained in the same hands 10 to 20 years or longer. Farmers are acutely aware of the dangers of splitting or loosing land and every effort is made to transmit holdings intact to a single heir. Both sale and partition are strongly resisted. Even so the pressure on land is great, and fragmentation, transfer or division has occurred over the years with the result that farms, particularly in Riam proper, tend to be very small. The average holding size is 4.2 acres and the modal size is just under four acres. The largest farms are between 12 and 18 acres. Given the large size of households, the density of population on existing farm land is an extremely high 1.7 persons per acre. Fragmentation is not uncommon, particularly in the case of larger holdings, and 10 of the 30 families in our sample work two parcels of land. Three of these double parcels adjoin one another, while the remainder are separated by from one to six miles.

The Government has recently acquired two large blocks of Riam land, one for the Miri airport, the other for the army barracks, and farmers greatly fear further encroachment. As a result, many informants were reluctant to answer questions concerned with land tenure, use and ownership, and, consequently, our information in these areas is limited. Moreover, patterns of tenure are complex and only partially reflected in the official registry of land titles. What our study shows is that any serious study of Chinese land tenure will need to be done on the ground, through detailed fieldwork.

Leasing or renting of land is unusual. However, two farmers in our sample are working land belonging to a second party who is not a member of their immediate family. One old couple, whose children live in China, were forced to sell their land to pay for medical treatment and are now working a small piece of land belonging to an unrelated clansman. A second farmer is an unemployed rubber tapper who, with his family, is looking after land belonging to a kinsman of his wife until he can find a job outside the farm.

Shared or divided use of holdings, or the working of land by members of the family other than its owner, are common patterns in our sample. While a much more detailed study then was undertaken here, with a far larger sample of cases, would be needed for an adequate description of the principles involved, it is clear the shared usage in a single parcel by brothers or by parents and children or by both is not uncommon. The ideal is for land to be inherited intact. Normally a single son is chosen as heir, with the selection often deferred so that the father is able to retain his authority over his sons as long as possible. While he remains alive a pattern of shared usage often occurs and upon his death a partial variant of this pattern may continue. Not all of those who share ownership or rights of use in a parcel of land necessarily live on the land or in a single household. In one

case, for example, a parcel of land was inherited by three sons. Only one son actually lives on the land. This particular man has added a second piece of land to the original holding. His two brothers who have part-time jobs in town live elsewhere but share in the cultivation and are likely to continue to do so until they can acquire additional land of their own. In a second case all but one of eight sons acquired land of their own. The seventh son was given title to the original farm by his father who is still alive. However, the seventh son is crippled and physically unable to work the land or to marry and establish a family. The land owned by the eighth son, on the other hand, is unsuitable for pepper so that he and his family have built a second house on the seventh son's land and now work a share of the original parcel. Some variant of shared ownership and/or use is represented by approximately a third of our sample.

3.4.3 Crops

One consequence of the commercial orientation of Riam farming and the limited reserve capital most farmers have to work with is a highly diversified pattern of cropping. No farmer relies exclusively on a single crop because of the danger of low price, oversupply or crop loss due to disease or other factors. Instead, farmers spread their risks so that failure of any one or two crops will not mean ruin. Thus all active farmers market a range of produce. Fruit growing, for example, is frequently combined with pepper gardening, and possibly with a limited poultry operation. Livestock and poultry are often combined and commonly joined with fruit or intensive vegetable gardening. Animal manure in this case is used for fertiliser. Vegetable gardening itself involves the cultivation of a wide variety of species and similarly, as a rule, with fruit production.

A discussion of the main crops grown in Riam is taken up below.

(a) Pepper

Once the principal crop in Riam, fewer than half of the families in our sample (45 per cent) still grow pepper. Three families stopped growing in the last two years and one farmer lost his entire garden from footrot disease in 1972.

The number of vines per farm ranges from 100 to 1 450, with the average being slightly less than 650. Between a fourth and fifth of these are new vines that are not yet producing.

Average annual earnings per 100 producing vines are about $500. New vines cost 30 cents each, posts $1.80, so that 100

vines represents a minimal initial investment of $210. In addition vines must be fertilised and the farmers in our sample spend from $120 to $2 440 annually on fertiliser, mainly imported chemical types. The average expenditure per farm is $875. In addition, farmers spend on the average just under $300 annually on herbicides and insecticides. The farmers must also pay to transport his pepper to market. The average family clears well under $2 000 annually from pepper, with the largest producer earning around $5 000.

Most pepper is harvested between April and July and is sold as white pepper. White pepper receives a higher price and is generally said to be easier to make than black pepper. However, it requires a better fruit, so that, as a rule, black pepper is made only out of the final pickings. There is some delay between harvest and sale for drying, usually two or three months, but three of the 11 farmers in our sample report storing pepper until they need cash or prices are more favourable. Market relations are discussed below, but, in general, each farmer deals with a single shopkeeper from whom he receives fertiliser, other farm requisites and general groceries and sundry items on credit, with accounts settled at harvest time when the farmer sells his crop. Most shopkeepers set a credit maximum at $1 200 to $2 000 per customer. This means that a large operator may be unable to obtain all of the fertiliser and other requisites he needs on credit, and he may have to make some direct purchases or pay into his account prior to harvest. All but two farmers in our sample deal exclusively with one of two Miri shopkeepers. The exceptions trade wholly or partly with a Riam shop.

(b) Fruit

Every farm in our sample has at least a few fruit trees. Two-thirds grow fruit for sale, and of the remaining third, the majority have immature trees that should begin to bear marketable fruit in the future. Fruit production is thus expanding and the common practice during the last 10 years has been to replace pepper vines with fruit trees, particularly rambutan, rather than replant fields in pepper.

Table 3.9 shows the types of fruit grown and the number of growers in our Riam sample. It is almost certain that the number of growers and trees is larger than shown here, since many farmers fail to mention trees they may have planted around the house for their own consumption.

(c) Rambutan

This is by far the most commonly grown fruit in Riam. Numbers of trees per grower range from 1 to 65, with an average of 14. Gross earnings from rambutan may be high, $600 per year for 7 to 10 trees, but are generally well below this. Because of the heavy supply in Miri, prices depend on the time of

TABLE 3.9 FRUIT PRODUCTION - TYPES OF FRUIT AND NUMBER OF GROWERS

Fruit	Number of trees	Number of growers	Average number of trees per grower
Rambutan	313	22	14
Banana	712	9	79
Mango	28	6	5
Pineapple	1 220	5	248
Papaya	69	5	14
Durian	48	5	10
Coconut	33	4	8
Orange	72	3	24
Others	17	4	4

Number of households surveyed - 27.

bearing, and fruit that is marketed at the beginning of the rambutan season generally receives a higher price than that marketed at the peak period. The main bearing season is from June to October. Most fruit is carried to market by bus, and, in contrast to other fruit, the grower or his wife generally sells directly rather than through a middleman. Trees generally require fertiliser and many farmers combine fruit growing with poultry or pig production, using the manure for their trees. In addition about a third of our sample apply purchased fertiliser. Amounts purchased vary considerably, but the average per farmer is approximately $50 annually applied to all fruit trees including rambutan. Bats are a widespread problem and seven farmers lost part or all of their rambutan crop to fruit-eating bats.

(d) Bananas

In general, the return on bananas is low, although no grower in our sample could say precisely how much was earned from their sale. Even so banana production is expanding and a large percentage of the trees reported here were recently planted. The average return per grower is said to be $30 to $40 per year, but is probably somewhat higher. The advantage of bananas is that they bear, and can be marketed, throughout the year.

(e) Mango

Mango is grown in only small numbers and is either not bearing or consumed by the grower's household. There is widespread loss from worms.

(f) Pineapple

Pineapple plantings are recent and are either not yet bearing or just beginning to bear, so that no estimate of probable

earnings is possible. There is some loss from animal pests.

(g) Papaya

Like bananas, papaya bear all year round, but generally yield higher incomes, up to $30 per month for 30 trees. Such yields require heavy use of fertilisers, however, and almost daily deliveries to market, both of which add considerably to production costs. In addition papaya are regularly grown for household use and the number of trees reported here is probably greatly underestimated.

(h) Durian

Reported annual earnings of $2 to $3 per tree are probably highly underestimated. Even so durian is of minor economic importance in Riam.

(i) Coconuts

Coconuts are another minor tree crop. The largest producer is a Hainan farmer who sells the entire output of 10 trees to a Hainan medical shop in Miri for $20 to $30 per year. Other farmers report higher earnings, up to $10 per tree annually, but, in general, production is highly limited.

(j) Oranges

Included here are local oranges and related citrus fruit. These are high-value produce and a small grove of 30 to 40 trees can easily yield $300 to $400 annually. However, citrus fruit requires very special soil conditions and can be grown only in very restricted areas of Riam.

(k) Vegetables

Virtually all families in Riam raise some vegetables. The area, however, is not a major vegetable growing centre, largely because of high transport costs, and just under 40 per cent of our sample market vegetables. The bus is the main means of transport and the round-trip fare from Riam bazaar is $1 plus possible additional charges for produce. Moreover, many families live too far from the bus route to make vegetable growing practical. Two families receive $70 to $80 per month from vegetable sales. For both families, vegetables are a major source of farm earnings, and the wife, in one case, is a market trader with her own stall in the Miri vegetable market. The wife of a second, somewhat smaller producer is also a Miri trader. The remainder market vegetables entirely through traders. Average monthly earnings are $20 to $40 except for a few farmers who sell only an occasional surplus from their own domestic garden. Vegetable gardening requires a great deal of labour and all but one grower apply fertiliser regularly. A few raise enough livestock to meet their own

needs, but most must purchase at least some fertilisers, spending on the average $30 per year, mainly for guano or German-made chemical fertiliser. Insect damage is universal and loss from snails is widespread.

(l) Livestock

All but two families in our sample raise some livestock, mainly poultry for their own consumption. Goats and pigs are raised for sale, while five families sell chickens and three sell ducks. Of the remainder, nearly two-thirds raise livestock only for their own use.

TABLE 3.10 LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

Livestock	Total number	Number of producers	Average number of animals per producer
Chickens	4 863	25	195
Ducks	180	18	10
Geese	-	-	-
Pigs	114	5	23
Goats	5	1	5

Number of farms surveyed - 28

(m) Chickens

Most farmers keep a small flock of 10 to 20 chickens for eggs and meat. In addition nearly half of the chickens in our sample are owned by a single commercial breeding and modern hatchery operation run by two brothers on land belonging to their mother. The farm is operated on a share-holding basis, the older brother holding 80 per cent interest, the younger, 20 per cent. The older brother is also manager of the local bus company and has a share in the shop that supplies the farm with feed. The younger brother, who was sent by the family for formal training in modern poultry methods in Singapore and Australia, actually runs the operation and receives a fixed salary of $200 per month in addition to his share of the profits. The farm keeps about 1 000 laying hens and about 1 000 chickens for sale as meat. Last year $5 000 to $6 000 was received from the sale of meat. About 12 000 eggs are sold monthly for roughly $1 400 per month. In addition the farm operates a mechanised hatchery, the only one of its kind in the local area, and until recently sold about 5 000 chicks per month mainly to Brunei. Chicks are sold at 50 cents each; thus the operation brought in about $2 500 per month. But recently the government has imposed a ban on exports to Brunei and the whole operation is now in jeopardy. About $17 000 in total is spent annually on feed. The family owning the farm are Chao-an and have been in business for over 10 years.

The remaining producers sell from 10 to 1 000 chickens annually at roughly $6 to $9 per chicken. Nearly all livestock feed is imported, and most growers complain that the price is high and rising. Several said that livestock prices merely cover feed costs, or that they are running their livestock operation at a loss, and several said they plan to curtail their business in the future. Only one other farmer, a Hainan, sells eggs, in this case, some 20 per month to a Hainan coffee shop.

(n) Ducks

Most farmers raise ducks, but only three in our sample raise ducks for sale. The largest sells only 30 ducks annually at an average price of $3 per duck.

(o) Pigs

The largest producer is the commercial chicken breeder referred to above. The farm sold about 60 pigs last year at approximately $13 000. Feed costs were roughly $10 000. One operator has just started with a herd of 10 pigs while another keeps only two. Unlike poultry, pigs and goats are kept only for sale.

(p) Fish Ponds

Fish culture is relatively recent in Riam. Only one farmer in our sample raises fish. He owns two ponds, one 1 800 square feet in area, the other roughly one acre, which he built in November 1971 at a cost of approximately $700. Fish are removed once a year, when the ponds are drained, around the time of Chinese New Year. The farmer sells the fish himself in Miri and transport them, free of charge, in a private automobile. Each year he earns around $200 from their sale, which means that by the fourth year he should begin to realise a clear profit on his ponds. In addition, his family consumes some fish at each annual harvest. Young fish are obtained from the Agricultural Department and are fed tapioca leaves which the farmer raises himself.

There is a good deal of interest in Riam in fish culture. Several farmers mentioned plans to construct ponds. Part of the interest is due to the fact that many farms contain swampy areas that could be used for ponds but which are unsuitable for any other purpose. Also the Government fish culture programme appears to be fairly effective, and together with veterinary care, is a service farmers know of and find valuable.

3.4.4 Government Assistance

Outside of veterinary care, and particularly in pepper gardening and fruit and vegetable growing, farmers either do not consult the Agricultural Department or consider its staff uncooperative or the Department unequipped locally to assist them.

3.4.5 Farm Labour

The basic work unit is the household. However, the size of the family work force, and the number of hours its members devote to farming, is determined by the relative importance of farming, as a source of income, compared to employment outside of farming. Three families do virtually no farming at all, and six others do very little. Thus, for about a third of our sample, farming is an insignificant or only a subsidiary source of income. Thus the family work force figures shown in Table 3.11 are somewhat misleading, that is too low, when applied specifically to farm families.

Table 3.11 shows the farm labour available in total and per household. As defined here, full-time means that the worker spends from 40 to 80 hours per week at farm work; "part-time", from 20 to 39 hours per week; and "occasional", 19 hours per week or less. Classification of workers is based on estimates of hours worked provided by our informants and is only approximat . There is considerable seasonal variation, particularly in the case of pepper gardening, and some of those who are "occasional" workers, for example, when calculated on an annual basis, are "full-time" workers during the harvest period. These figure, then should be taken only as a rough approximation of the labour situation. Hours worked by full-time farm labourers are extremely long, 10 to 12 hours per day, seven days a week.

As these figures suggest, somewhat more than half of all household members work at least occasionally at farming. On the average there is somewhat less than one full-time male worker per household and roughly one additional part-time or occasional male worker. The range varies considerably, however, from one household with four full-time males to two households without any male workers in agriculture at all, even on an occasional basis. All children working as full- or part-time labourers are girls and most of those who work occasionally are youngsters in school who help their parents on weekends or after school hours.

TABLE 3.11 FARM LABOUR

a) Number Employed

	Males	Females	Children	
Full-time	22	19	1	
Part-time	11	10	4	
Occasional	16	15	16	
Total	49	44	21	114

b) Average Number Per Household

	Males	Females	Children	
Full-time	0.8	0.7	-	
Part-time	0.4	0.3	0.1	
Occasional	0.7	0.5	0.5	
Total	1.7	1.5	0.07	3.9

Total number of households - 29

While virtually all labour is supplied by households members there are a few cases of relatives living outside who assist on an occasional or part-time basis. Where their assistance is given regularly, these persons have been included in Table 3.11. One man, for example, is regularly assisted by two brothers who are part-time carpenters and share partial interests in the farm. Both work over 20 hours a week on the farm and are full-time labourers during the harvest season. Another man receives regular occasional help from his son, while, in return, he and the members of his family regularly help, from 10 to 20 hours a week, on the son's newly opened farm in Tukau.

Hired labour is even more unusual. One farm employs a permanent worker included in Table 3.11 who tends poultry and is paid a wage of $200 per month. Three other families employ casual labour. One, a widow who lives by herself, occasionally hires a man to carry soil to her fruit orchard; the others hire one or two workers during the pepper harvest, generally neighbours. Wages for men are between $5 and $10 per day depending on the nature of the work.

3.4.6 Market Relations

The main agricultural produce sold by Riam farmers is first pepper, then fruit and finally livestock and vegetables.

Approximately 70 per cent of the pepper grown in Riam is sold to Miri shopkeepers and 30 per cent to Riam dealers. There are five Miri and two Riam shops that buy some pepper, but of these only two Miri and one Riam shop are significant buyers of Riam pepper. The main dealer is Seng Ek on Kingsway and the second Thien Hiong on High Street. Both shops have been in business for a long time and have dealt with many of the same customers in Riam for over 20 years.

Credit is an invariable element of pepper marketing. The average debt per farmer is between $350 and $400. In general the shop advances the farmer fertilisers, insecticides, possibly groceries and sundry goods, to a maximum of between $1 200 to $2 000, with the debt to be paid in pepper deliveries at harvest time. There is rarely a direct charge for credit. However, the Miri pepper price is generally $30 per picul below the quoted Singapore price to meet transportation costs, insurance, export duties, etc. In addition deductions may be made in grading and for the weight of the bag in which the pepper is delivered, so that considerable scope exists for indirect charges for credit services. Moreover, the shopkeeper can usually expect some rise in price following harvest.

None of these local shops, can be considered first rank dealers (T'ien, 1953). Roughly 80 per cent of the pepper bought by Miri shopkeepers is sold through Sibu shipowners who act either as independent middlemen or as transport agents on behalf of major Sibu export firms. A small amount of pepper is shipped to Kuching, and, in all, no more than 10 per cent is consigned directly to Singapore from Miri. Miri shopkeepers deal directly with Riam farmers and the smaller Riam bazaar shops sell directly to Sibu shipowners, exactly like their Miri competitors, so that there is no functional differentiation in market operations between the two bazaars.

For second- and third-rank traders, like those in Miri and Riam, the risks in pepper marketing are considerable. To stay in business, a trader must be able to absorb occasional heavy losses due to adverse price changes. In addition, some debts, where farmers lose their crops through disease, must be wholly or partly written off. Largely for these reasons, the business is a shrinking one, and the number of shops in the Miri area dealing in pepper has declined by more than half in the last 10 years.

Most farmers have a permanent trading relation with a single shopkeeper. In addition to credit, and the sale of produce, they generally buy a large proportion of their consumer goods at the shop. For large purchases a shop will generally provide delivery to the customer's farm.

Pigs, poultry and eggs are marketed in much the same way, although the various economic functions of farm supply, credit, buying and selling are more often divided between several persons than in the case of pepper marketing. Fruit and vegetables are generally marketed through a stall trader licensed to sell in the Miri market. Many traders are also producers; some live in Riam and handle the output of their own farm, and possibly that of their neighbours, as well as other growers. Direct selling occurs during the rambutan season, when growers are allowed to hawk their fruit directly in the area around the Miri vegetable market.

Market contracts with Miri are frequent. Over a quarter of the families in our sample visit Miri daily and regular shopping trips are made on the average of two to four times a week; and no family in our sample visits Miri less than once a week.

3.5 NON-AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT

Almost half of the household heads in our sample are employed outside of agriculture (see Table 3.12). Most work as general or skilled labourers. Of the exceptions, one man manages the local bus company, while all the adult males in a second household are employed in a contracting firm owned by the eldest son, including the father who works as a construction supervisor. In addition, most households contain one or more dependents employed outside of farming (see Table 3.13), and, in all, 80 per cent of the households sampled (24) contain at least one member, the household head and/or a dependent, who is employed in some other occupation than agriculture.

TABLE 3.12 EMPLOYMENT OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Type of employment	Number
Skilled labour/professions	
Construction supervisor	1
Transport company manager	1
Shop clerk	1
Bus/lorry driver	2
Stevedor	1
General labourer	5*
Self-employed	
Barber	1
Tomb builder	1
Total	13
Unemployed	2

Note * One household contains only an aged widow who is supported by a son who works as a construction labourer in Singapore. Although not at the moment resident, the son is here considered to be the economic head of the household.

The figures shown in Table 3.12 and 3.13 clearly reveal the significance of non-farm employment in Riam. There are very few households without some non-farm earnings. Beside the income of household members, children who have moved from the farm, especially unmarried sons, frequently make cash gifts to their parents. These contributions are a significant source of income, and nearly two-thirds of the households in our sample receive some income from children living outside the household or from resident dependents. Contributed income ranges from $300 per month (from 3 resident sons) to weekly groceries and gifts of pork and wine on Chinese New Year. The average for our sample is between $70 to $80 per month; and for two households it is the main source of income and for one the sole source.

TABLE 3.13 EMPLOYMENT OF DEPENDENTS

Type of employment	Number
Skilled labour/professions	
Electricians	3
Carpenter	2
Apprentice carpenter	2
Mechanic	2
Apprentice mechanic	5
Tailor/seamstress	4
Welder	2
Shop clerk	1
Accountant	1
Teacher	2
General labour	6
Self-employed	
Contractor	1
Produce seller	2
Petty hawker	1
Total	34
Unemployed	4

35.1 Employment Patterns

Employment patterns differ notably between household heads and the younger generation. The latter are attracted heavily to skilled trades, particularly as mechanics, carpenters, electricians and skilled foundry and construction workers. This pattern is even more notable when those who have left their natal household are considered.

Most skilled trades are organised on a guild basis and require a period of apprenticeship. There tends to be heavy concentrations by families in particular trades; all electricians in Table 3.13, for example, are members of the same household. As a rule, once an older son completes his apprenticeship, and successfully establishes himself in a trade, his younger brothers are likely to follow his example, and all may eventually find employment in the same firm. As this suggests, personal connections, particularly kin ties, are of great importance, both within and outside of Riam, in obtaining training and finding a job.

Virtually all workers are employees in private firms. Except for those who are teachers, and one mechanic working in Brunei, none of those in our sample are employed by the Government.

3.5.2 Non-farm Income

Farm work is universally regarded in Riam as harder and less rewarding than wage employment, and many older informants said that they would prefer to see their children find work in town, rather than remain on the farm. Twelve of the 13 household heads with outside jobs were willing to provide income data. Incomes range from $70 to $400 per month, with the average being $237. Included, however, are three part-time workers, including the lowest paid above.

While comparable gross earnings are possible from pepper gardening, or from poultry or pig-rearing, the costs involved to the farmer considerably reduce this figure. Moreover, risks are relatively high, particularly in the case of pepper planting, and, in general, informants' view of the disparity between farm and non-farm incomes appears to be quite realistic.

3.5.3 Unemployment

Finding work is often difficult for those who leave the farm. Six persons in our sample describe themselves, or are described by others in their household, as unemployed and are actively seeking work outside the farm (see Table 3.12 and 3.13). Included are two household heads. One has only recently arrived from the First Division, and is staying on land belonging to another person until he can find a job in Miri. The other is a former sawmill worker who is being temporarily supported by two sons who work in the sawmill at Kuala Baram. The actual number of unemployed in our sample is easily twice the figure given here, as many young men in

this category are counted in the farm working force. Excluding women, the actual number is probably 20 per cent or more of the total non-farm labour supply.

3.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

While it is usual to think of the Chinese in connection with commerce and the urban trades, agriculture, in fact, is the most important single source of Chinese employment in Sarawak; and nearly half of all Chinese employed in the Study Area are engaged in some form of farming.

This report describes the farming system of a single Chinese small-holder area near Miri. The area described is basically a Hoppu Hakka settlement, and this report also gives a brief account of the main features of community social structure.

Riam is only one of hundreds of Chinese small-holder areas in Sarawak and the findings presented here should be generalised only with caution. However, three points emerge of wider relevance that deserve special emphasis:

The first, and perhaps most important of these, is that, as small-scale farmers, the rural Chinese occupy virtually the same position in the economic structure of the State as indigenous agricultural groups and suffer the same disadvantages - namely incomes well below those of other sectors of the economy, poor return to labour and relatively low standards of social and material amenities. In addition, pressures on land appear to be greater than with most other rural groups. Farms are small, averaging 4.2 acres in Riam, and land, as a basis of livelihood, is of vital concern and this concern is deeply ingrained, particularly in the older generation at Riam. It follows from this that efforts to improve rural living standards must be directed at the Chinese equally with other farming groups.

Secondly, farmers in Riam, and in other Chinese small-holder areas, are basically market producers bound to an urban bazaar. No family in our survey, for example, visits Miri less than once a week, and at least one member in more than a quarter of our households, commutes daily. In addition to selling produce, farm households, like those in town, must regularly shop for groceries and other necessities.

Thirdly, many families depend on the town for outside employment. Nearly 55 per cent of the households in Riam derive from a half to all of their income from non-farm earnings - either the wages of the household head or the contributed income of other resident members or of children employed outside

the household in non-farm occupations, or from both. This pattern of heavy dependence on outside employment appears to be widespread in rural areas, such as Riam, which are located close to town and deserves further study.

The findings of this report point up a series of problem areas. While these are treated in the main body of our report it is useful, by way of conclusion, to review them here.

(a) In general terms, farm earnings are low relative to wage incomes. Moreover, commodity prices on which farm earnings depend tend to fluctuate widely. This is due, in the case of pepper, to international market conditions. The price of locally consumed products, such as fruit or vegetables, is affected by the highly restricted size of the Miri market which is easily over-supplied. Obviously there is no easy solution to this problem. The size of holdings could be increased by making more Mixed Zone Land available for Chinese farming. However, to take full advantage of larger holdings, farm operations would need to be made more productive particularly in their use of labour. It is possible that mechanical tillers, etc. could be introduced though Cooperatives, Farmer Associations, or on a private rental or purchase basis. Extension service could be greatly improved. The Chinese are justly proud of their ability to look after themselves and a special effort will be needed to convince them that they need, or could profit from such service. Finally, wider markets are needed for local farm products even if this means higher Miri prices.

In this connection, as a more specific consideration, the present policy of restricting farm exports to Brunei should be reconsidered. The possible effects of this policy can be seen in the case of the modern hatchery described earlier in this report. Its output cannot be absorbed locally, at least at a profitable level of operation, and requires an export market. Pork producers are likely to face similar difficulties and to a lesser extent, vegetable growers. The intention of the policy is obviously to reduce local food prices; however in doing so, it may widen further the considerable gap in living standards that already exists between farmers and urban wage earners.

Finally, our survey gives little support to the view that low farm incomes are the result of exploitation by traders or shopkeepers. Many vegetable and fruit traders are themselves producers and the income levels of those interviewed appear to be relatively modest. Pepper marketing is a shrinking business locally and the shops involved are relatively small second- and third-rank firms. This is not to say that abuse does not occur or that the whole market system might not be made more efficient. However, information in this area is difficult to collect and the topic needs further study.

(b) Given the close ties that exist between Riam and Miri, a serious problem is created by poor road maintenance and high transport costs.

The problem of rural road maintenance exists throughout Sarawak and is by no means restricted to Riam. Basically the situation is that local authorities have responsibility for routine maintenance of all minor roads constructed to high enough standards to require only relatively minor upkeep. All major roadwork is the responsibility of the Public Works Department. The problem arises from the fact that most rural roads cannot meet local authority standards and thus there is no government body responsible for their upkeep. The only way around this problem is to incharge the PWD with the selective upgrading of rural roads to a level where local authorities can maintain them. In Riam the legal basis for such upgrading has already been prepared and existing road lands have been gazetted as development reserve land. Recently the Minister for Local Government, Mr. Sim Kheng Hong, announced that the Government is considering the possibilities of the PWD undertaking major construction of some local authority roads with the view of handing them back, after improvement, to the Councils concerned for routine maintenance. Implementation of this programme is to be recommended. In addition it would be desirable to precede it with a study of road use patterns to identify the roads where improvement would have the greatest impact.

It should be noted also that the absence of adequate roads has limited the development of some areas where Chinese have land holdings. In our study this was found to be the case in Tukau in particular.

High transport costs are also a problem. Bus service provides the chief means of transport in Riam, but at 10 cents per mile, plus added charges for produce, bus transport is expensive. For a grower living near Riam bazaar, the minimal roundtrip fare is $1. This may be too high, for example, to make the daily transport of fresh vegetables to market economically feasible, and thus restricts the kinds of crops a farmer can grow. In addition, the grower, or some member of his family, most normally accompany produce to market, thereby loosing time from farm work. Reduced bus fares would clearly help, but an alternative system of low cost lorry transport may be even more desirable.

(c) The younger generation is moving from the countryside to find work in town. Emigration from Riam is clearly reflected in household age structure and the relative absence of younger families in the population. Finding work is not easy and openings are restricted largely to the skilled labour trades. At the moment, these trades are characterised by a system of apprenticeship. While ensuring high standards of competence,

the system also has the effect of limiting the number of entrants. Not only are entrants likely to be Chinese, but kin and personal relations are important in finding a place in the system as it now exists. The Government may wish to establish training centres, as a way of increasing the supply of skilled workers and in order to bring in entrants of other community groups. However, the possible implications of such a programme need careful preliminary study, as this whole area, given the limited job opportunities currently available, contains an enormous potential for communal conflict. Private job training programmes, as those operated by Tractors Malaysia or Sarawak Shell Berhad, work well partly because jobs and training are combined and trainees are not placed in a competitive situation with established workers.

(d) There is interest in Riam in land development schemes. However, those of a highly managed estate-type hold out little attraction and have generally a poor reputation. The reasons appear realistic and at the moment can hardly be disputed. Farmers say that they can make much higher incomes from 10 acres of land if they are allowed to work it by themselves on an independent basis. Moreover, by diversifying the crops they grow, they are not likely to be stuck with those like rubber, and possibly oil palm in the future, for which the economic returns may be low. Therefore, the kinds of schemes they are interested in are either improvement schemes or new small-holder developments. As the older generation is highly fixed in its present situation, those likely to be attracted are younger people.

CHAPTER 4

FIELD REPORT NUMBER THREE

A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF URBAN MALAYS IN MIRI

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Miri (including Lutong) is the third largest urban centre in Sarawak with a population of 27 021 (1970 Census). Like others, Miri contains a sizeable proportion of urban Malays. According to the 1970 Census, there are 9 275 Malays out of the total population of 36 909 in Miri North (census area). The majority are found in the town area and it is safe to assume that about 90 per cent of the Malays in the census area live within Miri town and only a small number are rural dwellers. Based on this assumption, Malays can be said to constitute about 30 per cent of the total population of the Miri-Lutong urban area.

The majority of Malays in Miri are not native to the area; they came from different places and were originally of diverse ethnic background. A sizeable group came from the First (mainly Kuching) and Third (Mukah) Divisions following the opening up of the Miri oilfield. Others came from elsewhere in the Fourth Division, Brunei or from as far away as Indonesia. The only native Malays of the area are the Orang Miri; but their number is small and they are widely scattered, although most live on the outskirts of Miri town. The one common characteristic of the urban Malays is that they are all Muslims. With a common faith, and as a result of intermarriage and inter-mingling, they have developed a common culture. Many earlier differences have been lost and all Malays tend to consider themselves as Orang Melayu and have taken up the culture of the Kuching Malays whose language has also become the common or dominant language of the group.

The Malays in Miri are found in several villages as well as in Shell quarters and modern housing estates. The more established villages include Kampong Dagang, Kampong Wireless, Kampong Pujut, Kampong Pulau Melayu, Kampong Pankalan Lutong and Kampong Loak. A village in the urban area is not a self-contained unit, and its boundaries are not easily defined. Members are mobile and social relationships in most cases transcend its boundaries. The village is in fact a part of a bigger community, and is fully integrated within it.

No sociological study of urban Malays in Sarawak has yet been undertaken. This study is therefore a pilot study aimed at obtaining a general sociological picture of the structure of an urban Malay community.

4.1.1 Objectives of the Study

This short study has two general objectives. Firstly, it attempts to describe the social structure of an urban Malay community. Specifically, it seeks to present a picture of household composition, educational and occupational structure, social stratification and the type of organisations present and their role in the community. Secondly, the study attempts to look at the local process of urbanisation, including peoples' reasons for leaving the countryside, and the problems they encounter on taking up life in an urban setting.

4.1.2 Population

The population chosen for study is the Malay community of Kampong Dagang. The word dagang in Malay means foreigners. Kampong Dagang therefore means "a village of foreigners". It is situated along the Miri river at the eastern edge of Miri bazaar (Figure 4.1). Today there is a sizeable Chinese population living in the area and a few Ibans as well. Most rent houses from the Malays and some put up illegal huts on the river bank. This study is confined to the Malays; which include Melanaus, Indonesians, Kedayans and others who consider themselves Malays/Muslims.

The population of Kampong Dagang is chosen because it is the longest established urban Malay community in Miri and the population is ethnically heterogeneous and therefore probably representative of the urban Malay population in the area.

4.1.3 Historical Background

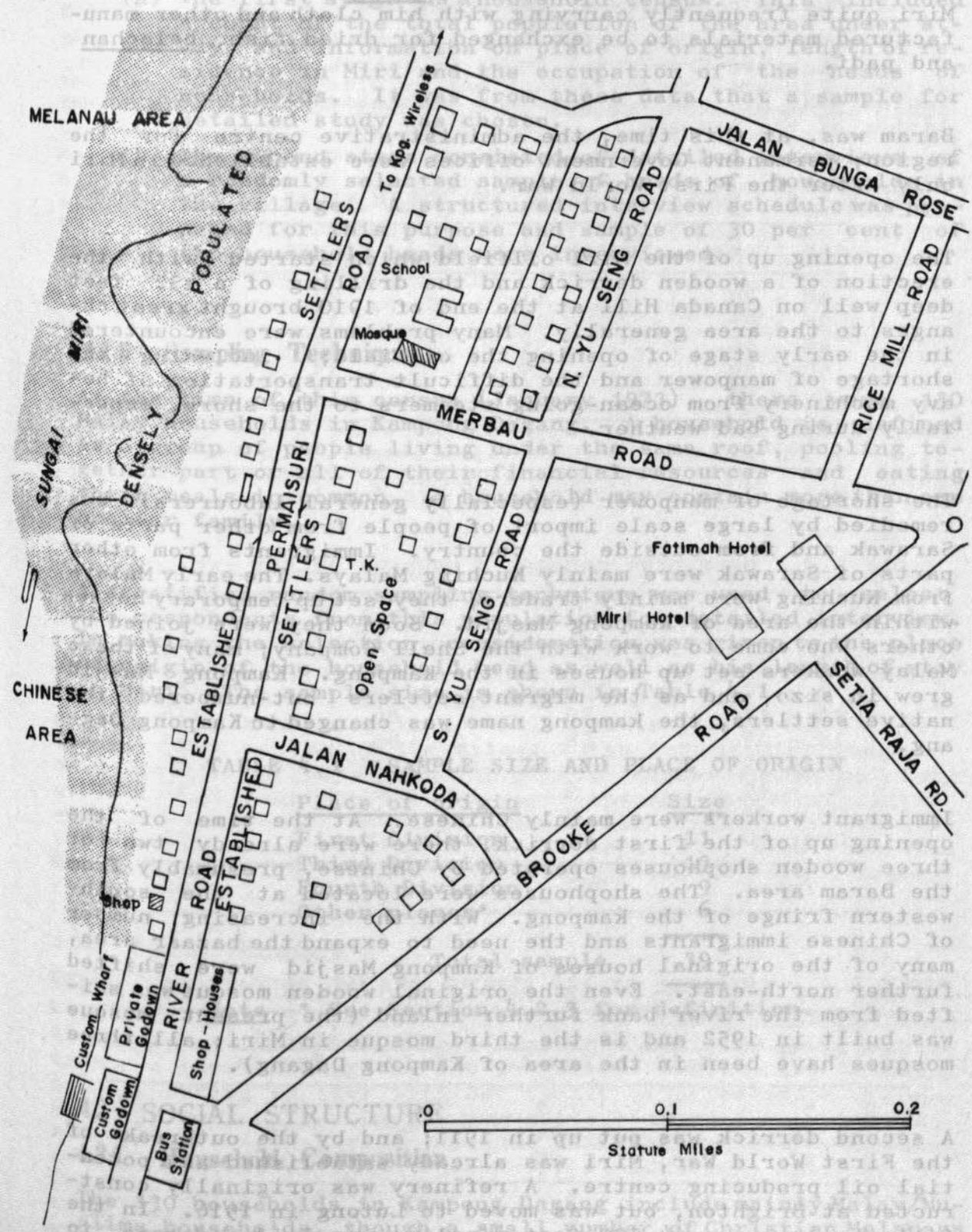
Prior to the coming of outsiders to Miri in 1910, there were small isolated villages of Orang Miri in the area at Kuala Miri, Krokop, Bakam, Loak, Pujut and Piasau. These villages were situated along river banks and consisted of individual attap houses. The inhabitants lived by farming and fishing. Except for the village at Kuala Miri, the others still exist, although they now contain larger, ethnically mixed populations.

At the present site of Kampong Dagang (but more towards the bazaar area), there was already a small village of Orang Miri. It was known as Kampong Masjid because of the presence of a wooden mosque in the village. The villagers lived in separate attap houses built along the river bank and lived mainly by fishing and farming.

Originally, the Orang Miri came from the Baram area. According to Datuk Muip, an Orang Miri, who is a prominent leader of the Malays in Miri District, the Orang Miri who are now settled in the area were originally driven from their homes in the Baram by hostile tribes. Linguistically, they belong to the Daleh dialect groups, which is predominant in the Ba-

FIGURE 4.1

KAMPONG DAGANG VILLAGE
MIRI - TOWN AREA



ram, and speak a language akin to that spoken by the Orang Bakong, Orang Narum and Orang Belait. A small number of this dialect group is also found in the Sibuti area.

There was no Chinese settlement of any size in Miri prior to 1910. There was, however, a Chinese trader who came from the Baram to do barter trading with the Orang Miri. He sailed to Miri quite frequently carrying with him cloth and other manufactured materials to be exchanged for dried fish, belachan and padi.

Baram was, at this time, the administrative centre for the region; permanent Government offices were established in Miri only after the First World War.

The opening up of the Miri oilfield which started with the erection of a wooden derrick and the drilling of a 452 feet deep well on Canada Hill at the end of 1910 brought great changes to the area generally. Many problems were encountered in the early stage of opening the oilfield; including the shortage of manpower and the difficult transportation of heavy machinery from ocean-going steamers to the shore, especially during bad weather.

The shortage of manpower (especially general labourers) was remedied by large scale import of people from other parts of Sarawak and from outside the country. Immigrants from other parts of Sarawak were mainly Kuching Malays. The early Malays from Kuching were mainly traders; they set up temporary houses within the area of Kampong Masjid. Soon they were joined by others who came to work with the Shell Company; many of these Malay workers set up houses in the kampong. Kampong Masjid grew in size, and as the migrant settlers out-numbered the native settlers, the kampong name was changed to Kampong Dagang.

Immigrant workers were mainly Chinese. At the time of the opening up of the first derrick, there were already two or three wooden shophouses operated by Chinese, presumably from the Baram area. The shophouses were located at the south-western fringe of the kampong. With the increasing number of Chinese immigrants and the need to expand the bazaar area, many of the original houses of Kampong Masjid were shifted further north-east. Even the original wooden mosque was shifted from the river bank further inland (the present mosque was built in 1952 and is the third mosque in Miri; all three mosques have been in the area of Kampong Dagang).

A second derrick was put up in 1911; and by the outbreak of the First World War, Miri was already established as a potential oil producing centre. A refinery was originally constructed at Brighton, but was moved to Lutong in 1916. In the following year, a 14 500 feet pipeline was laid undersea to transfer oil from the refinery to tankers at sea. The refin-

ery gave rise to the growth of Lutong town.

4.1.4 Methodology

The information presented in this report was gathered in two stages:-

(a) The first stage was a household census. This included a count of the total population of the area under study, and information on place of origin, length of residence in Miri and the occupation of the heads of households. It was from these data that a sample for detailed study was chosen.

(b) The second stage consisted of detailed interviews of a randomly selected sample of heads of households in the village. A structured interview schedule was prepared for this purpose and sample of 30 per cent of the household heads were interviewed.

4.1.5 Sampling Technique

At the time of this census (January 1973), there were 130 Malay households in Kampong Dagang. A household is defined as a group of people living under the same roof, pooling together part or all of their financial resources and eating their meals in common. A household may contain more than one nuclear family.

A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the respondents from this population for detailed interview. In making the selection, consideration was given to the place of origin of the household head as well as his length of stay in Miri. The sample size is shown in Table 4.1.

TABLE 4.1 SAMPLE SIZE AND PLACE OF ORIGIN

Place of origin	Size
First Division	11
Third Division	13
Fourth Division	9
Other places*	6
Total sample	39

Note * See Section 4.2.3 for definition.

4.2 SOCIAL STRUCTURE

4.2.1 Household Composition

The 130 households in Kampong Dagang include mainly Malay/Muslims households, though a small number of Christian Melanaus

is also included. The total population of Malay/Muslims is 888, giving an average household size of 6.8 which is very much larger than the average of 5.9 for the Study Area. In fact, in Miri South (Census Circle 34), the average household size is 5.2. The big household size in Kampong Dagang is mainly attributed to two factors:-

(a) the prevalence of extended families within the Malay/Muslim community of the area; and

(b) the inclusion in the household of relatives who have migrated from rural areas in search of jobs in Miri.

Tables 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 give the characteristics of the population of the kampong.

TABLE 4.2 HOUSEHOLD HEADS AND THEIR WIVES BY AGE GROUP

Age group	Household heads	Wives*	Total
18 - 29	11	23	34
30 - 39	29	31	60
40 - 49	31	36	67
50 - 59	25	13	38
Over 60	18	8	26
Total	114	111	225

Note * 16 household heads are female.

TABLE 4.3 DEPENDENT HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS BY SEX AND AGE GROUP

Age group	Male	Female	Total
0 - 5	57	71	128
6 - 12	82	99	181
13 - 17	52	66	118
18 - 29	66	85	151
30 - 39	13	23	36
40 - 49	9	8	17
50 - 59	2	7	9
Over 60	12	10	22
Total	293	369	662

TABLE 4.4 CHILDREN BY AGE GROUPS, SEX AND EDUCATIONAL STATUS

Age group	In school		Not in school		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
0 - 5	2	3	55	68	128
6 - 12	74	84	8	15	181
13 - 17	28	29	24	37	118
Total	104	116	87	120	427

The population is, on the whole, young. 48.2 per cent is below the age of 18 years (see Table 4.3) and is ineligible for any kind of paid employment outside the household. If those within the 18 to 29 age group are included, a big proportion (69.2 per cent) of the population falls below the age of 30 years. However, a mere 34 household heads and their wives (see Table 4.2) are below 30 years of age. The majority of household heads (excluding Orang Miri) are originally in-migrants.

Another characteristic of the population of Kampong Dagang is the predominance of females over males. Looking at the population as a whole, 406 (45.7 per cent of the population) are males, while 482 (54.3 per cent) are females. In the lower age group (below 18 years old), the female proportion gets slightly bigger, that is, 55.3 per cent females compared to 44.7 per cent males (see Table 4.4). In terms of sex composition, therefore, the population structure of Kampong Dagang differs from the population of the Study Area and the Fourth Division. According to the 1970 census figures, the Study Area has 53.1 per cent males and 46.9 per cent females, while for the Fourth Division the proportion is 52.4 per cent males to 47.6 per cent females. A partial explanation for the higher proportion of the females over males, is that the males (especially the youngsters) are more mobile than females; the author believes that more males from the kampong have moved elsewhere for better employment such as joining the Armed Forces or by going to Brunei.

Table 4.4 shows the number of children in school. Urban dwellers regard sending their children to school as essential, at least to primary school level. A big proportion of children of both sexes within the age range of 6 to 17 years are in school; and of these the majority are in primary school. More male children (excluding those within the 0 to 5 age group) than female are in school. This reflects the traditional value system of the Malays which puts greater emphasis on education for boys than for girls. Higher education for girls is not considered to be important and therefore girls who fail the Common Entrance Examination are not encouraged to continue their studies. This is especially true with the Melanaus and other recent in-migrants from the rural areas.

4.2.2 Family Structure

The extended family is not an uncommon feature of the household structure of the Malays in Kampong Dagang. Extended families are mainly three generational and of the matrilocal type - a married daughter (or daughters) takes in her husband and off-spring to live with her family of orientation to form a single household. In the community studied, 29 households contain three-generation extended families and four contain four-generation extended families. In addition, there are 14 expanded nuclear family households which incorporate the brothers, sisters and/or cousins of the household head or his wife. On the whole, however, simple nuclear family households predominate.

4.23 Ethnic Background and Place of Origin

TABLE 4.5 PLACE OF ORIGIN AND YEARS OF ARRIVAL IN MIRI OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Years of arrival	Place of origin				Total
	First Division	Third Division	Fourth Division	Other places	
1960 onwards	6	12	6	1	25
1946 - 1959	7	25	5	9	46
1930 - 1945	7	2	2	6	17
1910 - 1949	8	1	-	4	13
Born in Miri	8	3	18	-	29
Total	36	43	31	20	130

Places of origin of household heads are shown in Table 4.5. Thirty-six are from the First Division, 28 came directly from Kuching and the remaining eight were born in Miri of Kuching Malay parents. With the exception of three who came from rural areas in the Division, the others are all from Kuching municipal area. Forty-three are Melanaus from the Third Division (mainly the Mukah District); 31 are from the Fourth Division, 15 are local Orang Miri, and 16 came from Bintulu, Sibuti and Marudi; the remaining 20, classified in the 'other places' column in Table 4.5, came from Brunei (six), Indonesia (five), Second Division (four), India (three) and Fifth Division (two).

Kuching Malays are earlier in-migrants to Miri, only about 36 per cent came after 1945, that is after the Second World War. Of the Melanaus, 86 per cent came after the war. In-migrants from other districts of the Fourth Division are also later arrivals, and those from 'other places' are more evenly distributed. For the purpose of categorising the migrant settlers into 'established settlers' and 'new settlers' the year 1945, that is, the year when the Second World War came to an end in Sarawak, is taken to be the dividing line. Therefore, those who came before 1945 (an almost negligible number came during the war years) are considered as established settlers, and those who came after 1945 are newcomers. (Kuching Malays and Orang Miri are in this sense established settlers, while the Melanaus and in-migrants from other rural areas are new settlers.) It is an interesting point to note that the majority of those who came after the war were from rural areas of the Third and Fourth Divisions.

The Kuching Malays and the Melanaus show interesting contrasts in life styles. The established Kuching Malays have their houses favourably located along both sides of River Road and away from the river. The houses are modern in appearance and are adequately furnished. Houses are sufficient-

ly high and each is usually provided with open land space for gardening and a playground for children. The Melanaus occupy the river bank and many houses are built on stilts above the water. Most houses are small and poorly constructed; houses are very close to one another and are often joined by wooden footways raised on stilts, leaving almost no open space for playgrounds. A number of the Melanaus are tenant occupiers.

The other groups of established settlers, especially the Orang Miri and the Indonesians resemble the Kuching Malays in almost every respect. The Brunei Malays are an exception; though they have lived in the village for many years, their occupation as fishermen necessitates their living on the river edge together with the Melanaus. New settlers of non-Melanau origin join the Melanau in the already congested area of the river bank. (Further differences between the established and new settlers are described in the sections on occupation and social stratification.)

4.2.4 Occupation

(a) Occupation of Household Heads

The occupations of the household heads in Kampong Dagang are classified as shown in Table 4.6.

The Melanaus are mainly fishermen and sailors - 21 of them are fishermen and 12 are sailors (group 7). The fishermen and sailors are mainly employed on Chinese owned small launches or barges (tongkang). Very few of the Melanaus are in "other occupations" - the four under group 8 are labourers - mostly in Chinese godowns; and the two in business and trades are Malay/Melanau from Sibu. Three are unemployed and are widows.

The Kuching Malays are found in all the above occupation categories except fishing. Seven are workers in transport; four of these are drivers of Government vehicles and three are sailors, that is juragan (or captain) of small launches. Six are small businessmen and traders. Three are service workers - a postman, a hotel worker and a hospital attendant. Four are classified under groups 1 and 2; this includes a religious teacher, a hospital technician, a police officer and an assistant land officer. Two are under group 8, both are production process workers with the Shell Company. Of the large number of Kuching Malays classified as unemployed, seven are retired Shell employees, and three are widows.

The occupational structure of the Orang Miri and others from the rural areas of Fourth Division is somewhat similar to that of the Kuching Malays - they are found in every category except group 5. Under group 7, there are five sailors (two are juragan), two drivers of Government vehicles and one telephone operator. The three under group 9 service are hospital attendants (orderlies). In the unemployed columns, three are

TABLE 4.6 OCCUPATION STRUCTURE OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Occupation group No.	Occupation tupe	Division 1st	3rd	4th	Other places	Total	%
1	Professional, technical and related workers	2	-	2	-	4	3.1
2	Administrative, executive and managerial workers	2	-	1	-	3	2.3
3	Clerical workers	2	-	4	-	6	4.6
4	Business and sales workers	6	2	2	6	16	12.3
5	Agriculture, forestry, fishing	-	21	-	3	24	18.5
6	Miners	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	Workers in transport and communication	7	12	8	4	31	23.8
8	Craftsmen, production process workers and labour	2	4	3	2	11	8.5
9	Service, entertainment and recreation	3	1	3	-	7	5.4
10	Occupation not stated	2	-	-	-	2	1.5
11	Unemployed	10	3	8	5	26	20.0
	Total	36	43	31	20	130	100

Shell retired workers and five are women. The last group of villagers who are classified under 'other places' are also found in varied occupations. Six are in business and trades - these are Indian and Indonesian in origin; three Brunei Malays are fishermen; four workers are in transport of which three are drivers of Government vehicles and one is a sailor. Two people in group 8 are manual labourers, five in group 11 are retired civil servants and Shell workers.

In general, the majority of the household heads in Kampong Dagang are salaried employees. Apart from the 24 fishermen, 16 small businessmen and traders and a few unemployed widows, the rest are wage earners or have been wage earners. However, a large proportion of the wage earners are workers in transport - mainly drivers of Government vehicles and sailors on small launches and barges; very few are engaged in professional, technical, administrative, managerial or clerical services.

With the Melanau group, there is no difference in the type of occupation held by the earlier and later migrants. All are predominantly fishermen and sailors. These are jobs to

which they are accustomed and to which entry does not require formal training. In their home area the Melanau migrants were sago farmers and/or fishermen. Many combined the two occupations (see Table 4.9), the farmers became fishermen during favourable seasons. Moreover, the majority of Melanau migrants were without formal education (only two out of thirteen indicate having attended primary school) or any kind of formal occupational training prior to migration. As such, they could not expect to enter into jobs which require formal education and/or specialised skills. Besides, being late comers, they have not much choice except to enter occupations where entry is not competitive and to which they are accustomed. Fishing, sailoring and manual labour were or are not preferred by established residents and are occupations which are considered as low class by the Kuching Malays.

With the Kuching Malays and other Malays, later migrants are found in occupations which are comparatively low in both status and income as compared to those held by earlier migrants. Of those coming after 1945, six are sailors (two of them juragan), three hospital attendants, two are working with the drilling company offshore and two are village traders. Of four others who occupy supervisory/technical jobs, two are Government employees who were transferred to Miri and another two are ex-Shell employees from Seria who were re-employed in the civil service. These four cannot be considered as in-migrants in the true sense.

The earlier migrants, including the Orang Miri, occupy or used to occupy better jobs. Many of them work or have worked with the Shell Company and are now retired. This does not mean that the earlier migrants had more education or were better qualified (than later migrants) for the good jobs. They were fortunate that at the time they came to Miri, job openings in the Shell Company were plentiful and less competitive. Moreover, at the time they entered the service of Shell, there were very few really qualified persons in the service, and therefore the chances of promotion to better posts were good. It is not surprising that those who are still with Shell have good positions. But today entry to good jobs has become very competitive and requires specialised skills. Migrants to urban areas from the countryside, in general, lack any kind of occupational training and experience for skilled jobs, and do not generally have the educational basis for a ready acquisition of new skills. Table 4.7 shows the educational status of migrants.

It can be seen from Table 4.7 that very few Melanau migrants had any kind of formal education before they migrated. This is true for both the early and later migrants. Except for two who completed primary education (these two are very recent migrants and are in their early twenties), the others have no education at all. The majority of migrants from other areas have a few years of primary education. Of the Kuching Malays, nine out of ten have been to school and two of the recent migrants (from the First Division) have had some sort of an occupational training.

TABLE 4.7 EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF SAMPLE HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Origin	Education level		
	Primary school	Secondary school	No schooling
First Division			
Post 1945	3		
Pre-1945	5	1	1
Third Division			
Post 1945	2		8
Pre-1945			3
Other places			
Post 1945			1
Pre-1945	4		1
Total	14	1	14

Note: One household head from First Division is born in Miri.

(b) Occupations of Other Members of the Household

The majority, 64 out of 102 (62.7 per cent), of the male members of the households (excluding the household heads) are employed (see Table 4.8). Within the 18 to 29 age group, 47 out of the 66 (71.2 per cent) are employed; only 11 are reported as not being employed and eight are still schooling. Those who are presently unemployed are recent school-leavers who are still looking for employment.

TABLE 4.8 OCCUPATIONS OF OTHER MALE MEMBERS OF HOUSEHOLD

Occupation group number	Divisions			Other	Total
	First	Second	Third		
1	2		1		3
2					-
3	6	1	1	2	10
4	1				1
5		2		1	3
6					-
7	3	4	1		8
8	9	15	1	3	28
9	6	2	2	1	11
10					-
Total	27	24	6	7	64

A large proportion (about 44 per cent) of the working males are found in group 8 - craftsmen, production process workers

and labourers, 19 are manual labourers engaged mainly in building construction or the Public Works Department; and the remainder from this category are mechanics mainly with the offshore drilling companies. Eleven are found in group 9 - two are firemen, two are watchmen and the rest are office boys and hospital attendants. Ten are in clerical work (group 3), and eight are employed in transport and communication, mainly as sailors and drivers.

The type of employment held by the youths also tends to vary according to their place of origin. Obvious differences in types of employment can be observed between youths whose parents came from Mukah and those whose parents came from Kuching and other places. Melanau youths are predominantly "blue collar" workers - 12 of them are manual labourers, four sailors, two fishermen and two hospital attendants; only one is doing clerical work. The Melanau youths show a tendency to move away from the traditional occupations of their parents, that is, as fishermen and sailors. Many of them tend to go into wage employment, and because of their low educational achievement, they predominate in the manual labour force. Kuching Malay youths are found in various categories - six are doing clerical work, two are teachers, five are mechanics, two are drivers of Government vehicles, a few are office boys or firemen, and only four are manual labourers. Those from the Fourth Division and other places follow the occupational pattern of Kuching Malays.

Only 16 females are working as wage earners. The majority are from the First and Fourth Divisions. Four are teachers and five are clerks. With Melanau females, maids (amah) in the hospitals and private homes are popular - five of them are working as maids, and only one Melanau girl works as a clerk.

On the whole, the other members of the household are employed mainly as casual labour, other blue collar workers and in low grade office jobs. With the established settlers (the First Division and Fourth Division Malays) many of the educated children have moved outside the locality to work or live elsewhere in Miri. Many are occupying Shell quarters or have acquired their own house elsewhere. A number of youths in the 18 to 29 age group are continuing their studies in West Malaysia. Those who are left behind are teachers, lower paid office workers and manual workers who are unable to change their occupation and move elsewhere.

43 COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

A village such as Kampong Dagang which is situated within a larger, more complex urban community is not easily defined spatially or socially. Very few of the villagers can specify where its boundary exactly is, and what separates it from other villages. As the number of houses keeps growing and the land area keeps expanding, new boundaries are created all

the time. New villagers have difficulty in establishing themselves as members of the community, many lack a sense of belonging and do not share interests in common with established villagers. It seems only the established villagers have a sense of belonging to the village. The greater physical mobility of the villagers and the prevalence of mass media of communication break both the physical and social boundaries of the village; its members no longer confine their social activities within the boundaries and social relationships and membership in organisations usually transcend the village community and extend into other areas of Miri town.

4.3.1 Formal Organisations

Kampong Dagang lacks any kind of formal organisation or club that serves only the members of the kampong. Organisations that exist and to which some members of the kampong belong are open to all Malays in Miri. In the sections that follow, brief descriptions are given of some of these formal organisations.

(a) The Malay Association

The Malay Association is the oldest established formal organisation for Malays in Miri. Started by a small group of Kuching Malays and Orang Miri, it aims to represent the non-political interests of the Malays, especially in social matters. At present, the organisation is inactive; very few people in the kampong know what it is doing, membership is slowly decreasing, and nobody knows how many members it has. Out of those interviewed, only six say they belong to the organisation, and these are old people who have been members from the time it started. No effort has been made to recruit new members, especially from the younger generation. According to popular opinion in the kampong, the committee which runs the organisation is ineffective and its president (a member of Kampong Dagang) has not been changed for a very long time. Since the president of the organisation is also an influential figure in the Miri Malay community nobody dares to challenge his position or compete with him for leadership of the club. In fact, no one knows whether or not an annual election has been held to elect new members of the committee. In a way, the organisation is run by a single man who appears to dictate policies and most of the activities of the organisation. Since the leadership is conservative, change within the organisation is slow and, as such, it discourages new membership among the modern educated Malays.

(b) Malay Youth Club

The youths group themselves in a youth organisation which basically has the same aim as the Malay Association. It caters

for the social interests of the youth, and serves as a body in which Malays with modern outlook can express their views and organise activities which are not normally acceptable to the older generation. At present the club has a total membership of 208, each member pays a subscription fee of $1 per year towards the club fund. The leadership of the club comes from the educated Malays. In early years, Kampong Dagang furnished the leaders of the club, but today, most of the leaders are Government employees living elsewhere in Miri.

The club hopes to organise the youths in order to promote the cultural and social interests of the Malays. It has cultural, sports and welfare sections, each responsible for organising appropriate activities.

(c) Miri Malay Charitable Trust

The Trust was formed immediately after the Second World War. When the war ended, relief in the form of food and clothing, was received from the United States and Australia. A large quantity of the clothing was warm clothing unsuitable for use in Sarawak. The Malays decided to sell their share and they obtained about $3 000 from the sale. A body called the Miri Malay Charitable Trust was formed to manage the money. It was decided to build a ten-unit block of wooden shophouses for renting. The investment proved successful. A few years later, the Trust Management Committee decided to use the proceeds together with a substantial loan from the bank to construct a ten-unit single storey, concrete shop-block to replace the wooden shophouses. These shops stand in Brooke Road and are rented at $200 per unit per month.

In 1952, when the wooden mosque was ordered to be demolished to give way for bazaar expansion, the Trust took over the financial responsibility for building a new concrete mosque which now stands at the fringe of Kampong Dagang.

The Trust at this time owns:-

- Miri mosque;
- ten units of shops;
- cooking pots for rent;
- cash in the bank amounting to about $40 000.

Part of the money is used for the maintenance of the mosque, a small allowance to mosque officials, financial aid to needy Malays, donations to Malay students from Miri going for further study abroad and for other social purposes.

The Trust is managed by a seven-man committee with Datuk T.K. Muip bin Tabib as chairman. Only the treasurer, who does the routine work of collecting rents for the Trust, receives a

small allowance from the Trust. Both the chairman and the treasurer are established settlers of Kampong Dagang. The committee members seem to be permanent; many of them have been members from the time the Trust was formed. This committee is also responsible for the welfare of the mosque.

(d) Other Formal Organisations

Other formal organisations to which Malays in Kampong Dagang can belong include Kabajikan Mati (Funeral Welfare Association), the Melanau Association, the Women's Institute.

The Funeral Association has a very small membership mainly the older generation. Its leadership comes from the Malay of Kampong Dagang. The Association contributes financial assistance to a member's family in case he or a member of his family passes away.

The Melanau Association theoretically caters for the general interest of Melanaus in Miri. According to informants, it is almost dying and nobody knows exactly what is going on in the organisation.

The Women's Institute is an active organisation. Membership is open to all women in Miri regardless of ethnic background. Its chief organisor is a daughter of a Kuching Malay from Kampong Dagang.

In general, formal organisations tend to be inactive and disorganised. Unlike Chinese community organisations in Sarawak which are always actively involved in community works, Malay organisations are normally affected by internal conflicts both between the members themselves, and between members and the leaders. Jealousy and mistrust are normally the sources of conflict, leading to unwillingness on the part of sections of members to co-operate with the leadership. This contributes to the static and almost dying state of many Malay organisations as typified by the Malay Association and the Melanaus Association.

(e) Political Organisation

Political activities are organised. Political parties, in their early years of formation (in the early sixties) were active in recruiting members among urban Malays. At that time, there were two (Malay - identified) political parties, and conflicts among members of Kampong Dagang occurred along party lines. Some villagers became members of Party Negara and others were members of Party Berjasa. Today, however, after

the two original Malay parties have resolved their differences and merged into one, enthusiasm for affiliation with a party has died out. Very few people from Kampong Dagang are registered party members; interest in political parties is no longer maintained except before an election or when a national political leader comes for a visit. There is little doubt that the majority of the Malays in Kampong Dagang support the single Malay party in any election.

As with other formal organisations already mentioned, in party politics too, the Malays of Kampong Dagang form part of the bigger Malay community of Miri. However, Kampong Dagang provides the leadership for the local Malays, and the most prominent Malay political leader in Miri District comes from the kampong.

(f) Informal Organisation

Members of an urban community, being more mobile physically and having varied interests, are not generally keen to be members of an ethnic or community organisation. This is partly because their social needs can be fulfilled elsewhere outside the village community, such as in informal groupings among friends sharing the same interests. Informal groups are numerous; they are geared towards specific objectives and are mostly ad hoc and dissolve immediately after the tasks for which they were formed have been achieved.

4.3.2 Social Activities and Relationships

Social activities are seldom, if ever, organised for the members of Kampong Dagang alone. Any kind of activity, be it religious, social or political involves all Malays in Miri. Religious activities which take place in the mosque are attended by all Malays/Muslims in Miri; guests invited to wedding ceremonies transcend village boundaries, and funerals are attended by friends and relatives from all over Miri. According to informants, no activity is ever organised for the people of Kampong Dagang alone. Even in small informal groups, such as the bergikir (singing of the Islamic hymns) group, people outside the village are included, and in public processions, such as the one held to celebrate the Prophet's birthday, the kampong is never represented under a separate section. All social activities, therefore, include all Malays/Muslims in Miri. Exceptions are small religious feasts (kenduri), such as makan arwah bulan which is held before the fasting month. Such a feast is usually on a very small scale involving a dozen or so guests who are almost exclusively neighbours. It is the practice for an established villager, organising such a small scale feast, to invite mainly other established villagers.

Social activities and relationships, therefore, in most cases

transcend village boundaries. The lack of any formal community organisations serving the population of Kampong Dagang alone and the greater physical mobility of the urban villagers lead, on one hand, to a breakdown of community spirit and, on the other, to an awareness that they are members of a bigger community of which their village is only a part.

4.3.3 Leadership

(a) Formal Leadership

Formal leadership in Malay communities is institutionalised in the person of Tua Kampong (TK), or Wakil Tua Kampong (WTK). Both are popularly elected. The TK is normally in charge of several villages which are represented by a WTK. Unlike the TK, the WTK is not salaried.

The duties of the TK are numerous; generally he is responsible for looking after the welfare of the villages and their members, for settling disputes within families and between one villager and another, and liaison between the villagers and the Government. The TK or WTK is also the keeper of customary law.

In a traditional community the TK or WTK is the centre of activities; every villager goes to him for advice and to hear his views on Government policies. The villagers rely on him for social, religious as well as political advice.

Apart from other qualities, the qualities most often sought by rural villagers in choosing a TK or WTK are religiousity and fairness. These two qualities are complementary to each other; the leader must be able to decide cases fairly according to the accepted customs as well as the teachings of Islam. It is generally the case that the elected leader is an aged man; this reflects the respect that members of a traditional Malay community have for their elders.

It seems that the position of TK in the community studied has lost much of its traditional function. The TK is no longer the centre of expert opinion within the community; such a centre has been split and the role has been assumed by various individuals, not necessarily within the village boundaries but also outside it. For instance, his role as an advisor on religious matters has been taken over by a religious teacher, and his opinion is no longer sought on matters of land disputes; as disputes over titled land normally go straight to the Land Authority. Moreover, the complexity of the needs of urban dwellers renders the TK incapable of meeting them and therefore he is normally left out of the picture. The TK, however, still maintains his role as a peace-maker in case of marital disputes, especially divorce, sexual relationships which are contrary to customary laws, and in solemnising marriages between a Muslim and a non-Muslim when one party becomes a Muslim.

The post of TK for the Malay community in Miri is held by a prominent Malay politician. He was appointed WTK for Kampong Dagang in 1937, and in 1948 he became a full TK for the entire Malay population in Miri District. He has held the post since then. He is also the leader of many of the formal social organisations for the Malays in Miri. When Sarawak gained independence, the TK became actively involved in politics, and was established as a political leader of a big section of the Malays in Miri area. He is a councillor in Miri District Council. He was conferred the 'Datukship' in 1972 which is a sign of recognition of his service by the present Alliance Government.

The TK is now an influential figure within Government circles, and his views carry a lot of weight in decision-making, at least in matters pertaining to Malay affairs in Miri District. Moreover, being a Datuk, his status has raised above the general Malay public, with the result that a big status gap exists between the TK and the rest of the villagers. This partly accounts for the fact that the ordinary villagers do not normally see him, if the reason for doing so is merely to seek his advice or view points. Social relationships between the TK and his villagers which exist freely in rural communities have become restricted in the case of the community studied. People only come to see him if they have something of real importance to discuss.

(b) Informal Leadership

Informal/opinion leaders exist within the village. This study did not examine their existence or how much influence they have vis-a-vis the formal leaders. However, from the author's own knowledge as a member of the community, the role of an informal leader is normally vested in religious teachers, the Tuan Imam, and other officials of the mosque and high ranking Government officers in Miri District. Apart from the Government officers, informal leaders are mainly religious men, who are well-versed in and follow strictly the teachings of Islam. They are respected by members of the community, and their views are sought especially on religious and other matters pertaining to Malay custom. Based on their knowledge of the Islamic religion they have established themselves as centres of expert opinion whose views are sought, especially by the older generation, and therefore, have taken away from the TK part of his traditional role. Informal leaders are mostly old men; this partly reflects the traditional value of the Malays emphasising the need to respect the elders. In Kampong Dagang, there are many of these informal leaders, and they are normally found among the established Kuching Malays.

In a transitional community, as exemplified by the Malay community in Miri town, salient conflicts for the leadership of the community exist between the older and younger generations. The latter group sees the older people as the keeper of traditional values and practices, and so must be replaced

if the Malays are to keep pace with modern development. The older generation, on the other hand, see the young people as a threat to the entire value system of the Malay community which according to them is founded on the teachings of Islam. Such a conflict now occurs within the Malay Association. In most cases, the older leaders triumph. This is partly due to the fact that many young Malays dare not challenge the authority of their elders openly, as the traditional value system emphasises respect for the elders. Also, to question the established value system openly can be interpreted as questioning the teachings of Islam. Not wanting to be ostracised, potential young leaders are obliged to remain quiet for the time being while waiting for the opportune time.

4.4 SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

The treatment of social stratification in this report is rather brief; the study did not attempt a detailed investigation of the phenomena.

The rigid class system of the Malay community which existed during the Brooke era no longer exists today; at least not as rigidly, and status conferment is not determined by the same factors. The Brooke Rajahs accorded the Malays a privileged position, and drew from among them a handful of officers to occupy the high administrative positions in the civil service and to act as advisors to the Rajah. These few administrators, due to their elevated positions and good salaries were regarded by the Malay public as people of high class and were referred to as Orang Berbangsa or 'Aristocrats' (Puteh, A.Y., 1966). Membership in this class became hereditary, members carried the title of datuk, their sons, abang and daughters, dayang. The children (especially the sons) were automatically taken into the Rajah service regardless of whether they had any formal education or not; and so their membership in the group was maintained.

With the transfer of power from the Rajah to the British Crown and finally with the gaining of independence this privilege was slowly withdrawn. Merit more than anything else became the entry ticket into the civil service; the abangs soon lost their monopoly of the administrative service, as other people with better education joined in. With the loss of this monopoly and the subsequent problems faced by their children in getting good jobs, the once exclusive class began to disintegrate and lost many of its characteristics. No longer is the title abang a ticket for entrance into the civil service. Similarly the title abang no longer carries the social status within the Malay community that it used to, unless the abang occupies a high position in the Government service or has accumulated wealth.

In traditional Malay society, social prestige was attached to positions of authority and/or wealth. The members of the ruler's family, their advisors and rich landlords were the

aristocrats. They enjoyed a high status and the respect of the ordinary people. Similarly, during the Brooke era, prestige was attached to positions which were close to the source of authority. All officers of the Rajah and members of their families enjoyed a high social status within the community.

The population of an urban Malay community is made up mainly of wage earners of one sort or another. Successful businessmen are few in number and have just started to emerge on the scene. In a society of wage-earners, one's job is therefore the main determinant of ones status within the community. On this premise, it is hypothesised that a new upper class has emerged in the modern, urban Malay community of Sarawak and is slowly replacing the hereditary aristocratic class of the Brookes' time. This new class is made up of a small group of college-educated Malays as well as those old timers who now occupy high positions in Government service. A good university education automatically obtains a high position in Government service. The class has not yet become rigidly structured as most of its members are pioneers and the first-generation to emerge. But members are slowly developing a class culture of their own which takes as its base the middle-class culture of western societies. They are materialistic in orientation. The ordinary people refer to this group of people as orang bersekolah tinggi (people with good education) or orang berpangkat (people with rank).

In the context of the Malay community of Kampong Dagang, the upper class is virtually non-existent. Two other classes, the middle and working classes predominate. The established Kuching Malays and other established settlers form the middle class. Occupationally, they are better off than the new migrants who form the lower working classes. The boundaries of the two classes overlap, and are easily crossed.

Members of the middle classes live in bigger and better looking houses, which are nicely furnished and painted both outside and inside. Their houses are situated very near the road and on both sides of it; and each house is normally surrounded by an open space for gardening.

The lower class is composed of manual labourers, sailors, fishermen and other daily-paid workers. Its members occupy the less respectable residential area of the village, especially the area immediately on the river bank. Houses are poorly constructed and made from poor quality materials. This area is heavily congested; houses are constructed very close to one another in a disorderly manner. They are small, and poorly furnished, and are often-times over-crowded.

The members of the working class admit they are different from those people living in bigger houses along the roadside. They refer to themselves as orang miskin (poor people), whereas those along the roadside are referred to as orang berduit (well-off people). Members of the middle class refer

to the working class people as orang kampong ayer or as kuli (labourers). Styles of life of these two groups of people vary somewhat; and social interaction, in most cases, is restricted between them. Within the context of the village, established villagers interact mostly with other people of similar socio-economic status; very little interaction takes place across class boundaries. In a sense, class-consciousness is beginning to separate members of the two different groups.

4.5 PROCESS OF URBANISATION

Regretably little can be said of the process by which rural people become town dwellers. The reasons for this are many. The author found that respondents were unwilling to talk at length about their experiences in Miri. Migrants came from different places of origin and emigrated to Miri at different times. The Kuching Malays, for instance, came from an urban area and for them there was very little or no need for social re-adjustment for urban life. Other established settlers, like Brunei Malays, came to Miri when it was just starting to grow. They came to Miri when it was a simple rural town and a big area of what is now Miri town was still covered with bushes. Jobs were readily available with the Shell Company. They experienced little change, except perhaps for a change in occupation. There are others who were born in Miri or who came to Miri when they were children with their parents. As they grew up in Miri, the question of adjustment to an urban area does not apply. It is only for the very recent migrants, mainly the Melanaus and a few others from rural areas, that the question of urbanisation applies.

4.5.1 Reasons for Migration

Except for 15 Orang Miri, all other household heads are in-migrants. Those originating from Kuching area are originally town/urban dwellers, while those from Mukah area and many of those from other areas are rural dwellers. In their villages, the former were engaged in non-farming occupations, while the latter were engaged in the production of primary products. The Melanaus from Mukah were engaged in one way or another in the production of sago and/or fishing; similarly those from other rural areas were farmers, mainly occupied with the cultivation of padi (see Table 4.9).

According to later migrants, living conditions in their home areas were discouraging. The Melanaus report that the sago industry could not be depended upon as the price of sago products was not stable. Fishing was seasonal and marketing was not well organised, so that most of the fish caught during the favourable seasons could not be profitably sold. Similarly, other rural migrants report discouraging conditions on their farms. Many were disillusioned with farming as an occupation and this acted as a motivation to look for alternative sources of income. In addition, Miri as an emerging

TABLE 4.9 OCCUPATION OF SAMPLED MIGRANTS IN PLACES OF ORIGIN

Occupation	Divisions			Other places	Total
	First	Third	Fourth		
Farming			3	1	4
Sago processing		3			3
Fishing		1			1
Sago and fishing		4			4
Logging and sago		2			2
Clerical work	2			1	3
Teacher	1				1
Sailor	1				1
Cake seller		1			1
Unemployed*	4	1		4	9
Labourer	1				1
Born in Miri	2	1	3		6
Total	11	13	6	6	36

Note * Those unemployed are those who came to Miri with their parents when they were still children.

industrial/service centre provided and still provides a strong pull through its promise of better job opportunities.

To migrants from urban areas, like the Kuching Malays, the growth of Miri as an urban centre with its promise of better job opportunities is a strong migratory pull. The promise of better job opportunities elsewhere, however illusory, can dislocate mobile people from their established homes even if they do not face real hardship in the home area.

Most of the later in-migrants report they had relatives in Miri before they came. These relatives furnished them with information about job opportunities in Miri. Relatives were and still are instrumental in getting later in-migrants to settle in Kampong Dagang. To potential emigrants, the presence of relatives in an alien land gives them some sense of security, as they know they can fall back on the relatives, if they get into any kind of difficulty in the initial stage. Thus relatives help to attract potential emigrants to the area.

4.5.2 Consequences of Migration

Recent migrants to Miri lack the education and skill needed for industrial or service jobs in the urban area. None of the recent migrants (refering to those coming after 1945) who were interviewed have an education beyond primary school, and such an education is not suitable for competing for a decent job in town. Initially these migrants met problems in obtaining jobs when they first arrived. Some of them, especially those with some years of education, tended to be choosy about jobs but they soon came to realise that their level of train-

ing did not entitle them to all forms of employment. They therefore had to accept low level occupations. Established settlers in Miri, mainly the Chinese, do not desire employment in manual labour, fishing and sailoring. These are the sorts of employment that later migrants are engaged in. However, most of the Melanaus appear to be contented with the jobs they have; although the wages are low; they said they feel relatively secure as they know they will receive their wages every month.

Housing is a serious problem. Many recent migrants have to rent rooms or houses in the village; others squat in the already crowded houses of their relatives. From our sample, we find one family is renting a house, and six stay with relatives. These newcomers, would, as soon as they have saved sufficient money construct their own houses on any available land space next to those of their relatives. This process of constructing somewhat temporary houses in already congested areas gives rise to slum conditions where houses are poorly built, often overcrowded and very close to one another.

Rural dwellers brought to a town situation are often shocked with the high cost of living in town. In the countryside they normally do not have to purchase all the vegetables, fish and meat they won consume. But in town, every household item has to be purchased, and as their income is low and their demands for consumer goods keep on increasing, they often have budgeting problems. In most cases, they have to subsist on a very low level of living.

Another point in the migration of rural people to Miri is that many of the migrants already had relatives living in Miri prior to their arrival. Apart from encouraging them to move, relatives provide new migrants with immediate companions, and in some cases, food and shelter as well. Relatives introduce them to new friends and possibly to potential employers in the town; and prevent them from being lonely or lost in an unfamiliar situation. In the absence of an organised body to look after the welfare of in-coming migrants, relatives, in many ways, facilitate the newcomers' gradual adjustment to new surroundings.

4.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Migration to Kampong Dagang and Miri town is generally spontaneous and unorganised. People move into town just because they are not satisfied with living conditions in their home area and because they expect they can find better employment and higher income in the town. Migration to the town is open to any individual and because there is no organisation (formal or informal) to look after the welfare of the migrants when they arrive in town, a range of social problems arises. Prominent among these problems are the finding of employment and housing. Migrants from rural areas are generally unskilled and lack the educational basis for ready acquisition of

skill, and also lack entrepreneural abilities as a result social adjustment for urban jobs is often difficult. They are forced to become urban proletariat, with a style of life notably different from that of established settlers.

Socially, the later migrants live apart from the established settlers. A social gap exists between the two groups of villagers, so much so that they cannot mix freely with one another. Ethnic difference contributes initially to the gap, but as no deliberate attempt is made by the established settlers or by an outside agency to bring the people of different ethnic backgrounds together the gap persists. Voluntary organisations, like the Malay Association and Melanau Association, are inactive, and have not assumed the task of helping socialise new in-migrants. If such associations could be strengthened perhaps with expert guidance and/or financial help from relevant Government departments, there is a good possibility that voluntary organisations could be used to help ease social problems that may occur with mass migration of rural people to urban areas, and thereby help to facilitate easy integration of new in-migrants with the established settlers.

CHAPTER 5

FIELD REPORT NUMBER FOUR

SOCIAL SURVEY OF THE LAMBIR LAND DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The "Terms of Reference" call for special attention to be given by the sociologists to the establishment of new communities and "types of settlement ... in the new area (designed) to achieve ... a harmonious, integrated society" (Para. 13). In this connection the following study was undertaken.

Lambir Land Development Scheme represents a new type of rural community in Sarawak. Founded in 1964, the primary purpose of the scheme - and others like it - is to improve rural living standards by resettling part of the farm population of the State in planned villages located in selected development areas of known agricultural potential.

Our assumption here is that such schemes as Lambir create new social conditions - including new organisations, regulations and incentives - in which selected settlers must make decisions and act. Our principal concern is to assess the suitability of these conditions in meeting the specific goals of the Government, management and the settler population.

In addition, we have sought, more specifically, to determine how and why settlers came to Lambir and from where and under what conditions they migrated. The relations they maintain with persons, and their use of institutions, located off the scheme are also examined, as these relations give indication of the likely problems and potential for integration that exist with regard to future migrants to the Study Area. Finally, Lambir is an ethnically mixed scheme; and its organisational make-up illustrates the problems that can be expected to occur when community groups with different social institutions and values are brought together in a single settlement complex.

We realise that many of the problems discussed in this report are familiar, and that in some cases solutions have been planned or are under consideration. It is felt, nevertheless, that a background to these problems is needed, however familiar they might be, so that they are not compounded by new policies based on a misreading of the consequences of existing programmes. Our suggestions are intended constructively and are not to be read as criticisms of individual officials or agencies.

5.1.1 Methodology

Information presented here is based on both structured and unstructured interviews. Unstructured interviews were carried out primarily with Tua kampong, Tuai rumah and other settlement leaders on the subject of migration, experiences involved in resettlement, grievances and the functions of scheme leadership. Structured interviews were conducted with selected household heads using a pre-prepared interview schedule. Both types of interviews were conducted during the evening in the respondents' house or bilek.

A form of stratified random sampling technique was used to select household heads for structured interviews. Ten Malay, twenty Iban and three Chinese respondents were selected proportionately from the main sub-groupings in each community, and represent respectively 35, 18 and 25 per cent of the total households in each community. The present population was settled in three phases and respondents were also selected proportionately from each phase.

Table 5.1 shows "Malay" respondents by ethnic groups and phase of settlement.

TABLE 5.1 MALAY RESPONDENTS

Ethnic group	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Total
Kedayan	1	1	1	3
Melanau	1	1		2
Miri Malay		3	1	4
Kuching Malay			1	1
Total	2	5	3	10

Table 5.2 shows Chinese respondents by dialect and phase.

TABLE 5.2 CHINESE RESPONDENTS

Dialect	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Total
Hakka		1	1	2
Foochow			1	1
Total		1	2	3

Iban settlers are divided into seven main sub-groups. These groups, or their core members, moved to the scheme as a unit under a single leader and generally came from the same home

area. Each group closely resembles a separate longhouse, even though its members may live in single family dwellings, and the leader is referred to as a Tuai rumah and is conceived of in much the same way as a traditional longhouse headman. We have therefore, drawn our sample proportionately from each of these groups; and Table 5.3 shows our Iban respondents by Tuai rumah and development phase.

TABLE 5.3 IBAN RESPONDENTS

Tuai Rumah	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Total
T.R. Spitt	2	2		4
T.R. Kiroh	1	2	1	4
T.R. Lawai		1	2	3
T.R. Maju	1	2	1	4
T.R. Anding	1			1
T.R. Mitoh		1	2	3
T.R. Manggang			1	1
Total	5	8	7	20

The counterpart sociologist, wrote an initial draft report of the present study and in addition carried out a more detailed investigation of the Lambir Co-operative Society the results of which are presented in Chapter 6 (Field Report Number 5).

In addition to interviews with settlers, conversations were held with management staff, teachers, medical personnel and others concerned with Lambir, and the Divisional Development Committee made available its extensive files on the scheme. Interviewing was done primarily between September and December, 1972, and unless otherwise stated the time period referred to here is within these dates.

5.1.2 Background

Shortly before independence an effort was made to establish a plan for the overall economic and social development of Sarawak. The result was the Sarawak Development Plan, 1964-68, which was eventually incorporated in the First Malaysia Plan, 1966-70. An integral part of both plans was the increased development of rural areas by establishing planned agricultural villages. In Sarawak these villages were originally set up under the "Rubber Planting Scheme B"programme (RPS 'B') initiated by the Department of Agriculture in 1964. A basic aim of the programme was to remedy the defects of earlier schemes in which rubber planting was promoted over extensive areas of the State without regard to soil or terrain conditions or prior study of transport and market problems. Under RPS 'B' planting was confined to selected areas of known

agricultural potential and accessibility and tappers were settled in planned communities characterised by a high level of management organisation. Part of the costs of development was debited to the settlers who in return became part owners in the scheme and received, upon repayment of their debt account, title to a house and a developed rubber lot.

Seven settlement scheme communities were established in Sarawak between 1964 and 1968 under this programme. They include, in addition to Lambir, Triboh (Serian District), Melugu and Skrang (Simanggang District), Maradong (Binatang District), Sibintek (Sibu District); and Lubai Tengah(Limbang District). All are rubber schemes and the main occupation of settlers is tapping and related activities connected with latex processing.

5.1.3 Objectives of RPS 'B' Land Settlement

In terms of social goals, RPS 'B' schemes were established with the following objectives (SDFC paper No. 1/65):

i) to transfer from the subsistence sector to the cash economy that segment of the population which is dependent primarily on the cultivation of hill padi;

ii) as a result of (i), to create a surplus of land to provide an adequate means of livelihood for those people who are landless or near-landless; and

iii) to supply amenities to a segment of the rural population that cannot be so supplied under existing circumstances.

Given these objectives settler selection was intended to give preference to persons practising shifting cultivation on a subsistence basis who live in areas without easy access to modern social amenities. In practice a more direct attack on the problem of land scarcity was made by also favouring those without land or persons whose holdings are uneconomically small regardless of whether they practise shifting cultivation or more sedentary forms of agriculture.

5.2 LAMBIR LAND DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

Lambir Land Development Scheme is located to the north of the main Lambir-Subis Development Area. The scheme village, known officially as Kampong Tunku Abdul Rahman, is situated on the Miri-Bintulu road nine miles south of Miri town. The scheme covers more than 3 000 acres and is bounded on the north and west by Chinese farms and on the east and south by forested

State Land. Scheduled bus service connects the scheme village to Miri town where most settlers do their principal shopping and a few hold permanent jobs.

5.2.1 Scheme Development

Of the total area incorporated in the scheme, nearly 2 000 acres have been cleared, terraced and planted with high-yielding rubber trees. Development was spread over four phases, as shown in Table 5.4.

TABLE 5.4 DEVELOPMENT PHASES AT LAMBIR

	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV	Total
Total acreage	568.9	920.9	1 613.8	248.5	3 352.0
Planted acreage	290.0	650.0	780.0	162.5	1 882.5
Date of planting	1964	1965	1966	1968	-
Number of settler households	34	68	72	0	174
Lots available	34	68	80	18	200
Vacancies	0	0	8	18	26
Lots in tapping	33	43	0	0	76
Non-resident	0	10	8	0	18
Non-tapping	1	15	64	0	80

(a) Phase I

As Table 5.4 shows, the area developed in Phase I consists of 290 acres of planted rubber. The area was allocated at the beginning of 1967 to 34 settlers who first moved to the scheme between 1964 and 1966. For the first two years following planting care of the trees was the responsibility of the management; after that lots were assigned to individual settlers. Titles were not granted until 1st January, 1967, although most settlers had already moved to the scheme and were employed from the outset in clearing and planting on a daily wage basis.

(b) Phase II

This phase covers 650 planted acres. Planting was done in December 1965 and settlers received title to their lots on 20th March, 1968. As in Phase I, the management looked after the trees for approximately two years before assigning them to settlers.

(c) Phase III

This is the largest phase and covers an area of 780 acres. As shown in Table 5.4 it was planted in December, 1966. The area is divided into 80 lots of which 72 are allocated. None of the settlers who received lots has yet been granted title. Tapping began in January, 1973.

(d) Phase IV

This phase covers only 162.5 acres and was planted in December, 1968. No settlers have yet been selected for Phase IV and the trees will not be mature until late 1974 or early 1975.

5.2.2 Land Ownership

The original plan at Lambir was to transfer developed holdings to individual ownership. In other words, selected settlers were to be made independent small-holders and part-owners in the scheme. Phase I and II settlers have already received titles to a single lot each. Each lot comprises roughly eight acres of planted trees. In addition most lots contain some unused land, which, in some instances, is suitable for other crops, including rice, so that the total area of land available to a settler may be as much as 12 acres. Each settler also receives a half acre residential lot in the scheme village. Initially it was intended that settlers should also receive a two-acre dusun lot to be used for growing subsidiary crops. However, the land selected for the purpose proved to be too infertile for normal cultivation. Part of it was leased to the Agriculture Department for an experimental cashew nut planting scheme. If the scheme proves successful, as appears likely, the land may eventually be given to the settlers as was originally planned.

In the meantime, while no permanent dusun lots have been set aside, some State Land has been made available for temporary annual cropping and considerable illegal encroachment into forest land has occurred in areas surrounding the scheme. Titles to rubber lots are grants in perpetuity free of premium and other fees, with an annual rent of $3 per acre payable after seven years when the trees planted on the lots reach maturity. Residential lots are leased for 99 years free of premium.

Phase III settlers, who make up more than 40 per cent of the total settler population, have not yet been granted titles to their lots. There is some uncertainty in the minds of both the management and the settlers whether such titles are likely to be granted at all in the immediate future. The present management, in particular, views the outright transfer of titles as a mistaken policy, as it makes the removal of non-resident settlers difficult. For the settlers, on the other

hand, the situation is a source of considerable dissatisfaction. They see themselves being treated less favourably than earlier settlers and feel that the Government has gone back on its agreement with them. Dissatisfaction is particularly marked among the Chinese settlers for whom the prospect of land ownership was central in their decision to join the scheme. For this reason, reportedly, a number of selected Chinese settlers have resigned from Lambir.

5.2.3 Management Structure

Lambir is managed by the Sarawak Land Development Board(SLDB). SLDB has been in existence for little more than a year and many of the policies and basic organisational aspects of the scheme were established well before SLDB was founded.

Planting was started at Lambir in 1964 by the Department of Agriculture. In 1966 the Department handed administrative responsibility for the scheme over to theDivisional Development Committee, an inter-departmental body chaired by the Resident which was, and remains, under the general guidance of the Divisional Development Officer. The Committee's responsibility extended only to administrative and policy matters; and the routine work of clearing and planting continued to be done by the Department of Agriculture. The Land and Survey Department surveyed the scheme and the Public Works Department constructed roads and installed piped water. Construction of housing was begun in May, 1965 by private contractors. A Land Selection Committee, with the District Officer as Chairman and six appointed representatives of the major ethnic groups in the District as members, was assigned the task of selecting settlers to participate in the scheme. For a variety of reasons, this set-up was found to be unsatisfactory and on 1st July, 1968, responsibility for the scheme, was entrusted to the Sarawak Development Finance Corporation (SDFC). SDFC was reorganised in March 1972 and was split into two separate agencies, the Sarawak Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) and the Sarawak Land Development Board(SLDB). Following reorganisation, SLDB assumed sole responsibility for Lambir and other land development schemes.

During the nine years of its existence Lambir has been managed by no less than four separate agencies not counting those less centrally involved in its operation. Many of the organisational weaknesses of the scheme are, in consequence, attributable to the lack of a continuous planning body that might otherwise have guided its development and ensured closer correspondence between its goals and actual operation.

5.2.4 Settler Selection

The formal goals of the RPS 'B' programme prescribe, in general terms the type of settlers for whom the schemes are meant to cater. Basically, these persons are subsistence cultivators who live in remote rural areas that cannot be adequately provided with schools, clinics or other social and material amenities. In addition RPS 'B' schemes were meant to ease the problem of land scarcity by making it possible for part of the farm population to abandon wasteful methods of land use, specifically shifting cultivation, and, more directly, by opening previously undeveloped land for colonisation by landless or near landless families.

(a) Point System

Potential settlers were screened by a Selection Committee and their suitability was measured according to a point scoring system. The system adopted was modelled on that used by the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA) in West Malaysia. Minimum qualifications in the case of Lambir were that a candidate be married, male and a Malaysian citizen eighteen years of age or over without a criminal record. In addition, the following modifications were made in the FELDA system:-

i) points were awarded in a scale of 0 to 10 for the number of dependents - with eight and above qualifying for a maximum number of points;

ii) inadequate land was a pre-emptive condition with total landlessness - including worthless land in this category - qualifying for twice the maximum number of FELDA points and the scale adjusted accordingly;

iii) agricultural background received twice the number of FELDA bonus points;

iv) no bonus points were awarded for skilled trades; and

v) physical fitness did not score points.

The rational for (v) was that the concern in choosing settlers is with an entire family unit and not exclusively with the labour capacity of the household head, and at least one settler was selected at Lambir with a severe physical disability. A description of the modifications made in FELDA procedures is contained in a memorandum from the Fourth Division Resident to the Federal Secretary (reference B/74/64 - dated 9th April, 1964) on file with the Divisional Development Committee in Miri.

Present guidelines are currently under review by SLDB, and, for this reason, there is a temporary moratorium on the recruitment of new settlers for Phase IV.

(b) Selection Procedures

Actual selection of settlers at Lambir, and perhaps most, if not all, RPS 'B' schemes, was never entirely consistent with the stated objectives of the programme.

One discrepancy is in the occupational background of those selected. Out of the 125 Malay and Chinese settlers originally offered a place on the scheme, 80 were wage employees or worked in occupations outside of agriculture. While Iban settlers were overwhelming rural in background, they also included a sizable minority of retired or redundant former Sarawak Shell employees. Less than a fourth of all settlers could, in any way, be considered as "subsistence cultivators". In addition it is clear that FELDA policy of rejecting settlers over 35 years of age was not followed at Lambir. A large number of early settlers, particularly Malay and Iban, were in their late forties or even early fifties at the time they entered the scheme. The disadvantage of this to SLDB is that, given the terms of loan repayment, most settlers will be unable to repay their loans during their active working life.

A major complaint of the current SLDB management is that Lambir settlers were not properly selected, and our own findings tend to support this view. In addition, it was found, in conducting follow-up interviews, that much of the background information on settlers used by the selection committee to determine their suitability was incorrectly recorded. Moreover, besides those settlers whose applications were formally screened, an additional group were admitted directly, as "approved settlers", without being interviewed or systematically chosen by the selection committee. Most of these persons were Iban who had lost their property and had been made homeless by the 1963 floods. Some were illegal settlers who could not return to where they had been living prior to the floods. Therefore their selection was made on social grounds as many were in need of immediate public assistance. Interestingly enough, "approved settlers" as a group more closely met the criteria set for settler selection than those who were formally screened.

There also appears to have been an effort to balance the scheme population racially, although this was never formally stated as an objective of recruitment. This is suggested, however, by the racial breakdown of the original group of selected candidates.

TABLE 5.5 RACIAL BACKGROUND OF SELECTED CANDIDATES

Iban	-	66 settlers
Malay	-	66 "
Chinese	-	67 "
Indians	-	1 settler
		200 settlers

(c) Selection Experience

Experience at Lambir clearly points up the importance of well-conceived selection procedures and careful adherence to the guidelines embodied in them. While the thinking of the

Land Selection Committee is not known, it is obvious that the majority of selected settlers resigned or failed to join the scheme, and this appears to be due in large part to faulty selection practices. Little more than half of all applicants were farmers by occupation and many had little apparent interest in developing the land they were given or were unwilling to invest the labour necessary to make the scheme succeed in its objectives. Some saw in Lambir a way of acquiring a house or a piece of land for reasons of security or as a financial investment. Once it was clear that the requirements of loan repayment prevented them from obtaining clear control of their lots without maintaining and eventually tapping the trees provided them, many applicants chose to withdraw from the scheme. Not all resigned outright and the problem of non-residence is also related to poor selection. The low price of rubber was also a factor and some settlers found it more profitable to seek employment off the scheme.

It is the view of the current management that sub-standard maintenance of lots and the refusal of settlers to establish permanent residence are attributable to the former policy of granting settlers immediate title to their holdings. Our own findings do not fully bear out this view. They suggest instead that these problems are due in large part, first, to poor selection procedures and, secondly, to a lack of adequate safeguards in the terms by which titles are transferred whereby the managing agency failed to reserve for itself the right to remove settlers who refuse to work the land provided them.

It must also be noted that Lambir was initially plagued by organisational and planning problems that caused a number of settlers to withdraw out of discouragement who might otherwise have made valuable participants in the scheme.

The slope of some rubber lots, for example, was exceedingly steep, and slippage proved to be so serious during the early stages of development that there was some discussion of relocating the scheme on more suitable terrain.

The village site was located at the extreme northern tip of the scheme. As a result, many lots are difficult to reach because of their distance from the settlers' houses. A few are as much as two hours' walk from the nearest tractor drop off point. Moreover, residential land proved to be so infertile that most settlers found it difficult to grow even simple garden crops around their houses. This was especially serious as dusun lots were never provided. The land originally set aside as dusun area was unsuitable and later on, when other land was obtained on temporary lease from the State, no adequate provision was made for its division and assignment so that conflicts and misunderstandings were said to be common between those who sought to use it. Some settlers report that only after planting a piece of land did they discover

that others had a prior claim on it. In retrospect, it is easy to see that the area should have been surveyed, its boundaries fixed and settlers' rights clearly defined before any of it was allocated. Further, allotments should have been made at the time of entry onto the scheme and been available from the first year of settlement when their need for supplemental income was most acute. Early settlers also claim that the supply of herbicides and other requisites was not systematically regulated and depended partly on the personal relations which an individual was able to establish with the Field Assistants.

Also a number of the originally selected Chinese settlers resigned from the scheme in order to take up land being made available about the same time for pepper planting. In this case, those who left saw a better chance of improving themselves in a different type of scheme.

5.2.5 Transportation

On-the-scheme transport is provided by a tractor and open trailer. Settlers are picked up around 6 a.m. and carried by tractor to drop off points as near as possible to their lots. They are picked up again around noon and returned with their latex to the scheme processing centre. The point at which they are dropped off and picked up is often at some distance from their lots; in some cases it may be as much as two hours' walk when carrying heavy latex containers. Bicycle loans of up to 90 per cent of the cost, or a maximum of $100, are available but the terrain is too difficult in some cases to make the use of bicycles practical. Consequently a reason given by some settlers for not regularly tapping is that it takes them so long to walk to their lots that there is not sufficient time left for a proper morning's work. The scheme itself is poorly designed from a transport point of view and the settler village is located at the extreme northern tip of Lambir. It is hard to imagine at the moment how the settlers will solve this problem by themselves once they become full owners of their rubber gardens. At the moment some have built temporary field-houses in their lots where at least some members of the family stay while they are tapping, leaving others to carry in their latex.

Transportation off the scheme to Miri is provided by bus or by licensed or "pirate" taxis. The bus runs three times a day and the fare for a single one-way trip is $1. Settlers complain that the bus is seldom on schedule so that they have no way of knowing when it will arrive or depart. At $2 for a single-person round trip, it is also expensive. Taxis regularly stop at the entrance to the scheme to pick up passengers. The fare is negotiable, but is generally around $1.50 for a single trip. In addition five or six cars owned by settlers are used from time to time as "pirate" taxis, and, in

some cases, provide their owners with a significant source of income. One settler operates a private school bus service for students attending secondary school in Miri charging $15 per child per month and providing two trips daily.

Most Malay and Chinese settlers, and about half of our Iban respondents, indicate that they do the bulk of their shopping in Miri town. Six of the ten Malay household heads hold jobs in Miri and commute daily. One Chinese respondent operates an unlicensed shop and travels each day to Miri to purchase goods and deliver his children to school.

Table 5.6 shows the frequency of visits to Miri by ethnic group.

TABLE 5.6 FREQUENCY OF VISITS TO MIRI

	Malay	Iban	Chinese
Almost daily	6	-	1
Once to several times a week	-	1	1
A few times a month	4	9	1
Less than once a month	-	10	-
Never	-	-	-

Among the six Malays who visit Miri daily, two indicate that they also regularly visit Bintulu, Batu Niah, Bekenu and Beluru. These visits are connected with their duties driving trucks to these towns. No Iban settler in our sample says he ever visits these towns and only one Chinese respondent occasionally visits Batu Niah in search of work. Iban, clearly, have the most restricted contacts off the scheme.

5.2.6 Service Facilities

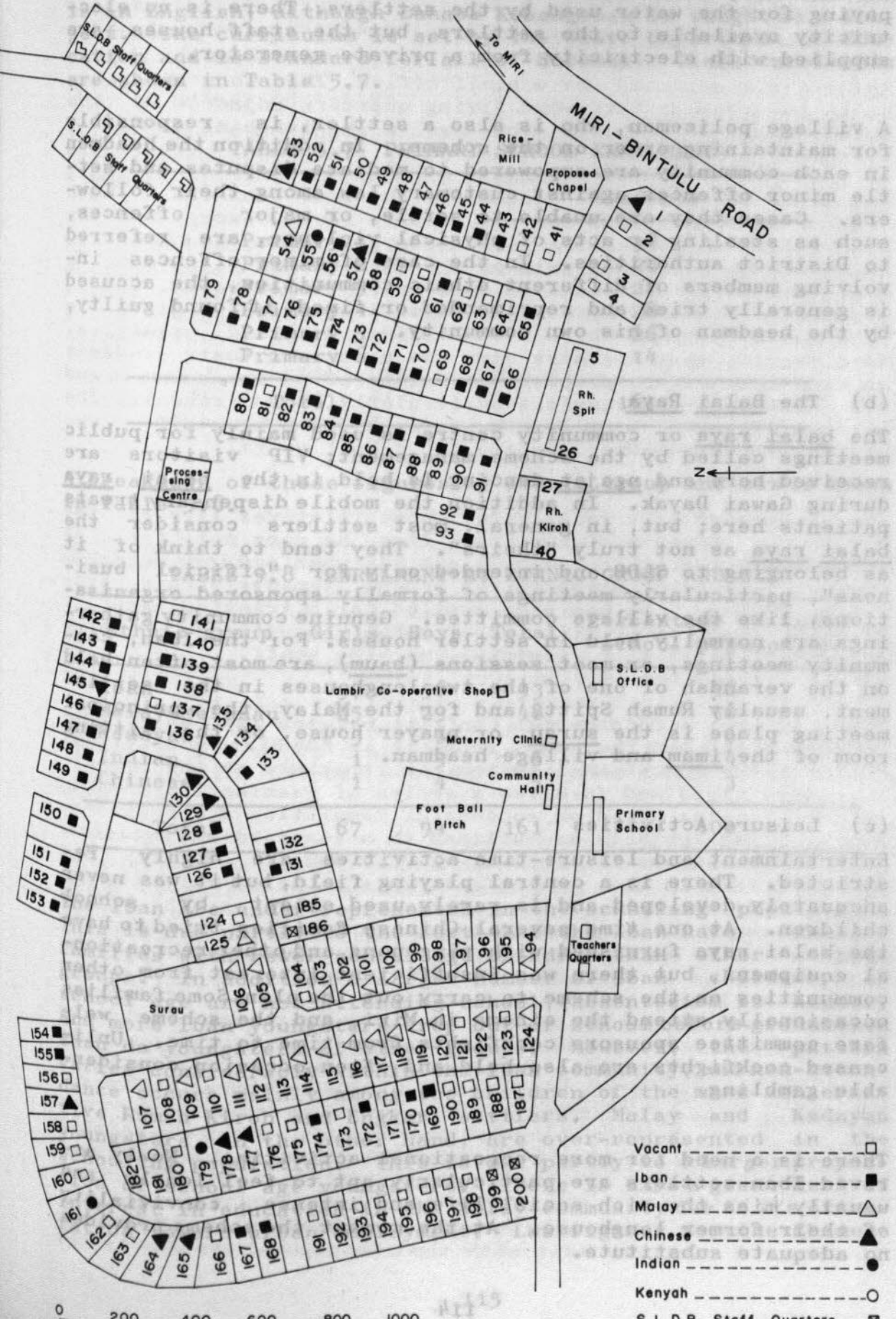
The main facilities available on the scheme consist of a community centre (balai raya), a maternity clinic, a full-primary school (primary one to six), a co-operative store and padi mill, a rubber factory, a football field, a sepak raga court and a playground. These facilities are located in the central area of the scheme village (see Figure 5.1) and are described below, with the exception of the co-operative store and rubber factory which are dealt with in later sections.

(a) Amenities

The villagers are supplied with running water for bathing and household use from open stand pipes situated near the scheme roads for every four or five houses. With the completion of the new Miri water plant adjacent to the scheme piped water

FIGURE 5.1

TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN VILLAGE



could be supplied directly to each house provided that the owner pays the installation costs and a monthly water rate. No one has yet arranged to do so, and, at the moment, PWD is paying for the water used by the settlers. There is no electricity available to the settlers, but the staff houses are supplied with electricity from a private generator.

A village policeman, who is also a settler, is responsible for maintaining order on the scheme. In addition the headmen in each community are empowered to mediate disputes and settle minor offences against customary law among their followers. Cases they are unable to settle, or major offences, such as stealing or acts of physical violence, are referred to District authorities. In the case of minor offences involving members of different ethnic communities, the accused is generally tried and reprimanded or fined, if found guilty, by the headman of his own community.

(b) The Balai Raya

The balai raya or community centre is used mainly for public meetings called by the scheme management; VIP visitors are received here and ngajat dancing is held in the balai raya during Gawai Dayak. In addition the mobile dispensary treats patients here; but, in general, most settlers consider the balai raya as not truly "theirs". They tend to think of it as belonging to SLDB and intended only for "official business", particularly meetings of formally sponsored organisations, like the village committee. Genuine community gatherings are normally held in settler houses. For the Iban, community meetings, or moot sessions (baum), are most often held on the verandah of one of the two longhouses in the settlement, usually Rumah Spitt, and for the Malay the principal meeting place is the surau, or prayer house, or the sitting room of the imam and village headman.

(c) Leisure Activities

Entertainment and leisure-time activities are highly restricted. There is a central playing field, but it was never adequately developed and is rarely used except by school children. At one time several Chinese families tried to have the balai raya furnished with ping-pong and other recreational equipment, but there was insufficient interest from other communities on the scheme to carry out the plan. Some families occasionally attend the cinema in Miri, and the scheme welfare committee sponsors cockfights from time to time. Unlicensed cockfights are also held and often occasion considerable gambling.

There is a need for more recreational activities. Newly arrived Iban settlers are particularly apt to feel lonely and usually miss the rich social life and intense conviviality of their former longhouse. At the moment the scheme provides no adequate substitute.

5.2.7 Education

(a) Lambir Primary School

A full primary school is located on the scheme. Instruction is in English, although Bahasa Kebangsaan is taught as a subject. The curriculum is set by the State Department of Education and is standard for all of Sarawak. Class enrolments are shown in Table 5.7.

TABLE 5.7 PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT

	Students
Primary 1	38
Primary 2	28
Primary 3	27
Primary 4	28
Primary 5	26
Primary 6	14
Total	161

A breakdown of these figures by ethnic group and sex is shown in Table 5.8.

TABLE 5.8 ENROLMENT BY ETHNIC GROUP AND SEX

Ethnic group	Girls	Boys	Total	Percentage of total school population
Iban	37	56	93	58
Malay-Melanau	25	23	48	30
Kedayan	3	6	9	6
Indian	1	5	6	4
Chinese	1	4	5	3
Total	67	94	161	100

The Iban are under-represented in the schooling population. This is due partly to the fact that the Iban have smaller families with fewer school age children than other ethnic groups. In addition a larger number of Iban children of school age are not attending school, absenteeism is higher, and more Iban youngsters drop out of school before graduation than do youngsters of other groups. However, the pattern varies considerably within the Iban community, and non-attendance occurs mainly among the children of the more conservative Rumah Kiroh and Engkari settlers. Malay and Kedayan youngsters, on the other hand, are over-represented in the schooling population. This is due partly to a larger proportion of school age youngsters. There is also a great deal of interest in education in the Malay community due to its orientation toward urban employment. Low figures for the Chinese

community are due partly to the fact that a number of Chinese families send children to schools off the scheme.

The present primary school building is a modern concrete structure built in 1967 by the Miri District Council. It contains six classrooms and a staff office. The Council also built two rows of furnished living quarters adjacent to the school that are provided rent-free to the teaching staff.

The staff consists of a headmaster and four teachers. Each teacher is responsible for one primary level, except for the headmaster, who teaches a combined primary five and six class. Teachers are hired and paid by the Miri District Council. Most come from town areas in other parts of Sarawak. As a group, the values they hold are almost completely alien to life on the scheme, which most consider dull and primitive. As a result, most teachers view the parents of their students as unco-operative, apathetic or uninterested in education and are quick to seek transfers particularly to town schools. The average length of stay for the current teaching staff, excluding the headmaster, is one and a half years.

The headmaster is a local Malay whose relatives live in the Miri area. Because of his local ties, he does not feel as isolated as the other teachers and has remained long enough to develop a sense of pride in the accomplishments of his students. However, he has also applied for a transfer, and it is clear that Lambir, like other rural communities, faces great difficulties in retaining teaching staff.

There is also a fundamental conflict between the objectives of the scheme and the goals implicit in the State educational system. The educational system, as it exists at the moment, is highly rigid and involves a series of examinations leading to certificates based on successful completion of a programme in specified subjects as outlined in a standardised syllabus. As a result, there is virtually no freedom of subjects and little effort is made to put materials in terms which are directly understandable to the students. There is also little encouragement of independent inquiry and almost no effort is made to foster students' interest in their surroundings. Moreover, there is no syllabus for agriculture or technical subjects. A clearly perceptable attitude of most teachers, whether they openly voice it or not, is that such subjects are inferior to those that form the basis of education for an urban white-collar job. By ignoring or denigrating agriculture and the immediate experience of the settlers' children, schooling tends to undermine their pride in themselves and the goals for which the scheme was founded which basically have to do with improving the status of the rural population.

This problem is far reaching and cannot be easily overcome. It does not entirely rest with the educational system itself.

Parents expect education to be removed from their present situation and generally look upon it as an avenue of escape from the countryside, and this point of view is reinforced not only at school, but throughout society.

(b) Secondary Education

All primary six students are required to sit for Common Entrance Examination and those who pass are eligible to attend a public or Government aided secondary school.

Lambir students do relatively well and each year a half or more of those who sit for the examination are advanced to secondary school. In 1971, 12 students - seven boys and five girls - were selected for secondary education and chose to attend schools as follows:-

Miri (St. Columba's)	8
Batu Niah	3
Lutong	1
Total	12

There is no secondary school at Lambir and those going for further education must leave the scheme. Although no tuition is charged for State schools, parents must pay school fees, transportation and other incidental expenses; purchase books, uniforms, etc., and provide their children with pocket money. For students studying outside of Miri, parents must also pay boarding fees. As a result, secondary education is beyond the means of many families or represents a severe financial burden. On the other hand, at least two Malay settlers send children to a private secondary school at their own expense, indicating the intense concern which many families have with education.

In addition to formal schooling, there is a Koranic study group organised by the Malay community, and while it is primarily religious in orientation, it, and other groups like it, also promote literacy, and our interviews indicate that most, if not all, older Malay respondents are literate in the Jawi script.

(c) Education Background

In addition to youngsters who are not attending school, a large proportion of those who begin primary school drop out before they complete primary six. For nearly all of those who fail their Common Entrance Examination, primary school marks the end of their formal education. The present educational background of our sample of the settler population is shown in the following:

	Malay	Iban	Chinese	Total
Working population				
No formal education	9	29	3	41
Primary level	5	12	3	20
Lower secondary	1	-	-	1
Middle secondary	-	-	-	-
Total	15	41	6	62
Schooling population				
Primary school	16	19	3	38
Lower secondary	4	5	1	10
Middle secondary	1	-	-	1
Of school age but not attending school	3	6	2	11
Total	24	30	6	60
Under school age	18	17	5	40

Roughly two-thirds of the working population at Lambir is without any formal education. In contrast, nearly all of their children receive at least some primary schooling. Iban informants in particular, many of whom came from remote rural areas, feel that a major attraction of the scheme is improved educational opportunity for their children, and even though many Iban youngsters drop out of school, the educational level of the younger generation is notably higher than that of their parents.

5.2.8 Health Services

Health standards on the scheme are generally good. Chronic complaints are relatively minor, mainly worms and minor respiratory and skin infections, and the settlement is free of malaria and serious malnutrition. For most settlers, health facilities at Lambir are markedly better than in their original home area and serious health problems are largely restricted to newly arrived settlers. Health facilities on the scheme consist of a mobile dispensary and a maternity clinic. In addition a rural health supervisor, employed by the Medical Department, is resident on the scheme and is responsible for checking on the general cleanliness of settler houses and latrines.

(a) Maternity Clinic

The maternity and infant care clinic is operated by the Miri District Council and is perhaps the most successful service offered on the scheme. The clinic is staffed by a professionally trained midwife who is assisted by a medical orderly.

The midwife attends three deliveries per month on the average. There are, in addition, some two or three unattended deliveries annually, nearly all of them in the Malay community where the resistence to modern health treatment is strongest, particularly in areas related to sex and reproduction. The midwife also performs pre-natal examination. Cases involving complications, or likely complications, are referred to the Government Hospital in Miri. Six weeks after delivery the baby and mother are examined and at this point the mother is advised as to the availability of family planning. All deliveries are performed at home and the midwife visits the expectant mother's house prior to delivery to give advice on cleaning and preparing the interior. She also advises the expectant mother on hygiene, nutrition and infant care.

The midwife also looks after the general health of the infant until the age of five. This includes providing a series of inoculations, principally BCG, polio and smallpox, and offering demonstration sessions concerned with food preparation and diet. Mothers also bring infants with injuries or general health complaints to the midwife. Mothers are expected to attend the clinic during regular hours, if possible; however, the midwife lives at the rear of the clinic building, and, as the only health officer permanently resident on the scheme, she is often consulted when emergency attention is required. In addition, some mothers forget or are unable to attend the clinic at regular hours, so that the midwife and her assistant make frequent house calls on settler families.

The midwife attends nearly 500 calls per month in the clinic and makes close to 100 house calls. Between 80 and 90 per cent of all calls concern child or infant care.

Since mid 1972, the midwife has also provided family planning advice; before that women were referred to Miri. At the present time the clinic sells contraceptive pills at half price. Sixty-six women are regularly practising contraception, 59 Iban, three Chinese and four Malay. Here, as with obstetrical care, Malay women show considerable conservatism. For some the topic is "shameful" or "embarrassing" (*malu*) and those who come to the midwife for birth control advice generally do so covertly. With this exception, modern health practices are fully accepted by the settlers, and as the figures above show, are heavily used.

(b) Mobile Dispensary

The scheme is visited every Friday morning, between 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., by a mobile Road Dispensary Unit consisting of a hospital assistant, aid and driver. The assistant attends patients and dispenses medicine in the *balai raya*. Most cases involve minor respiratory infections, abdominal complaints - chiefly diahorrea and worms - or muscular pains and headaches. Serious cases are referred to the outpatient clinic

in Miri. Between 30 and 40 patients come for attention each week.

The timing of the dispensary's visit to the scheme is inconvenient as the settlers' workday begins at 6 a.m. and ends around 1 p.m. The assistant makes allowance for this by providing medication, in the case of minor illness, on the basis of described symptoms without requiring the patient to be actually present. But, it is clearly preferable that the dispensary's visits be rescheduled so that they occur in the afternoon, when most settlers have returned from their rubber gardens.

The settlers have two complaints with regard the health care. First, there is no emergency transport available on scheme. Those suffering a serious illness or injury cannot wait for the weekly dispensary, and bus or taxi transportation from the scheme is available only irregularly during the daylight hours. Consideration should, therefore, be given to providing the scheme with a telephone - located in the maternity clinic or the home of the village policeman - that could be used at all times to dispatch an emergency vehicle to the scheme.

Secondly, the settlers complain that while health care for children is good, that for working adults is inadequate. Specially, they note that, while a resident midwife is available on the scheme to treat infants and small children, no comparable medical officer is available to treat adults. The visiting dispensary is available at a time which is convenient only for those who are not actively working, mainly women and children, and so is looked upon as duplicating a service already provided by the midwife.

5.2.9 Shopping

(a) Lambir Co-operative Society

The only shop licensed to operate on the scheme is run by the Lambir Scheme Multi-purpose Society, a settler-subscribed co-operative. The Society also runs a padi mill.

For the third quarter of 1972, the Society had 159 members and a share capital of $3 565; the total turnover on sale of goods from the first of the year amounted to $44 138.52. The Society shop is located near the centre of the village and was built in 1967 with the help of a $10 000 Government grant.

The performance of scheme co-operatives has been a universal disappointment in Sarawak, and Lambir is no exception,

although the scheme shop has generally done better than most. Since the beginning of the year turnover has decreased by $7 875.84, as compared to the same period of 1971, and there has been a slight decrease in the number of paid up shares (a reduction of 65). The total amount of padi milled by the Society during the period was 619.54 piculs, as against 878.06 piculs for the corresponding period of 1971. Business continues to decrease as the number of settlers who receive a maintenance allowance, part of which is paid in the form of a local purchase order (LPO) for goods in the shop, declines, and once maintenance payments end in January, 1973, the shop, at least in its present form, may cease to have enough patronage to remain financially viable.

Because of the scheme's proximity to Miri, the majority of families do most of their shopping in town and rely on the co-operative shop only for occasional minor purchases. The Iban are the exception. The co-operative is often identified with the Iban community and Iban settlers are the only ones to do the bulk of their shopping in the scheme store.

It is unlikely that the scheme shop will ever replace Miri as the principal shopping area. Besides the proximity of Miri, most settlers feel that the shop is poorly run and dissatisfaction with its operation is widespread, even among the Iban. The price of most items is substantially higher than in Miri, there is far less variety to choose from and some goods, including essential items, such as powdered milk, are frequently out of stock and the store has shown little profit to its shareholders.

The padi mill operates only during the rice harvesting season. Milling prices at the co-operative mill are generally lower than outside the scheme, but many settlers prefer to take their padi to a private mill because the operator provides free transport of their rice from close to their fields.

At the present time the majority of shareholders in the society are Iban. On the average, Iban are also the largest shareholders, owning 3.5 shares per household compared to roughly one share per household for Chinese and Indian settlers. In addition, three of the five members of the co-operative management committee are Iban, including the chairman. The other two are a Chinese and a Malay. Besides a full-time shop manager, who is Chinese, the society employs a shop assistant and a part-time padi mill engineer, both of whom are Iban from the scheme.

Because of its close connection with the Iban community, many Malay and Chinese settlers are indifferent or feel that the operation of the Society has little significance to their own community. The shop is considered not so much a "settler's shop" as an "Iban shop". Most Iban, on the other hand, while

they would like to see the Society continue to operate, are dissatisfied with the way it is run, especially as they have invested heavily in shares. Moreover, some who arrived early on the scheme helped construct the present shopbuilding. While they patronise the shop, despite high prices, most feel that, as shareholders, they have received little return in the form of dividends. In addition, the situation has tended to split the Iban community and the present co-operative committee is generally identified with a particular faction.

At the time of writing, the Lambir co-operative is not working properly. The basic reason for a co-operative - to retain income on the scheme - is not being fulfilled. The settlers do most shopping in Miri town, where goods are substantially cheaper, and even goods bought from the co-operative shop are originally purchased by the manager from Miri suppliers at or near retail price, so that there it makes no economic difference whether goods are purchased from Miri by the settlers directly or through the co-operative. Experience at Lambir and other schemes suggested that unless its operations can be greatly improved, some alternative to the co-operative needs to be considered (see Chapter 9, Field Report No. 8).

In addition to the co-operative store, several unlicensed shops are currently operating on the scheme. Because of their covert nature and the constant opening and closing of the smaller ones, it is impossible to say exactly how many exist. Some operate with little more than a single shelf of goods while one, run by a Chinese settler, does a volume of business perhaps equal to that of the co-operative store. Prices are generally higher, but credit may be more easily obtained, and most unlicensed shops, unlike the co-operative, are opened for business at all hours.

(b) Coffee Shops

A block of three small stalls is currently under construction near the co-operative shop. When completed, the stalls will be leased to settlers - an Iban, a Chinese and a Malay - for operating coffee and eating shops. As an experiment in private settler business, the experience of these shops will be interesting to follow, although it is likely that three identical shops of this nature are too many for the settlement to support.

5.3 SETTLER POPULATION

Table 5.9 shows the current settler population by age and ethnic group. These figures, it should be noted, were collected in November, 1972 and are incomplete; not included are non-resident families and Iban settlers who were living at the time in Landau or temporary field houses on their rubber lots. An additional 62 persons, all but two of them Iban,

TABLE 5.9 LAMBIR RESIDENT SETTLER POPULATION

Ethnic group	Adult (16 and over)		Children (0 - 15)		Total	Percentage of total population
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Malay	37	36	61	51	185	24.6
Iban	130	116	136	133	515	68.4
Chinese	10	7	12	8	37	4.9
Kenyah	2	-	-	-	2	0.3
Indian	2	2	6	3	13	1.7
Total	181	161	215	195	752	100.0

are living as temporary guests in settlers' households; we have not included these people in our census as they have no formal status on the scheme. They form an interesting group, however, and some are experimenting with scheme life and plan eventually to apply for a place at Lambir or on other schemes being opened. A more detailed breakdown of the settler population is presented below by ethnic community and household.

5.3.1 Age and Sex

The population is relatively young; 410 persons out of 752, or 55 per cent, are below 16 years of age. The percentage under 16 varies between community group, from 61 per cent among the Malays to 52 per cent among the Iban. Except for the one, highly atypical Kenyah household, children are predominant in all community groups. The figure for Malays reflects both a high birth rate and more mature family units. Malay household heads are generally older than their Iban or Chinese counterparts. Their average age is 43.3 years, and eight out of nine male household heads in our sample are 40 years of age or older. The average age of Iban household heads is 41.1 years, and the spread in age is wider, with only 10 out of 19 in the comparable senior age group. The average age of Chinese household heads is 40.3 years and the range in age is narrow. Phase III settlers were slightly younger at the time of entry onto the scheme than earlier settlers.

Males outnumber females in all age categories and communities. The sex ratio for the scheme population as a whole is roughly 53:47.

5.3.2 Ethnic Communities

Table 5.10 shows the numbers and average size of households by ethnic community.

TABLE 5.10 HOUSEHOLDS BY ETHNIC GROUP

Ethnic group	Number of households	Mean household size
Malay	28	7.2
Iban	109	4.9
Chinese	12	5.1
Kenyah	1	2.0
Indian	2	6.5
Total	152	5.2

The "Malay" community is, in fact, an ethnically heterogenous one. Those who speak Malay as their first language comprise less than 15 per cent of the total community population, although this percentage is increasing as Malay replaces other languages, particularly Miri, as the common linguistic medium. The Orang Miri are the largest sub-group and like the closely allied Narum originally spoke a Kenyah language which is now falling into disuse.

TABLE 5.11 MALAY HOUSEHOLDS BY ETHNIC SUB-GROUP

Sub-group	Number	Percentage of total
Orang Miri	13	46.4
Narum	2	7.1
Melanau	4	14.2
Kedayan	5	17.6
Malay	4	14.2
Total	28	100.0

The first Chinese settlers to the scheme were predominantly Hakka; since then most have been Foochow from the Third Division. The Kapitan China is a Hakka settler from Phase II; however, the Foochow community has its own unofficial, but highly active, community headman. Table 5.12 shows the breakdown of the Chinese community by dialect.

TABLE 5.12 CHINESE HOUSEHOLDS BY DIALECT

Dialect	Number	Percentage
Foochow	8	67
Hakka	4	33
Total	12	100

Iban settlers are grouped by Tuai rumah or headman. Two households are at the moment without an acknowledged headman; one is that of the village policeman and the other is a mixed Malay-Iban household.

TABLE 5.13 IBAN HOUSEHOLDS BY TUAI RUMAH

Tuai Rumah	Number	Percentage
T.R. Spitt	21	19.2
T.R. Kiroh	23	21.1
T.R. Anding	7	6.4
T.R. Maju	22	20.2
T.R. Lawai	15	13.8
T.R. Mitoh	13	11.9
T.R. Manggang	6	5.5
Without Tuai Rumah	2	1.8
Total	109	100.0

5.3.3 Ethnic Groups by Development Phase

Table 5.14 shows the distribution of households by ethnic group and development phase.

TABLE 5.14 HOUSEHOLDS BY DEVELOPMENT PHASE

Ethnic group	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Total
Malay	5	18	5	28
Iban	29	31	49	109
Chinese	-	2	10	12
Indian	-	1	1	2
Kenyah	-	-	1	1
Total	34	52	66	152

5.3.4 Household Size and Composition

Household size and composition varies by ethnic community. Malay settlers have the largest households, as is shown in Table 5.10. This is due partly to a high fertility rate. Malay families are overwhelmingly large, and it is notable that among our respondents, 12 children were born to Malay settlers since they joined the scheme and only nine to Iban settlers, despite the fact that we interviewed twice as many Iban as Malay household heads. The difference is also due to the fact that Iban settlers and their wives are generally

younger than Malay couples. Moreover, two Iban respondents in our sample are not yet married and one couple has only recently married. Their youthfulness means that a larger proportion of Iban couples have just entered their main childbearing years, and therefore more children can be expected, while most Malay settlers are passing out of their childbearing period and their families can be expected to decrease in size as their children marry and leave the parental household. Also there is greater variation in the age of Iban household heads, and the population includes a larger proportion of very aged couples many of whom have left grown-up children in their former longhouse.

The majority of households in all groups oonsist of a single nuclear family. All Malay and Chinese households contain a single nuclear family and 12 of the 20 Iban households in our sample, or 60 per cent, are also nuclear family units. Of the remainder, six (or 30 per cent) contain three-generation stem families and two (or 10 per cent) fragmented nuclear families. The latter include a widow living alone and a widow plus her unmarried son.

Average household composition by age group and sex is shown for the principal ethnic communities in Table 5.15.

TABLE 5.15 AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION BY AGE GROUP

Community	AGE GROUPS															
	0 - 6		7 - 14		15 - 19		20 - 29		30 - 39		40 - 49		50 - 59		60 and over	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Iban	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.1
Malay	1.1	1.1	0.9	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4	0.2	-	-
Chinese	1.0	0.7	1.3	0.7	-	-	-	0.3	-	0.7	1.0	-	-	-	-	-
Average	0.7	0.7	1.0	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1

Household size increases in the normal course of events from the time the unit is established until the children of the founding couple marry and set up separate households of their own. This pattern of growth and eventual decline in household size is shown in Table 5.16; and Table 5.17 shows the number of household heads in different age groups by ethnic community.

TABLE 5.16 HOUSEHOLD SIZE BY AGE GROUP OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

Age group of household head	Number	Percentage	Household size
20 - 29	3	9.0	3.3
30 - 39	8	24.2	4.6
40 - 49	12	36.4	7.4
50 and over	10	30.3	5.7

TABLE 5.17 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS BY AGE GROUP

Ethnic group \ Age group	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and over	Total
Iban	3	6	4	7	-	20
Malay	-	2	5	3	-	10
Chinese	-	-	3	-	-	3
Total	3	8	12	10	-	33

5.35 Labour Force

Table 5.18 shows household labour force figures, broken down by age group, for the total scheme population in average and by major ethnic community.

TABLE 5.18 LABOUR FORCE PER HOUSEHOLD

Community	Age group					Total		
	15-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	Male	Female	Combined
Iban	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.5	1.3	0.7	2.0
Malay	1.0	0.2	0.3	0.7	0.5	1.5	1.0	2.5
Chinese	-	0.2	0.4	0.9	-	0.9	0.6	1.5
Average	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	1.3	0.8	2.1

Clearly labour availability, and its distribution between age categories, varies by ethnic community. Moreover, it appears from our household survey that these figures under-estimate the actual labour situation. Considering only rubber tapping, and not counting other forms of employment, the number of active workers per household is roughly two in the case of the Malay and 2.2 in the case of the Iban. If other employed are included, the actual number of workers for the scheme as a whole is 2.5. This includes all ethnic groups. Broken down by sex, this figure consists of 1.4 males and 1.1 females per household. By "workers", we refer only to persons between 15 and 65 years of age who are actively working or are seeking employment.

5.3.6 Migration

Lambir was established on land which was previously unoccupied; therefore all of those who took up a place on the scheme are migrants from other parts of Sarawak.

TABLE 5.19 PLACE OF BIRTH OF IBAN HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Community leaders (Tuai Rumah)	Second Division								Third Division								Fourth Division				Total household head by Tuai Rumah
	Saribas	Bt. Lupar	Undop	Pantu	Lubok Antu	Saratok	Skrang	Banting	Katibas	Oya	Bt. Rejang	Kapit	Entabai	Machan	Sarikei	Kanowit	Tatau	Bintulu	Bakong	Miri	
Spitt	1	1						1		13	2	1					1			1	21
Kiroh						1	4		1	2	5	1	3	1	2		1	1	1		23
Anding	5								1									1			7
Maju			4	1	9				1	1						1	2	1	1	1	22
Lawai					10	1	1			1							1	1			15
Mitoh					10						3										13
Manggang											4							2			6
Totals	6	1	4	1	29	2	5	1	3	17	14	2	3	1	2	1	5	6	2	2	107
Percentage of total	46								40								14				

(a) Attitudes Toward Movement

In Iban society there exist well-developed traditions of migration, in the form of bejalai - to journey for the purpose of prestige or material profit - and pindah - to move as a family or community in order to establish permanent residence in a new place - that continue to play an important role in the movement of rural families. While many older people are unwilling to leave their longhouse, younger families can and do move, and one of our findings is that most Iban settlers at Lambir were already migrants before they decided to join the scheme. Some first learned of Lambir, or arrived in the local area, in the course of a bejalai expedition or while searching for a new place to settle. A large number moved several times before they finally took up a place on the scheme.

Table 5.19 shows the place of birth of Iban household heads and the geographical spread of Iban migration to Lambir.

With Chinese and Malay settlers there appear to be somewhat greater obstacles to movement, particularly in the latter case. Malay migration to Lambir has been restricted largely to the surrounding area, as shown by Table 5.20. There appears to be considerable reluctance of rural Malays to migrate outside their home areas, although a well-defined pattern of urban migration exists involving educated Malays in both Government and private employment. One exception is Melanau migration from rural areas of the Third Division, but this, too, has been largely urban-oriented and occupational preference has been for wage jobs in the timber or fishing industries rather than in farming.

The lack of scope for individual initiative built into settlement schemes like Lambir is a strong disincentive to Chinese migrants many of whom have had prior experience in commercial farming. A more attractive programme to such persons would be one that makes land available for agricultural development, perhaps on a long-term lease basis conditional on development, but leaves the choice of crops, their mix, patterns of cultivation, and so on to the settlers themselves.

TABLE 5.20 PLACE OF BIRTH OF MALAY HOUSEHOLD HEADS

Ethnic group	Fourth Division			First Division		First Division	Total
	Miri	Baram	Bintulu	Mukah	Sibu		
Melanau			1	3			4
Kedayan	5						5
Narum		2					2
Miri Malay	13						13
Malay					1	3	4
Total	18	2	1	3	1	3	28
Percentage of total	75			14		11	100

(b) Reasons for Moving to Lambir

The success of Lambir and other land colonisation schemes depends upon the geographical mobility of the rural population and the scheme's ability to attract and hold migrants. On the basis of interviews, there appear to be three major reasons or motives which settlers have for migration of which the first, land hunger, is by far the most important.

(i) Landlessness or ownership of land that is uneconomical to cultivate: This is the most frequently mentioned reason for moving to Lambir as reported by members of all ethnic groups. Prior to joining the scheme most Malay settlers were wage earners and, in addition to a rubber lot, some were attracted by the possibility of acquiring a house and a residential lot of their own. In particular, some looked upon the house as a place to which they might retire, once they become too old to work or in the event that they lost their job, and where at least one's children might remain to help look after them in their old age. Most Iban settlers were either landless or near landless, or they found that they could not support their families on the land which was available to them in their original home area. In moving, those with some land frequently acted in the interests of their kinsmen by relinguishing rights to its use to those left behind. Moreover, in moving to the scheme, a new settler acquired an eventual legacy, in the form of land, that he can pass on to his descendants. Some Iban families had already illegally settled State Land in the Fourth Division as squatters, and in coming to the scheme were following a long established tradition of movement in search of new land to pioneer.

(ii) Low or irregular incomes: Insufficient income and land hunger are often closely interrelated. Most Iban settlers report that their previous farm income was inadequate, partly because of a scarcity of suitable land, and many, as we have noted, were already migrants from the countryside, who were unable to find other form of steady work, before they moved to the scheme. Here their move was influenced by wider economic conditions. For those without special skills, there are few opportunities for permanent employment available, and the only security for many is in land ownership.

(iii) Lack of security: Many settlers describe security as a major motive for seeking for a place at Lambir. The interest of Malay settlers in acquiring a home is partly related to their concern with being looked after when they are too old to support themselves. Land ownership, too, is a source of security. In addition, many Iban settlers felt that by moving to the scheme they had placed themselves in the care of the Government which was now obligated to ensure their well-being.

In addition to these reasons, some settlers were attracted to Lambir by the prospect of better schools and health facilities. Many Iban settlers saw the scheme as providing their

children with opportunities to improve themselves which were not available in the more isolated areas of the countryside. Even if they themselves would not benefit, some felt that the scheme held out the possibility of a better life for their children.

Having a large family to support may also have been a consideration, particularly to Malay settlers, although few mentioned it explicitly as a reason for coming to Lambir. While Iban families are much smaller, this is due partly to the fact that they generally split, particularly three-generation families, at the time they enter the scheme in order to be eligible for a maxium number of plots and family size may also be a factor here.

(c) Existing Patterns of Migration Ethnic Groups

Iban migration to Lambir was largely by groups under a recognised leader. While there was some movement of individual families, these persons were usually among the original followers of a leader already settled on the scheme or, if not, they ordinarily allied themselves with such a leader once they took up residence at Lambir. While leaders exercise little real control over their followers in everyday life, their role in mobilising migration is significant and needs to be taken into account in designing recruitment policies.

Houses within Lambir village are allocated by lot, but those who arrive in a group generally choose houses in a block so that each leader and his followers tend to be identified with a particular section, or block of houses, in the settlement village. Later settlers, who arrive to take the place of those who resign, often choose as their leader the Tuai rumah who lives in the area where they settle. However, the choice is always a free one, and a settler may elect to follow any Tuai rumah he considers capable, to whom he is related, or for other reasons that he considers appropriate, and not all followers necessarily live together in the same area of the village.

Iban immigration is well established and frequently involves movement over long distances. At Lambir 46 per cent of the resident Iban settlers are from the Second Division, 40 per cent from the Third Division, and only 14 per cent from neighbouring areas of the Fourth Division. This is shown in Table 5.19.

A notable point is that such migration is rarely direct to Lambir from the settlers' original home area. Most Iban who have joined Lambir were migrants, and had already left their home area in search of land, work, or for other reasons, prior to their arrival on the scheme. In other words most were already detached for one reason or another from their traditional homes. Moreover, in moving to Lambir, they often

came under a Tuai rumah who was not necessarily a leader from their own home area, and the groups that took form in the process of migration frequently have a scattered geographical origin, although a dominant block is likely to be interrelated by local ties, kinship and intermarriage and to share a long history of association.

In contrast, Malay migration is mainly over a short distance and ties with friends and relatives left behind are usually maintained. At Lambir many Malay settlers first learned of the scheme, and were persuaded to join, due to the presence of resident kinsmen. Consequently the Malay feel less isolated, and, although ethnically heterogeneous, tend to be more unified than the Iban, and internal subgroupings have much less social importance and are not so great a hindrance to co-operation. Malays also have higher incomes and greater access to jobs off the scheme and so are able to travel more and maintain a wider field of social relationships generally.

Resident Chinese settlers are either Hakka or Foochow and are generally the least exclusive community, although the two dialect groups have their own leadership structure.

5.4 SOCIAL ORGANISATION

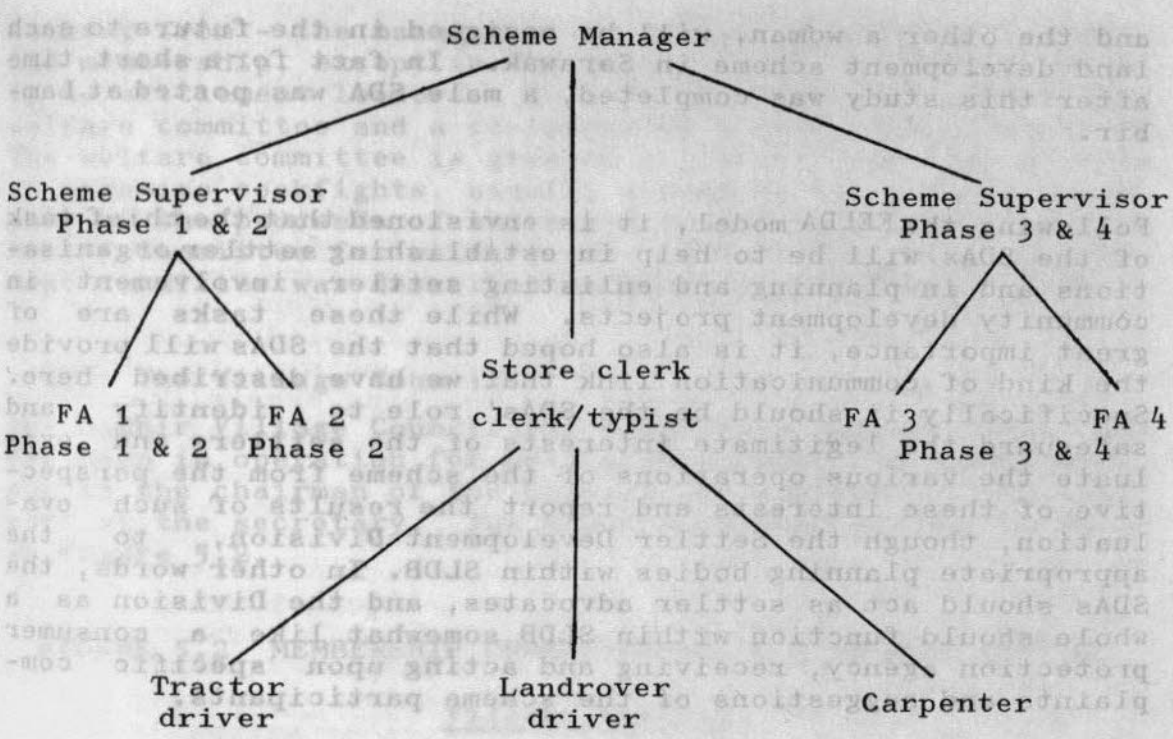
Settlers at Lambir come from various kampongs, towns and longhouses with their own localised patterns of leadership and interpersonal relations, and while the social patterns characteristic of their original homes are maintained to a large degree, settlers, from the moment they enter the scheme, st also adjust to a new organisational set-up, made up of:-

- management and supervisory staff, service personnel; and
- formal and informal settler organisations.

The following sections describe this set-up and the adjustments that it requires.

5.4.1 Management Structure

The formal management structure is one part of this set-up and is shown diagramatically as follows:



The delegation of authority is hierarchical and the manager is responsible for the overall operation of the scheme and for the supervision and assignment of duties to his subordinate staff. Direct contact with the settlers is maintained chiefly through the field assistants (FAs) who are expected to channel up complaints from the settlers to the scheme supervisors and manager. The turnover of personnel is high, and there has been a chronic shortage of low and middle-level staff since the scheme was founded.

In general, the division between the management and the settlers is sharply defined. The staff live separately in their own housing area, and many have been on the scheme too short a time to be well acquainted with the settlers or their problems. Moreover, their training is largely in farm work and in the technical aspects of rubber planting and processing. None have received formal training in community development work and so have no special preparation to handle the often intricate social problems that increasingly arise on established schemes like Lambir. In addition, a basic conflict exists in the role of the FAs who form the principal bridge between the settlers and the management. The FAs' job involves directing the work of the settlers on the scheme, and yet, at the same time, they are expected to act as their spokesmen with the management. Clearly these two aspects of their job are difficult, if not impossible, to reconcile. Moreover, some of the grievances which the settlers have are likely to concern the conduct of the FAs themselves.

Obviously there exists a need for an independent channel of communication within the scheme management structure. It is planned that two settler development assistants, one a man

and the other a woman, will be assigned in the future to each land development scheme in Sarawak. In fact for a short time after this study was completed, a male SDA was posted at Lambir.

Following the FELDA model, it is envisioned that the chief task of the SDAs will be to help in establishing settler organisations and in planning and enlisting settler involvement in community development projects. While these tasks are of great importance, it is also hoped that the SDAs will provide the kind of communication link that we have described here. Specifically it should be the SDAs' role to identify and safeguard the legitimate interests of the settlers and evaluate the various operations of the scheme from the perspective of these interests and report the results of such evaluation, though the Settler Development Division, to the appropriate planning bodies within SLDB. In other words, the SDAs should act as settler advocates, and the Division as a whole should function within SLDB somewhat like a consumer protection agency, receiving and acting upon specific complaints and suggestions of the scheme participants.

From the view point of settler development, the existing management set-up is poorly designed to achieve the long-term objectives for which the scheme was originally planned. In particular it was intended that settlers would become part owners in the scheme upon repayment of their loan debts. However, their relationship with the management remains very much like that of estate workers and it appears that little planning has gone into how and when they are to take charge of the various operations on the scheme. Moreover, scheme authority is so centralised that FAs and other lower level staff are frequently unwilling or unable to make decisions without referal to the scheme manager. As a result, many decisions with which the settlers are immediately concerned are postponed or delayed and the settlers are led to feel, often unjustly, that the management is evasive, ineffectual or unconcerned with their well-being.

5.4.2 Settler Organisations

Apart from the management structure, the social organisation of the scheme consists of both formal organisations and informal social groupings of settlers.

(a) Formal Organisations

Active formal organisations, particularly those of an inter-racial nature, are limited on the scheme. An inter-racial youth club was active for a time but has now ceased to function. At the moment the only important working organisations are the village council, the school committee and the Women's Institute. All were initiated by - and/or receive heavy

backing from - the management or groups outside the scheme, and membership, except in the latter case, is confined largely to settlement leaders. In addition there is a semi-active welfare committee and a co-operative society management board. The welfare committee is granted a licence from time to time to organise cockfights, usually around 12 to 15 times a year, part of the proceeds of which are turned over to the District Relief Committee for welfare use. The co-operative management committee was described earlier(under Section 5.2.9.).

(i) The Village Council

The Lambir Village Council was founded in January, 1972 and has been in operation for only a short time. The scheme manager is the chairman of the Council and a member of his staff acts as the secretary. The membership organisation is shown in Figure 5.2.

FIGURE 5.2 MEMBERSHIP ORGANISATION OF A VILLAGE COUNCIL

Village Council

Chairman
(Manager)

Secretary
(scheme staff)

Manager Co-operative Store	Headmaster	Policeman	Midwife	Health supervisor	Chairman school committee	Chairman Women's Institute	Elected members

Beside the chairman and the secretary other members include the headmaster of the Lambir Primary School, the manager of the Co-operative Store, the policeman, the midwife, the health supervisor and the chairman of the school committee and the Women's Institute. There are also two elected representatives from each of the major ethnic groups: Ibans, Malay and Chinese. Representatives are chosen once a year in an open meeting of the Council.

At the moment the Council serves mainly as a public forum for official communication between the management and the settlers, and meetings are held at the manager's discretion whenever there is information to be conveyed or some matter of general concern that needs to be discussed publically.

(ii) School Committee

The School Committee was founded 1966 to foster closer ties between the settlers and the teaching staff. Its members are elected in an open meeting to a three-year term of office; the present term runs from 1969 to 1973. The current chairman is Tua kampong of the Malay community. The committee meets three times a year. The first meeting is held at the beginning of each school year and the headmaster and members of the Committee canvass the settlers, compile student lists and attempt to persuade parents to enrol their children in school. Other meetings are held during the year mainly to organise school festivities or competitive sporting events. The Committee has no jurisdiction over educational policies, which are set by the State Education Department.

(iii) Women's Institute

The Women's Institute was formed with strong backing from the divisional organisation in Miri. Membership is racially mixed, although the Institute's main support comes from a group of active Malay women led by the Tua kampong's wife, who is the local chapter chairman. To some extent the success of the group is due to the continuing guidance it receives from the divisional organisation which sends qualified instructors to teach women cooking and sewing. As with other organisations that attempt to bridge racial divisions, success depends on outside support, and social divisions on the scheme appear to be too great to allow such organisations to arise spontaneously or persist without formal encouragement.

(b) Informal Groupings

Land development schemes, such as Lambir, have produced a new type of community - the planned village. These villages consist, in part, of new organisations and patterns of relations to which the settlers must adjust themselves. In addition, existing relations persist, and the pattern of life that develops is not, by any means, completely unrelated to pre-existing social systems. In their informal relations and primary groupings settlers have succeeded in recreating at Lambir forms of community organisation, leadership, kin and familial relations that, in their main outline at least, are characteristic of their former home areas. This is not to say that adaptation has not occurred, or is not required, only that settlers have responded to the demands placed upon them in terms of the social institutions and values that are familiar to them and find in their continuance an important source of security in the new environment in which they find themselves.

Life in a planned village poses a greater problem of social adjustment to some groups than to others. At Lambir the greatest adjustment is required of the Ibans. To many Iban settlers the scheme not only presents new physical surroundings and patterns of settlement, but also an unfamiliar routine at work, leisure and new problems of budgeting and

consumption. Many respondents say that they miss the traditional longhouse atmosphere with its thick surrounding jungle where they can hunt, fish or collect fruit and wild plants and where materials are readily available for making mats, baskets and other items of domestic use.

Most especially, Iban respondents who live in single-family dwellings say that they miss the sociability of the longhouse community. Single-family dwellings provide no opportunity to berandau, or relax in the company of others, on the verandah. Our own observations indicate a notable reduction in the spread and density of inter-family contacts as a result of this change in living patterns. Members of neighbouring households visit each other less often when they live in separate houses and are not as likely to call upon - or to offer - assistance in times of need. Community constraints on social behavior are weakened, and where obligations traditionally exist between individuals, these are more likely to be forgotten or ignored when the parties involved live in separate houses. In particular, informants say, persons are likely to behave in ways which are disapproved, such as stealing, being discourteous or ignoring the hardships of others. They may also be less industrious. Some Iban settlers report that because they can no longer work together on the verandah or in their fields, they feel less inclined to work and may remain at home, rather than go to their rubber lots, because doing so is not likely to provoke adverse comment. Others are not apt to see them, and, if they do, community opinion is no longer so important. While it was not possible to test these views in any systematic way it is clear that families living in longhouses are no more conservative, in an economic sense, than those who live in individual dwellings, and the Iban may very well be right in saying that they are more industrious. Certainly our impression at Lambir is that longhouse families are generally better off financially than those occupying separate houses although this may be due to the fact that those who live in the two longhouses on the scheme arrived earlier, their trees are already mature and they have had a longer time to take advantage of the opportunities available at Lambir. On the basis of these observations, it appears desirable to make longhouse dwellings available to settlers as an alternative to single-family houses. These longhouses could be shorter than those that exist at Lambir at the moment, consisting perhaps of five to six doors, although provision might be made for future extension. As at present, each longhouse could be expected to have its own Tuai rumah or headman. Ideally these headmen should be included in the organisational set-up of the scheme and, as such, could be expected to provide a link between the settlers and the management.

Another factor adversely affecting Iban adjustment is that most Iban settlers migrated from distant parts of Sarawak and arrived to take up residence with little prior knowledge of conditions on the scheme. Many imagined, or were led to expect, that conditions would be different than they found them. Moreover, the majority still have only a rudimentary understanding of the terms of agreement to which they made

themselves a party in entering the scheme. A large block of settlers arrived after being evicted from land they had illegally occupied and had little opportunity to make a careful decision as to whether or not they wished to join the scheme.

In contrast, most Malay settlers were former residents of Miri town or lived in the immediate vicinity and consequently had a much clearer conception of what the scheme would be like. Many had friends or relatives already living on the scheme, and some first-hand knowledge of the Lambir area, so that they were generally able to make a more rational decision. While most selected Malay applicants eventually withdrew, those who chose to take up residence have tended to be far more satisfied than other groups on the scheme.

This suggests that in future recruitment, established settlers might be used to recruit others and visits to a scheme might profitably be arranged before accepted applicants are moved.

The fact that many Iban settlers are relative newcomers to the Lambir area means that the communities they have formed tend to be relatively isolated from those located off the scheme; and, as yet, organised social activities, such as film shows, are too infrequent to overcome the sense of isolation many feel at Lambir.

In contrast to the Iban, the Malay settlers at Lambir form a relatively tight-knit community. Except for one family, all live in a single block of dwellings with the surau and house of the community headman at its centre. In addition, the type of housing provided and other aspects of scheme life are not so unfamiliar to the Malay as they are to the Iban. Although the majority of Malay household heads worked for wages before they moved to the scheme, most are accustomed to working under supervision and are less dissatisfied with the regimented aspects of scheme life than are either Iban or Chinese settlers.

(c) Inter-Group Relations

The members of each ethnic group on the scheme sort themselves out into separate communities. Although the settlement village is known officially as Kampong Tunku Abdul Rahman, it consists, in actuality, of separate villages, six of them Iban under separate Tuai rumah, one Malay and one Chinese. All but the Chinese community are identified, at least roughly, with a particular section of the settlement area (see Figure 5.1). When asked what type of village they prefer to live in, nine out of ten Malay respondents and 19 out of 20 Iban respondents indicate that they would prefer a village consisting of a single ethnic group to a racially mixed one. Chinese settlers are only slightly less insistent that their neighbours be members of the same ethnic group; and the prevailing pattern is for each cultural group to live separately, although in close proximity. Clearly this pattern is the preferred one.

While there is some visiting between families on Hari Raya or Gawai Dayak, and settlers meet at work, while shopping or in the scheme office, there are few close voluntary ties between families of different groups. This is not to say that, as a "mixed" settlement, Lambir is a failure or that the integration of racial groups in scheme settlements is undesirable. Inter-group relations are generally harmonious and are likely to improve still further as members of different groups gain a better understanding of one another.

5.4.3 Political Activity

The major political parties, Bumiputra, SUPP and SNAP, all have a following on the scheme. Political affiliation generally follows racial lines, and only the Iban are split politically between Alliance and Opposition ordinarily identified with one particular party. The acting Penghulu is generally considered to be a SNAP supporter, and it is sometimes said that this is the reason why he has never been formally recognised by the Government, despite his election to office. The Malay Tua kampong is the son of a local Alliance politician and is an active party worker. Otherwise there is little organised political activity on the scheme and, in general, settlers are reluctant to discuss politics.

5.4.4 Leadership

Each of the major ethnic communities has its own headman or headmen and a separate leadership structure. Virtually all Iban families, whether they live in a longhouse or not, regard themselves as followers(anembiak) of one of the seven Tuai rumah on the scheme. The Tuai rumah act essentially as a traditional longhouse headmen and are responsible primarily for safeguarding customary law.

The role of these leaders, while formally acknowledged both on the scheme and by the State Government, is not clearly defined in the organised set-up at Lambir, particularly in relation to the management. This problem is especially acute in the case of the Iban. Both Chinese and Malay settlers have greater experience with hierarchial political relations above the local village level, and the Malays in particular feel less estranged from the management.

5.4.5 Religious Activities

At the time this study was made the Malay community at Lambir was constructing a surau, or prayer house, with communal labour (gotong royang). Building materials were supplied largely

by a State grant of $40 000. An elderly settler acts as the unofficial imam - that is, he is not formally recognised in office by Majlis Islam - and leads the community in evening prayers. Besides their religious significance, evening prayers are also an important social gathering. Two prayers are said each evening between 6.45 p.m. and 8 p.m. Congregants gather at the surau and, rather than return home, most remain during the time between prayers to chat or discuss matters of common interest. Periodic feasts and life crisis celebrations also bring families together, and Islam is a powerful cohesive force that welds the Malay settlers into a comparatively tight-knit community.

An area has been set aside near the entrance to the scheme for a Christian chapel. However, the Christian community, which is mostly Iban, has not yet been able to raise enough money to start construction. At the moment periodic services are held in settler houses and the scheme is visited from time to time by Anglican and Catholic clergy. Those who wish to attend regular services, however, must travel to Miri to do so.

Most Ibans are non-Christian and even among those who are Christianised traditional religious observances remain important. Gawai Dayak (1st June) is a State Holiday and at Lambir has been combined with the traditional manggol rites that mark the beginning of the agricultural year. These rites comprise a complex cycle set in motion by a public ceremony conducted by the Tuai burong, or community augur, and are followed by a series of rituals performed by individual households in conjunction with each phase of padi cultivation. The main purpose of the manggol rites is:-

a) to procure auspicious bird omens;
b) to propitiate the spirits of the earth and jungle; and
c) to inaugurate the major operation of felling by the use of ritual whet-stones (batu manggol) (cf. Freeman, 1970)

At Lambir it is the "whet-stone festival", or gawai batu, that is the main religious observance held around Gawai Dayak.

A brief summarised and extracted account of these rites, as they are performed at Lambir, is provided here by the Tuai burong:

> "The Iban community has decided among itself the way that it will celebrate Gawai Dayak at Lambir. Last year a meeting was called by the Tuai Rumah in the Balai Raya on the 28th of June. During the meeting I was chosen Tuai burong and T.R. Mitoh was appointed as my assistant. It was agreed that each year four fowls and a large pig are to be sacrificed at gawai batu.

Before gawai batu Mitoh and I went into the jungle near the village to seek paung burong omen plants. We went at dusk and took food offerings with us. We collected plants first at the spot where we heard the nendak omen bird call from the right-hand side; then we collected plants where we heard the same omen bird call from the left hand side. The meaning of these two kinds of plants is - those collected where the bird was heard to the right strengthen us spiritually so that we will not easily become ill and those from where the bird was heard from the left soften the land and increase its fertility so that our padi will grow well.

The plants are taken on Gawai Dayak to the Balai Raya... Each family brings its own offerings which are placed on a specially constructed platform. Here my assistant and I (the Tuai burong) lead the participants in prayers, most importantly to Simpulang Gana, the god of the earth, and the pig and chickens are slaughtered. The blood is a gift to the spirits... Each family normally returns home with its share of the offerings to feed its whetstones... At the conclusion of the ceremony all are invited for entertainment and refreshments in the balai raya".

Christian as well as non-Christian Iban take part in these rites and in the feast and entertainment that follow. Other settlers may come to watch, and some families have adopted the Malay practice of receiving guests in their homes during Gawai Dayak and visitors may include Chinese and Malay, as well as other Iban settlers.

5.5 HOUSING

Each settler is provided with a ready-built house constructed on a half acre residential lot with space surrounding it for fruit trees and a garden. Houses were built by the Sarawak Development Finance Corporation (SDFC) at a cost to the settler of about $2 500. All are single-family dwellings except for two longhouses of 22 and 14 doors, Rumah Spitt and Rumah Kiroh, respectively.

The single family dwellings are built according to a stereotype design and consist of a verandah, a bedroom, a living room and a dining room/kitchen. A pit latrine is located behind each house. The longhouse apartments consist of single living room/bedroom that opens onto a common verandah enclosed with plywood siding. A kitchen is built partly detached behind the main structure. Aside from the lateral connection of apartments, the design has little in common with traditional Iban longhouse architecture, and the settlers complain in particular of the low roof, the small amount of

living space and the absence of a storage area above their apartments.

Housing is a source of universal dissatisfaction among all groups on the scheme. In order to minimise costs to the settler, houses are small and simply constructed. However, most are too small for an average settler family (5.2 persons) and the lack of sufficient living area is the most frequent complaint settlers have against scheme housing. The second most frequent complaint is that houses are poorly constructed. Many, for example, have leaking roofs, the siding is coming apart or the porch steps have collapsed. House posts are not sunk into the ground so that houses tend to sway when there is a wind or persons are moving about inside. Many settlers feel, with some justification, that the house they have been sold is unlikely to outlast its mortgage.

Since houses are built in a single standard design, no allowance is made for individual or cultural preferences, and many settlers, particularly Iban, consider the design to be undesirable. Eighty per cent of the Iban household heads interviewed said that they preferred to live in a longhouse, yet nearly 70 per cent are forced to live in a single family dwelling. Moreover, it is widely believed that it was only due to the insistence of a former political leader, Penghulu Chundi, that any longhouses at all were built at Lambir, and even then the design adopted was unsatisfactory.

Most settlers feel that they can improve upon their house if they are given an opportunity. Some have asked to be allowed to add rooms or make other improvements but say that their requests have been denied or have never been acted upon. Given the wide-spread dissatisfaction that exists with scheme housing, it might be desirable to allow for self-constructed housing as an alternative. Several Iban families have built houses on their rubber lots, suggesting that such an alternative might be feasible. Settlers who wish to build their own houses might be provided with materials, minimum specifications and possibly the service of a skilled carpenter for technical advice and guidance. However, self-construction would have to be tested initially on a trial basis. As a more immediate solution to the problem of housing, the present cumbersome restriction on making improvements to existing dwellings should be relaxed in order to foster a greater sense of ownership and better standards of maintenance.

With present housing, there is a need for greater variety of design. Domestic architecture among indigenous Sarawak people is highly distinctive and closely linked to their social life. As we have already noted, in the case of the Iban, there are reasons to favour the optional provision of longhouse dwellings. While there appear to be fire insurance restrictions that prevent construction of long, multi-door houses, our interviews suggest that shorter, five to six door

longhouses would be accepted provided improvements can be made in their construction.

5.6 ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

This section is concerned, first, with the economic aspects of scheme organisation, particularly income creation and distribution and scheme financing, and, second, with a comparison of the relative economic status of Malay, Iban and Chinese settlers in terms of income and occupational patterns.

5.6.1 Income Patterns

(a) Income From Rubber Tapping

Table 5.21 presents the basic tapping statistics for the period covered by our study. The factory at Lambir began accepting latex on 8th June, 1972. By January, 1973 all of the trees planted during the first three phases of development had reached maturity. In the period covered here only Phases I and II lots were in production.

On the average, 40 settler families tap each day that the scheme factory operates. The factory is closed on Sundays, holidays and during heavy rain. The maximum number of days per month that a settler can tap is between 21 and 26. Each family taps on the average slightly more than 14 days a month. The work day is roughly six hours, from 6 a.m. until noon, not counting the time it takes to have the latex weighed and processed, and the average number of workers per family, including women and youngsters under 18, is slightly over two. Thus the average hours spent each week at tapping are roughly 40 per household, or 20 hours per tapper. Clearly tapping, as practised at Lambir, involves some underemployment of labour. Several families report that they occasionally tap on Sunday, when the scheme factory is not operating, and sell sheets to outside buyers.

TABLE 5.21 LAMBIR TAPPING STATISTICS

Month	Maximum no. of days tapped per month	Average no. of tappers per day	Range in numbers	Total pounds of latex	Total DRC
June	19*	12	1 - 20	13 999	5 227.74
July	22	25	9 - 36	40 686	13 968.73
August	23	23	1 - 33	40 327	14 087.68
September	22	22	6 - 34	32 714	12 467.24
October	26	37	8 - 50	78 379	28 459.21
November	21	40	3 - 54	63 809	21 987.17

Note * Tapping at Lambir began on 8th June, 1972.

Tapping income figures are shown in Table 5.22. Average monthly income per settler family is slightly over $100 and daily earnings are $7.22. These figures, it should be noted, are for two workers on the average; but, even so, daily income is relatively high. Since the study was completed, daily income has remained relatively steady ($7.02), but, average monthly income has increased to around $154, due to a larger number of days worked per month (22). Beginning in January, loan deductions of 10 per cent have been made from settlers' earnings, bringing this figure down to around $139 for the net average monthly income per settler household. Increase in income during the early part of 1973 is due to a number of factors, some of them inter-related: unusually dry weather, increasing settler interest in tapping, rising latex prices and improving output per lot. Some levelling off of incomes may be expected, unless prices continue to rise, and there is evidence that some settlers, at least at the time in which this study was made, were over-tapping their trees.

TABLE 5.22 TAPPING INCOMES (SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER, 1972)

	September	October	November	Three month average
Total number of tappers	38	59	60	52
Average number of days tapped	10.89	16.37	13.80	14.06
Average monthly income per settler	$67.75	$128.57	$96.29	$101.52
Average daily income	$6.22	$7.85	$6.98	$7.22

At the time of this study the scheme factory paid settlers 20 cents per pound d.r.c. of latex. Payment was increased immediately after our study was completed to 26 cents and in March a sliding scale was introduced. The base payment is now 26 cents per pound, but as the Singapore price increases above 100 cents per kilo, the following "bonus" calculations are made:

Singapore							
Price (cents per kilo)	100	105	110	115	120	125	130
Payment (cents per pound d.r.c. of latex)	26	27	28	30	32	34	36
"Bonus"	-	(+1)	(+2)	(+4)	(+6)	(+8)	(+10)

Basic payments are made weekly and the "bonus" is paid out monthly.

(b) Income Distribution

While rubber prices are increasing at the moment, past experience with rubber reveals the economic hazards of total

reliance on a single crop without subsidy activities or sources of employment by which settlers and their dependents can supplement their income should prices drop significantly. The incorporation in a scheme of land suitable for wet rice and other crops is a partial answer. Experience at Lambir suggests that in order to encourage permanent cropping and avoid conflicts such land should be available on a long-term basis and be carefully surveyed and its agricultural capability determined before it is turned over to settlers. Once allotments are assigned, settlers' rights should be well defined and safeguarded to prevent misunderstanding. Experience at Lambir, again, indicates that assignment should be made as soon as settlers enter the scheme as their need for supplemental income is greatest in the period before their trees reach maturity. In addition, the labour available per family is generally greater at Lambir than is sometimes realised and varies widely from one household to another, so that larger holdings, or greater flexibility in holding size, may be desirable in future scheme planning to prevent underemployment, increase incomes and provide for its better distribution.

Another serious problem is income distribution over time. At Lambir a family receives a $40 per month subsistence allowance until its trees reach maturity and begin to produce. This amount is insufficient, most settlers feel, to maintain a family at a reasonable level of productivity and is a serious disincentive to scheme entry. Particularly this is true of those persons, young couples with small children, who are the most desirable settlers. Under present circumstances, such families may have to face five to six years of very low income and accumulat ng debts, if they join the scheme, and, as a consequence, may be forced to sacrifice the future educational opportunities of their children simply to make ends meet. The problem is a serious one, and most settlers report that low incomes and the absence of meaningful work during the period that immediately followed their settlement was a highly discouraging experience. Moreover, by forcing the settlers to look outside the scheme for employment, it lays the basic for a later pattern of labour instability and possible non-residence.

5.6.2 Subsidiary Employment

Subsidiary employment on the scheme is limited. The principal source of wage work at Lambir is the rubber processing plant. At the time this study was made, the plant employed five full-time workers, who earned $4 per day, and from five to fifteen casual labourers depending on the amount of latex to be processed. Regular labourers worked eight hours per day, not counting breaks, starting to work at 6.30 a.m. and ending around 4 p.m. Some settlers also worked, under private contract with SLDB, maintaining unassigned lots.

Wage employment off the scheme is discussed below in the sections comparing the economic status of the major ethnic groups on the scheme.

More important for most families than wage work, is the cultivation of food crops. Originally it was planned that every settler would receive a two-acre dusun lot. However, such lots were never provided. Instead, approximately 220 acres of State Land has been obtained on a temporary lease basis (TOL) for use by the settlers. The land is assigned in three-acre plots for a period of three years. However, settlers are allowed to plant only annual crops, with the result that it has not allowed for the kind of permanent cash cropping that was originally intended in the dusun concept. In addition, approximately 71 acres of land in the Sungei Ukong, Sungei Klampu and Payau Melanul areas is available for wet rice cultivation under APPS. Land is given out by the manager in one acre lots and remains in the settlers' hands as long as he continues to work it. The reason for the small size of plots is to prevent the settlers from neglecting their rubber lots. This latter policy may require reconsideration, however, as family labour force size varies considerably and there appears to be some underemployment of labour even under average tapping conditions. In addition, most Iban settlers are engaged in shifting cultivation on State Land off the scheme and it may be desirable to persuade those people to take up settled, wet rice farming as an alternative, whether it detracts from tapping or not. Our interviews suggest that roughly 200 acres of State Land is illegally cleared each year and planted in hill rice. Clearly the scheme has created a serious land encroachment problem.

Most families have planted some fruit trees and garden vegetables around their house or on the unused areas of their rubber lots. Some produce is sold on the scheme, particularly by Chinese settlers, but most is consumed by the grower and his family.

5.6.3 Settler Budgets

It proved impossible to collect monthly budget figures for all households in our sample. The budgets presented in Table 5.23 are given simply as examples showing the general pattern of expenditures and income for tapping and non-tapping households at Lambir. Both households shown here include four members, two adults and two children; and are thus smaller than average. Both income and expenditures are also slightly below average for the scheme; nevertheless, they appear to give some indication of general patterns.

TABLE 5.23 SETTLER BUDGETS

MONTHLY CASH INCOME AND EXPENDITURES (OBTOBER, 1972)
MALAY SETTLER (TAPPING)

Income		Expenditure	
	$		$
Sale of fruit (buah asam pelam)	26.55	Rice (beras)	6.60
		Sugar	1.10
Daily rubber tapping:		Cigarettes and tobacco	3.10
	2.81	Fish (salt and fresh)	5.00
	3.07	Canned fish	2.30
	3.22	Coffee and tea	0.90
	2.74	Cakes and bread	2.20
	3.43	Flour	1.30
	4.40	Noodles	0.50
	2.81	Vegetables	1.35
	3.00	Sweets	0.90
	3.30	Orange squash	3.00
	3.80	Matches	0.50
	2.92	Soap and wash powder	1.90
	4.30	Medicines	1.30
	7.72	Incidential items	2.40
	8.54	Kerosene and spirits	7.20
		Batteries	2.80
		Bus fare	4.40
		Coffee shop	1.00
Total	$82.61		$50.85

MONTHLY CASH INCOME AND EXPENDITURE (OCTOBER/NOVEMBER, 1972)
IBAN SETTLER (NON-TAPPING)

Income		Expenditure	
	$		$
Sale of chickens	15.00	Rice (beras)	26.25
Sale of pigs shot in hunting	10.75	Sugar	0.50
		Cigarettes and tobacco	3.50
Sale of vegetables	2.40	Fish (dried)	0.50
Wages for unloading pepper poles	16.00	Cooking oil	4.40
		Cakes and bread	2.10
Loan from sibling	14.00	Vegetables	2.35
Maintenance allowance	40.00	Spices	1.10
		Sweets	0.40
		Orange squash	1.50
		Matches	0.20
		Soap and wash powder	2.75
		Medicines	0.80
		Books and writing paper	0.20
		Shoes	5.10
		Cloth	6.00
		Clothing	5.50
		Kettle	2.60
		Incidental items	1.00
Total	$98.15		$66.75

5.6.4 Settler Loan Accounts

Our survey indicates that settlers tend to know less about finance arrangements than any of the other conditions of scheme entry.

Settlers at Lambir, and other schemes like it, are expected to repay only part of the original development costs. The financing of these costs is divided between the settler's loan account and an administrative account met from general revenues of the State. The settlers' loan account includes capital expenditures for houses, tools and implements and recurrent expenditures for lot maintenance until allocation. These expenditures are recovered from the settlers with interest through monthly deductions from their income from the sale of latex to the scheme processing centre. The administrative account includes capital expenditure for jungle clearing, ground preparation, planting materials and planting, offices, staff quarters, motor vehicles, plant and equipment and recurrent expenditures for management costs. None of these expenditures are recoverable from the settlers, but are met out of the budget of SLDB and the other agencies responsible for Lambir that preceded it. Additional expenditures for social overhead in the form of schools and teachers' quarters, access and village roads, water supply, health centre, etc. are paid for by the different public agencies responsible for providing these facilities.

The average settler loan debt at Lambir is over $6 000. This is extremely high given current income levels. Moreover, loans are subject to 7.5 per cent interest compounded annually. A rate of interest this high appears unrealistic at the moment. Given the present terms of repayment - 10 per cent of rubber incomes - it would require a monthly income from tapping of $375 simply to repay the interest on such a loan. This is far more than settlers can now earn, and under present conditions it is impossible for settlers to repay their debt account. If latex prices continue to rise, consideration should be given to increasing settler deductions. At the same time interest charges might be reduced to a more manageable three or four per cent.

In addition to creating a situation of permanent indebtedness, the present loan account system tends, through monthly deductions, to depress settler incomes and in some cases makes it impossible for settlers to realise an immediate improvement in earnings once they begin to tap their lots. If deductions are increased significantly, settlers are likely to find that the amount they are paid for their rubber is less than that received by independent farmers, and, as a result, they may feel victimised or seek outside buyers. This is particularly true of those who do not understand what they have received on loan. Unfortunately, this includes a large proportion of the settlers at Lambir.

A very serious information problem exists with regard to loan accounts and many settlers, particularly Iban, are unaware of the fact that their house and maintenance allowance are not gifts but are debited to their loan account or, if they are aware of this, many doubt that they will be asked for full repayment. In particular, it is commonly believed that the monthly maintenance allowance of $40 paid to the settler until his trees reach maturity is a wage paid for looking after his rubber lot, and some Malay settlers say they were led to believe, before they moved to the scheme, that their allowance would be an outright gift and would amount to $100 or more per month.

Chinese settlers, by comparison, generally have the clearest understanding of scheme finance arrangements, and many tend to view their scheme holdings, with some justification, as hopelessly indebted and insecure.

5.6.5 A Comparison of Economic Status by Ethnic Groups

As noted on development scheme elsewhere in Malaysia (cf. Wikkramatileke, 1964), notable differences exist in the economic adjustment of different ethnic groups, and these are described below.

(a) Malay Settlers

None of the Malay respondents interviewed were engaged in farming before they moved to the scheme. The majority worked as paid labourers. The only exception is a widow, whose husband was the original settler and worked as a driver with the Public Works Department (PWD). The majority of households continue to depend on outside employment as their principal source of livelihood. Four of the ten Malay household heads in our sample are working full-time in Miri, three with PWD and one with Miri District Council; three are part-time carpenters with Chinese contractors; two consider themselves too old to work and one is the widow referred to above. One of the elderly respondents has a son living in his household who works with PWD and provides the main support for the family. As a group, it can be said that the Malays earn their living mainly from outside the scheme and from sourc s other than those intended by the management. In other words, migration to the scheme has meant for the Malay population a shift in physical residence only, and no fundamental change in occupation.

Rubber tapping for those whose trees are mature is basically a supplemental source of income. Except for three Phase II respondents, and one Phase II settler who cannot obtain cups from the management, all of the others are tapping their rubber trees. Tapping is done mainly by the settler's wife and those of his children who are not in school; the average number of tappers per household is two.

In addition all but three Malay settlers grow padi for their own consumption. Padi is grown mainly in the unplanted areas of the settler's rubber lot and the average acreage is less than two. Only one respondent reports planting padi on State Land. Padi growing, like rubber tapping, is done chiefly by the wives and grown-up children, with the husband helping whenever he is not working. Most settlers also grow some vegetables and fruit.

The Malays appear generally to enjoy relatively high incomes by scheme standards. In acquiring a house and a rubber lot as a source of subsidiary income, most have substantially improved their economic position from what it was before they moved to the scheme. For those who hold outside jobs, the total cash earnings for the household is approximately $200 per month. Included in this category are six of our ten respondents; of the remainder, three who have immature rubber trees receive between $150 to $200 per month from outside employment, and one household, that of the widow referred to above, has a cash income of less than $100 per month.

Two points are notable in connection with Malay incomes. First, the major source of earnings, except for one household - the poorest in our sample - is off the scheme employment. Secondly, the importance of the scheme, contrary to what was originally intended, is as a source of security - providing the settler with a house from which he cannot be evicted and a plot of land on which he and his family can grow some of their own food and earn some additional income to supplement the husband's wages. Malay settlers remain, in other words, basically wage earners.

(b) Chinese Settlers

One Chinese respondent formerly worked as a hired rubber tapper on a private estate; the other two held jobs outside of agriculture, one as a shop clerk, the other as a lorry driver. None owned land.

At the time our survey was made, none of the Chinese respondents had started to tap their rubber trees as their trees were still immature. One man operates an unlicensed shop and hires an Iban settler to maintain his trees. His lot is a large one, and in addition he grows fruit and vegetables and raises pigs and poultry mainly for his own consumption. His shop is relatively successful, and he is able to afford a car and can send his children to school off the scheme.

The former lorry driver has planted three acres of TOL land in pineapples which he has not yet brought to market. In addition, he intensively cultivates the area surrounding his house. He raises poultry for his own use and earns about $10 per month from the sale of vegetables. Like other Chinese families, he finds the failure of the scheme to provide a

permanent dusun lot a source of considerable dissatisfaction, as he would like to raise long-term cash crops, such as pepper and fruit. Also he complains that he has not been able to obtain fruit tree seedlings from the Department of Agriculture for his house lot. At the moment his cash income is considerably lower than it was before he moved to the scheme.

The former tapper depends mainly on the income of his wife, who earns $50 per month as a part-time cook on a construction site, and on the sale of vegetables from his house lot garden. He also complains of the lack of a dusun lot and reports that he would like to open a temporary food stall near the primary school to earn money until he can start tapping his rubber lot but is not allowed to so so because of scheme policy. From time to time he works when he can as a lorry driver.

The income of Chinese settlers is variable, but for most families is as low or lower than it was before they moved to the scheme. On the other hand, Chinese settlers make by far the most intensive use of the land provided them and clearly understand the principles of farm management by planting crops and raising livestock that yield maximum earnings.

(c) Iban Settlers

Iban settlers tend to differ from both Chinese and Malay settlers in terms of occupational background and income. Sixty per cent (12 out of 20) of our sample came directly from farms. Of the eight who were paid employees, only two were full-time workers (with Sarawak Shell Berhad), while the other six were casual labourers with timber companies or building contractors and worked only seasonally. In effect, all have farming experience.

The number of Iban respondents who indicate that they still work for wages is very small - one is a full-time unskilled labourer and the other works in Kuala Belait as a cook. The latter respondent, who happened to be on the scheme at the time of interviewing, does not actually live at Lambir and his mother and nephew are looking after his scheme house and rubber lot. Therefore the majority of Iban rely exclusively on tapping or their monthly maintenance allowance to support themselves. In addition, a few engage in petty trade in vegetables and fruit or take casual odd jobs from time to time.

Every household grows some padi and the large majority of Iban continue to measure security in terms of self-sufficiency in rice. As a consequence, the great majority are illegally clearing State Land for shifting cultivation. All but two of our respondents clear an average of two to three acres of State Land annually. Some additional rice is grown in scheme rubber lots; in fact, clearance fires destroyed so

many trees at Lambir during the recent drought that SLDB has reportedly had difficulty obtaining fire insurance on its lots. Some land adjacent to the scheme is also available for wet rice cultivation under the Assistance to Padi Planting Scheme. Despite this concern with rice, only 20 per cent of the households in our sample grew enough rice last year to meet their needs.

Iban infringement into State Land is seen as a serious problem, particularly as clearing is coming close to the Miri watershed. Settlers have been threatened with prosecution, although no action has been taken. During the study, a land inspector was on the scheme attempting to assess the extent of existing use of State Land and further needs, so that sufficient land might be made available on a lease basis, and uncontrolled expansion stopped. Most settlers describe themselves as willing to go to jail rather than stop clearing State Land. To go to jail for growing padi is not something to be ashamed of; and once released from jail, their intention is to do the same thing again - for that is their way of life, as Iban.

The problem here is a complex one. In moving to the scheme, Iban settlers come quickly to realise the importance of cash earnings as they must now purchase nearly all of their necessities. On the other hand, cash is in short supply. Most find it difficult to support their families on the $40 per month that they receive as a maintenance allowance. The original settlers were better off in this respect, as they were employed in clearing and planting for daily cash wages, which, when several active males were present in the same household, could amount to several hundred dollars per month. Understandably later settlers in particular have turned to shifting cultivation. This is something they are familiar with that holds out the possibility of security; at least they need not worry about having enough food to eat. Like Chinese settlers, although for somewhat different reasons, most Iban settlers express considerable disappointment in not receiving land for cash crops. As is normal and traditional with the Iban, the expectation of acquiring land was a prime motive in migration. Some say that they feel justified, as a result, in working State Land.

In order to meet the demands of the settlers, the scheme has acquired additional land on temporary lease to be used by settlers in growing other crops than rubber. It is only regrettable that this demand was not foreseen, and that such land was not set aside from the outset and systematic provision made for its allocation and development. Also the fact that it is available only on a lease basis prevents its being planted in long-term crops. Finally, it must be recognised that Iban settlers, in many cases, have been unable or unwilling to adjust themselves to scheme conditions. A significant number are not tapping their trees or are tapping them only irregularly. Only seven out of thirteen mature lots in

Phases I and II are being tapped in our sample. The low price of rubber, at the time the study was made is obviously a factor. A few families also report that they are without adequate labour or have not been provided by the management with cups for collecting latex. However, the shortage of labour is due mainly to the demands of padi cultivation, and while the economic return on labour is low for tapping, it is far lower for shifting cultivation, a fact that many Iban settlers themselves recognise. Nevertheless they continue to grow padi. The reasons are therefore bound up with traditional sentiments, including religious practices, notions of ethnic pride and identity, as well as with calculations of economic security made within the framework of past experience.

5.7 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Lambir scheme was set up in such a way as to evolve eventually into a racially mixed settlement of independent farmers. Future schemes are not likely to be designed in the same way. Nevertheless, important lessons can be learned from Lambir and several features of the scheme, both positive and negative, deserve special attention.

First, the overall goals for which the scheme was established appear to be highly desirable. Rural families of different cultural background were brought together in a single settlement complex, something that is often prevented by existing land code restrictions, and "integration" of a restricted nature occurred and is clearly workable, so long as families of similar background are allowed to maintain their own residential areas and community leadership and other social patterns. Preference was given to families without land, or persons who are disadvantaged in other respects, and the central objective of the scheme was to provide them with a developed holding and the skills they need to succeed as independent farmers. While settlers received title to their holdings upon entry to the scheme, full ownership is obtainable only after the settlers' share of the original development costs has been repaid. Repayment, in this case, is evidence that the settler is able to manage his holding successfully; and, in theory at least, once repayment is completed, management supervision is to be withdrawn and the settlers are allowed to operate on their own.

These goals, from a social point of view, remain sound and are much less ambiguous than those of the public estate schemes now being planned. Where Lambir fails is not in terms of its objectives, but in the way these goals were implemented.

In this report a series of specific problems in various areas of the schemes' operation have been noted and, where possible, suggestions have been made as to how these might be corrected

or avoided in future planning. By way of summary, two problem areas stand out as central.

The first of these is settler selection. A major failure of Lambir was that a large proportion of places on the scheme were filled by unqualified settlers. Many of those chosen were too old; not genuinely interested in working the land or already held jobs outside of agriculture.

It is not entirely clear, at this date, why so few settlers met the criteria of eligibility set for the scheme. What is evident is that the potential pool of candidates was only haphazardly tapped and that of those who came forward for selection, many did so on the basis of highly limited, and even inaccurate, information. Clearly, a high priority must be given to the creation of an effective, State-wide recruitment, information and settler selection organisation if this problem is to be overcome.

The second major problem area is in the terms of scheme entry. From the management's viewpoint the chief difficulty here is that by granting settlers immediate title to their lots, management is left with no way of assuring that they will actually work their holdings, as they cannot be evicted if they fail to do so. The results of our study suggest that this problem is more complex. To begin with, nearly half of the settlers at Lambir have, in fact, never received title to their lots. Secondly, many of those who do hold titles consider them to be of little significance. In actuality, the terms of entry, as they now stand, work to the detriment of both settlers and management. Settlers feel that the land provided them is bound in perpetual mortgage, and, since they must work it under supervision and have no control over how and for what it is used, their rights of ownership, whether they hold title to the land or not, are highly limited. Some feel, as a result, that there is little point of developing their lots. On the other hand, the management has failed to reserve to itself the right to evict those who refuse to work their holdings. This situation, plus ineffective selection procedures and inadequate provision for the education of the settlers on entry conditions, has created considerable misunderstanding on the part of both settlers and management and contributed to the serious problems of non-residence and low levels of maintenance and tapping that exist on the scheme.

Our findings indicate that a policy of eventual alienation of developed holdings is not necessarily unworkable. However, it must be carefully planned in a sequence of phases through which settlers can gain experience and are made to demonstrate their ability to manage their holdings successfully. Conditions must be written into the terms of entry such that those who are unwilling to work their holdings, or are incapable of doing so, are replaced by more suitable settlers. Equally important, attention must be given to the eventual

assumption of control by the settlers of their own farms and the other operations of the scheme when management supervision is withdrawn and the settlers become independent producers.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The Lambir Scheme Co-operative Multi-Purpose Society was started in 1966. It runs a grocery shop to supply the everyday needs of the settlers and a padi mill. According to the Third Quarterly Report, 1972, of the Co-operative Development Department, the Society had 158 members and a share capital of $3 565. Total turnover on sale of goods amounted to $44 138.52.

The co-operative society, is managed by a five-member management committee which makes decisions for the society. The members are popularly elected annually at a general meeting. The present committee is made up of three Ibans (including the Chairman), a Malay and a Chinese. The day-to-day running of the shop is carried out by a full-time manager (who is a Chinese) and an Iban shop assistant, both paid by the society. Both the manager and his assistant live in the building which houses the shop.

6.11 Objectives of the Study

This study was initiated within the general social survey of the Lambir Land Development Scheme (Field Report No. 4) where dissatisfaction with the society shop was frequently expressed.

The study thus has the following objectives:-

(a) to find out the causes of dissatisfaction of the members, and settlers in general with the society; and

(b) to determine the opinion of the settlers as to what they think should best be done with the co-operative shop.

6.12 Methodology

Population

The population for the study consists of all the heads of households in the Lambir Land Development Scheme. According to the count which the sociological team carried out in October, 1972, the Lambir Scheme contains 150 settler households (see Table 6.1).

CHAPTER 6

FIELD REPORT NUMBER FIVE
SURVEY OF THE LAMBIR CO-OPERATIVE SHOP

6.1 INTRODUCTION

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6.1.2 Methodology

Population

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TABLE 6.1 HOUSEHOLD HEADS ACCORDING TO ETHNIC BACKGROUND

Ethnic origin	Number
Iban	110
Malay	28
Chinese	9
Others*	3
Total	150

Note * Consists of two Indian and one Kenyah

Sample

The figures in Table 6.1 serve as the sampling frame. Using a stratified random sampling technique, the number of respondents to be interviewed is as follows (all five committee members are included in the sample):-

Ethnic origin	Percentage for sample	Number of respondents
Iban	30	33
Malay	33	9
Chinese	33	3
Others	33	1
Total	31	46

The respondents are selected randomly taking into account:-

(a) the phases in which they moved into the scheme; and

(b) their ethnic groupings, and especially important with the Ibans, their internal groupings under different leaders. This is to ensure that each group is proportionately represented in the sample.

Information was gathered by means of structured interviews with the head of each sample household. As far as possible, interviews were conducted in private with the help of an interview schedule.

Findings

The information reported here is obtained from interviews with 43 respondents. Two Iban and one Malay respondents were not available for the interview.

Membership

Of those interviewed, only two indicated they are not members of the co-operative society. Both are Malays who came in

Phase III. As they joined the scheme later, they said they had gathered sufficient information from their Malay friends about the society to discourage them from becoming members. According to these informants, it makes no difference whether they belong to the society or not; they can still buy goods from the shop and members never receive any profits, anyway. There is an indication that most of the Malays who joined the scheme in Phase III are not members of the co-operative society. Unlike the Ibans, the Malays (except one who is a committee member) feel that the co-operative does not belong to them. Most have bought only token shares (one share per family). They said their voice is seldom heard in meetings on policy matters and that since the opening of the shop there has never been a Malay employed to work in the shop. They identify the shop with Iban ownership as these are the people who run the shop.

All 31 Iban respondents are members of the society. Their membership is not affected by the phase in which they joined the scheme. Those who came to the scheme during the last phase (Phase III) seem to buy fewer shares than those who came earlier. Like their Malay counterparts, the Phase III Ibans said they too had heard discouraging stories about the society, and are therefore discouraged from buying more shares. Also, the original Iban settlers received cash wages for the initial clearing and development of the scheme, and many were encouraged to use part of their earnings to purchase shares in the society. Later Ibans, and other settlers, do not have extra cash earnings to invest. Ibans who came earlier hold an average of 3.5 shares (one share costs $10), compared with an average of two shares held by the Malays and later Ibans. The three Chinese and one Indian respondents are members of the society, but they hold only one share each. They are indifferent to the business of the society.

6.2 ROLE OF CO-OPERATIVE SHOP

The majority of Malays and Chinese buy most of their groceries in Miri. Seven of them say they buy almost all of their groceries from Miri, three buy groceries from the co-operative shop, and two buy equally from Miri and the co-operative shop. Five (two Chinese, two Malays and one Indian) of those who buy their goods from Miri, are working in Miri; while the other four (including the two who say they buy equally from Miri and the co-operative shop) are rubber tappers.

For those who work in Miri, getting their household supplies from there is reasonable. They travel to Miri everyday, and find that Miri offers them better shopping facilities. Those who are not working in Miri, but do their shopping there, say they go to Miri about once a week to shop. They choose to buy their groceries there because:

(a) prices of goods in Miri are generally cheaper than at at the co-operative shop;

(b) goods are always available in Miri; and

(c) they can choose from which shop to buy goods.

The three who obtain their goods from the co-operative shop include a committee member (who is an ardent supporter of the co-operative shop), and a Malay and a Chinese rubber tapper. The reasons they give include:-

(a) it is conveniently located, that is they do not have to take the bus to go to Miri to buy their goods; and

(b) they consider it their duty to support their co-operative shop.

It should be noted that those who buy from Miri, do occasionally buy things from the co-operative shop as well. Due to its convenient location, settlers go there when they need certain things in small quantity immediately; to them (the Malays and Chinese) the co-operative shop is a secondary source of supplies from which they can obtain goods whenever the need arises.

With the Iban settlers, the co-operative shop is their main source of goods for household needs. Twenty-four of them indicate that they buy most of their household goods from the co-operative shop, six buy most of their goods from Miri, while another says that he buys equally from Miri and the co-operative shop. In terms of occupations, the Ibans are all farmers and rubber tappers. Being less mobile than the Malays and Chinese and seldom in possession of a large amount of cash, and coupled with their less sophisticated needs, the Ibans tend to use the co-operative shop. They find it convenient to buy their goods, a little at a time, from the co-operative shop. They are well aware that the prices of goods at the co-operative shop are higher than in Miri, and that the stock is not always satisfactory. Nevertheless, they are left with very little choice but to do their shopping there. They also say the co-operative shop is their shop and any profit obtained would be theirs.

The six Ibans who buy most of their household goods from Miri quote the same reasons as do the Malays.

With SLDB adopting the policy of paying rubber tappers once a week (started at the beginning of 1973) and given the present dissatisfaction of some of the settlers with the co-operative shop, there is a possibility that more and more Ibans will go to Miri to do their shopping. With more cash available to them at the end of the week, and with the regularity of the bus service to and from the scheme, there is reason to predict that the co-operative shop will gradually lose the bulk of its business, and will become a secondary source of supplies (as it has become for the Malays) where settlers obtain occasional small items (which they need urgently) and where children buy their candies.

6.3 SOURCES OF DISSATISFACTION

There is no doubt that a majority of the settlers at Lambir are generally dissatisfied with the conditions of the co-operative shop. The sources of dissatisfaction can be summarised as follows.

The price of goods at the co-operative shop is generally more expensive than the price of the same goods in Miri. Currently, with the exception of sugar, all other goods at the shop are sold at a higher price. The majority of respondents realise that due to transport costs, goods at the shop have to be slightly more expensive than in Miri, but many say the price is excessively high. Moreover, some respondents indicate that prices of many goods are seldom fixed. Prices for the same goods may change from day to day as different persons do the selling and sometimes vary with the persons who do the buying.

Since the shop charges high prices, and business at the shop is rather good, it is only logical, according to the members, that the society should make a profit. That is not the case as far as the members are concerned; allegedly many of them have never received a dividend from the society. Only 14 respondents out of the 41 members interviewed say they have received dividends. The dividends were very small in amount ranging from 15 cents to $12. This small amount of profit was not received in a single year, but over several years. Both respondents who report receiving higher dividends ($12 and $10) are members of the present committee. This is a source of widespread discontent among members, especially those who patronise the shop regularly. They believe the shop to be making profits and expect the profits to be divided among them. Many wonder where the profits go.

It is said that stock is not always adequate, especially of essential goods like sugar and rice. The stock of essential goods runs out a few times a month, and it usually takes a few days to remedy the situation. This sort of situation has been going on for some time, and causes inconvenience to the regular customers of the shop.

Though many members are reluctant to talk at length about management aspects, the general expression was one of dissatisfaction with the management. The present committee members are aware of this feeling, but fault previous committees and management. They say that prior to their appointment, the society had incurred outstanding debts - assessed by one member at around $6 000, and also, that a number of members were indebted to the society. They state further that the society has been making a profit since the new committee took office, but this profit must be used to pay off the outstanding debts. The present committee is also taking steps to make members pay their debts. Nineteen Iban respondents indicate they have debts with the co-operative shop, only one Malay and one Indian report having debts. The amount of debts each respondent has is small generally, the highest being $60, and most

debts are around $20 to $30. Out of the 19 debts, five (four Ibans and a Malay) are long standing debts, one is six years old. The long standing debts though small in amount, support the statement of the committee members. The rest are current debts which are paid whenever the settlers have money. It is essential that the amount of debts members have with the society be made known to the members. The current policy of the co-operative society, according to informants, is to restrict the amount of credit allowed to each member; each member is allowed credit at the shop to a maximum equal to the amount of his share, and that debts have to be settled in full every month before further credit is allowed. Many Iban respondents are dissatisfied with this arrangement. They complain that the amount of credit allowed is too small and not sufficient to meet their requirements. There is an indication that, with the new system of weekly payment for rubber tappers, coupled with the limited amount of credit allowed by the shop, many settlers will go to Miri to get their essentials rather than to the shop, if the shop insists on cash payment.

Other sources of complaint include:-

- the unfriendly atmosphere of the shop;
- since January of this year, the society has adopted a policy of issuing receipts for every purchase of a dollar or more. But the policy is not strictly followed by the shopkeepers who issue such receipts only to the heads of households but not to other family members, particularly children;
- some respondents are not satisfied with the fact that the paid manager together with his family and his assistant live in the shop-building;
- respondents are not generally satisfied with the committee members. They say the latter, having no knowledge of book-keeping and trading methods are unable to control management of the shop. For this reason, many members are not willing to participate in the selection of committee members as no one appears to have the requisite qualifications or experience.

6.4 MEMBERS' OPINION ON THE POSITION OF THE CO-OPERATIVE SHOP

Members generally are not satisfied with the condition of the co-operative shop. Though only seven of the respondents definitely indicate that they want the shop closed and replaced by some other kind of arrangement, the majority indicate a less drastic view; they want to see the management and operation of the shop changed. Only 12 respondents indicate that the shop should continue as it is. This includes four members of the management committee, and three Malays and three Chinese who are not concerned with what happens to the society. This leaves only five other Ibans (excluding those in the committee) who want the shop to continue running as it is; even with the Ibans who patronise the shop regularly,

discontent is evident.

There is an indication of a split within the Iban community on the issue of the co-operative society. Supporters of keeping the co-operative shop as it is seem to come from Rumah Kiroh and Rumah Maju (the three Iban committee members are under these two Tuai Rumahs), while those from Rumah Spitt and Rumah Lawai are against the co-operative shop. The Malays are not split but are dissatisfied with the shop; only one Malay (the committee member) seriously wants it to continue. The other Malay who wants the shop to continue as it is, is not a member of the co-operative society; and has no financial interest in what happens.

The majority of the society's members would like to see the shop continue operating, but with changes on the management side. Many now question whether anyone among the society is able to run the shop profitably and for the good of its members. They therefore agree that another organisation, such as SLDB, SEDC or SDFC, might take over the management on a joint-venture basis with the society. They realise that people with good education and experience in business are necessary to run a shop well; and that these organisations have the expertise, as is shown by the shop at Bukit Peninjau. The idea of SLDB or SEDC taking over the shop's management through some form of arrangement with the members of the society has popular backing among the respondents. But if the present co-operative society were dissolved and a new shop established by SLDB for instance, there would be strong resistance from the settlers, especially the Ibans.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is of little or no benefit to the society, or to the settlers in general to leave the situation as it is at present. Committee membership has changed often, but without apparent improvement. It would therefore appear to be in everyone's interest for either SLDB or SEDC to become involved in the society. The idea of a governmental organisation being involved in some way has the popular support of the sampled members, and it is recommended that a responsible officer of either of these bodies, should undertake the chairmanship of the committee. No strong opposition to this arrangement from existing members of the committee is envisaged as they would still serve on the committee, provided they are - or remain elected. Such an arrangement would put the committee, and the members generally under the leadership of someone with authority who is not subjected to the internal pressures and conflicts within a settler community. It would also give at least some of them the opportunity to participate in, and learn the techniques of business management, and instill in them the entrepreneural skill and spirit which the local people lack. In addition, and following sound management, both seen and in fact, settlers will be encouraged to use the shop as it will identify itself as belonging to them; a principle of a co-operative society to which many of them still subscribe.

The setting up of another independent shop is not recommended. There is a hard-core of Iban settlers who are strongly committed to having the co-operative shop continue running. Moreover they are aware, that it is the policy of SLDB not to allow another shop to operate within the scheme area. Therefore the setting up of another shop with the sanction of SLDB would imply that SLDB has changed its policy. Such a step could lead to greater problems, at least in the initial stage.

Further immediate recommendations are:-

- The manager of the Lambir scheme, or the Settlers Development Officer should actively advise the society in the principles of co-operative management, and perhaps at this stage the Co-operative Development Department should also take an active role.

- Alternative and competitive sources of supply for goods should be sought; and a committee member suggests purchase direct from PERNAS or SEDC, whenever this is possible. These agencies had been used once, but it was not known why this arrangement ceased. The aim should be to bring down prices to a more competitive level; and all goods on sale should be clearly price-tagged. Sales should be undertaken only by the shop manager and/or his assistant, and this should be strictly enforced by the scheme manager. The policy of issuing receipts for purchases of a dollar or more, again should be strictly enforced.

It would appear to be undesirable for the shop manager to live on the shop premises. Respondents, either through prejudice or other reasons apparently resent this.

A proper accounting system should be instituted and followed; including procedures for the daily checking of cash takings by the Treasurer and one committee member, and systematic audits and stock taking. Statements of the shops affairs should be published quarterly indicating income, expenditure and resultant profit or loss.

6.6 CONCLUSIONS

There is little doubt that the settlers understand the concept of a co-operative society shop. They are aware of their entitlement to a share of the profits relative to both share holdings and the purchases they make. Therefore, following closure of the year's account, a responsible member of the committee, or if possible a member of the Co-operative Department, should explain the accounts to the members and advise on the proposed distribution of profits, or the alternative use to which they had or will be applied - for example, liquidation of outstanding debts or expansion of the shop's facilities.

Through the diversity of ethnic groups, cultures and standards of the settlers, it is extremely difficult for one leader to emerge as yet as being acceptable to all. Therefore until this situation does obtain, and in the course of time through social contact and education, this is almost certain, it is apparent that leadership of the organisation should be found from outside the scheme and preferably from SLDB or SEDC, either of which bodies should enter into a joint venture with the co-operative shop.

CHAPTER 7

FIELD REPORT NUMBER SIX
SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE LABOUR FORCE AT BUKIT PENINJAU OIL PALM ESTATE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

7.1.1 A Brief Description

Bukit Peninjau scheme is the first in a series of oil palm schemes to be developed by the Sarawak Land Development Board (SLDB) in the Lambir-Subis area. The total target area to be planted by SLDB with oil palm is 33 000 acres (including allowance for roads, villages etc.). Bukit Peninjau scheme covers a total area of 4 800 acres, and like the other planned schemes, it is presently run on an estate basis and is capable of taking in about 400 labourers.

7.1.2 Objectives of the Study

The study aims to gather information on the following:-

(a) the background of the current labour force in terms of place or origin, ethnic affiliation, age, former occupation and education;

(b) the labourers' sources of information, nature of information received, and their motives for moving to Bukit Peninjau; and

(c) the labourers' assessment of working conditions.

7.2 METHODOLOGY

A period of approximately two weeks (June, 1973) was spent at Bukit Peninjau for the purpose of gathering data. Informal discussions were held with members of the Management Staff and formal interviews with the help of a structured interview schedule were carried out with a sample of labourers in their houses. For Iban informants, interviews were carried out with the help of an Iban interviewer.

Sample

A total of 45 labourers was interviewed (their ethnic background is shown in Table 7.1). This represents approximately 20 per cent of the male labourers on the scheme; similarly, the number of respondents in each ethnic group is approximately 20 per cent of the total labourers from the groups. The respondents were randomly selected from a list of labourers whose names are registered as occupying houses within the

scheme. For a married man with a family, only the name of the head of the household is registered, whereas in the case of two unmarried men sharing a house, the names of both occupants are registered. The sampling frame is not exhaustive, it excludes female workers and other working male dependents (the number of the latter is very small). Our sample therefore represents only male workers.

TABLE 7.1 SAMPLE SIZE BY ETHNIC GROUPS

Ethnic groups	Number
Iban	25
Land Dayak	4
Melanau	10
Kedayan	3
Malay	2
Chinese	1
Total	45

73 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LABOUR FORCE

There were, at the time of the study, a total of 313 labourers at Bukit Peninjau. The number fluctuates greatly from month to month. Table 7.2 shows the total labour force by ethnic groups and sex.

TABLE 7.2 LABOUR FORCE BY ETHNIC GROUP AND SEX

Ethnic group	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Iban	136	75	211	67.4
Land Dayak	23	1	24	7.6
Melanau	55	-	55	17.5
Kedayan	13	-	13	4.1
Malay	7	1	8	2.5
Chinese	2	-	2	0.9
Total	236	77	313	100.0

Note Figures obtained from SLDB Regional Office showing labour force on 15th June, 1973.

7.3.1 Ethnic Composition and Place of Origin

More than two-thirds (67.4 per cent) of the labour force is Iban and more than one-third of the Iban workers are females. They are either wives of the workers, or their unmarried daughters. Female workers take up employment periodically and seldom stay for a long period in continuous employment. They are paid $3.50 a day as compared to $4.00 to $5.00 a day paid to the male workers. The relative absence of female workers from the other ethnic groups indicates that non-Iban workers

are either unmarried or do not bring their families to the scheme, as shown in Table 7.5.

The workers come from various places in Sarawak and Table 7.3 shows their place or origin. According to the sample, a large proportion of Iban workers comes from the Second Division, particularly the Lubok Antu District. The Lubok Antu group has a long history of migration prior to its arrival at Bukit Peninjau.

TABLE 7.3 PLACE OR ORIGIN OF WORKERS BY ETHNIC GROUP

Place of origin	Ethnic groups						
	Iban	Land Dayak	Melanau	Kedayan	Malay	Chinese	Total
First Division							
Serian	1	3					4
Bau		1					1
Simunjan					1		1
Second Division							
Lubok Antu	8						8
Simanggang	1				1		2
Saratok	1						1
Betong	3						3
Third Division							
Sibu	2		1			1	4
Kanowit	3						3
Mukah	1		8				9
Seventh Division							
Kapit	2						2
Song	2						2
Fourth Division							
Bintulu	1		1				2
Sibuti				3			3
Total	25	4	10	3	2	1	45

The Lubok Antu Iban came in three separate groups under three different Tuai Rumah. They started to leave their villages during the period of confrontation, or immediately after confrontation at the persuasion of Government officials. They were persuaded to move, firstly, due to security reasons; and secondly, the area in which their villages were located was remote and unsuitable for any major development projects. One group was persuaded to move to Serian District and they settled temporarily around Triboh scheme, working as wage-labourers on the scheme, and growing padi on lands borrowed from nearby longhouses. Another group was moved to Skrang, presumably to be settled in the scheme. They were also employed as contract labourers, but were never taken into the scheme

as settlers, since all the lots had been allocated. They then moved to Balai Ringin where they used lands of other Ibans with the latter's consent, to plant padi. From there they were moved to Bukit Peninjau. The third group was also moved to Skrang scheme after an attempt to put them in a padi scheme in Ridan failed to materialise; from Skrang they moved to the vicinity of Melugu scheme, where they worked as labourers and grew padi on other people's lands. Unfortunately they could not be settled at Melugu either, so they were persuaded to come to Bukit Peninjau. In the course of their migration, the main motive was to find suitable padi lands and create new villages with better facilities. In fact, they consented to move out of their original villages with the promise of more padi lands and better living facilities elsewhere. Similarly, they agreed to migrate to Bukit Peninjau as they were assured by Residents and District Officers that each family would be given a ten-acre plot of oil palm plus a two-acre plot of padi land.

The number of bileks that originally moved with each Tuai Rumah was relatively small; but as they came into the scheme, many three-generation bilek families broke up into separate households; mainly because the houses at Bukit Peninjau were too small for the larger family units. Moreover, other Iban families also joined them as they entered the scheme, and each Tuai Rumah has three or four Iban families under his jurisdiction who were not among the group of original migrants. Each Tuai Rumah now claims to have from 20 to 25 bilek families under him in the scheme.

Other Ibans came from the Third and Seventh Divisions; the First and Fourth Divisions supply only one Iban labourer each (referring to the sample). Ibans came to the scheme mainly in groups; only five Iban respondents indicate they came individually and these five were already in the Miri area looking for jobs before they moved to the scheme.

Land Dayaks came mainly from Serian District and were recruited in a group by the Land Board. The single Land Dayak in the sample who came from Bau was already in Fourth Division working in a logging camp prior to entering the scheme. The majority of Melanaus were recruited from Mukah; three, however, who indicated coming into the scheme individually, were already in Miri looking for employment prior to joining the scheme. Similarly, both Malays were already in Miri. The Kedayans were originally residents of the immediate vicinity of Bukit Peninjau.

As indicated in Table 7.4, the majority of the Iban labourers were already on the move. For one reason or another, they had already left their home villages and taken temporary residence in other areas. The group consists of members of the Lubok Antu Ibans, and a handful of young Ibans (either married or single) who earlier moved out of their home villages to take up employment in logging camps. When work at the camps was over, they were unemployed. The majority of mem-

bers of other ethnic groups were recruited directly from their home area. Only 35 per cent of them were on the move at the time of being recruited; these are the two Malays, three Melanaus, one Land Dayak and one Chinese.

TABLE 7.4 PLACE OF RESIDENCE OF LABOURERS PRIOR TO WORKING IN BUKIT PENINJAU

	Iban	Other groups
Same place as place of birth	10	13
Different from place of birth		
Fourth Division towns	3	7
Other areas	12	-
Total	25	20

7.32 Age and Marital Status

TABLE 7.5 SAMPLE LABOUR FORCE BY AGE AND MARITAL STATUS

Age group	Iban		Land Dayak		Melanau		Malay		Kedayan		Chinese		Total
	M	S	M	S	M	S	M	S	M	S	M	S	
16 - 21	2	2+1*		2		3		1		1			12
22 - 31	5	1+2*	1	0+1*		1+1*				1		1	14
32 - 41	4	1			2	1+1*			1				10
42 - 61	7	-				0+1*	1						9
Over 61	-	-											-
Total	18	7	1	3	2	8	1	1	1	2	-	1	45

Note M = Married; S = Single

In the above table, 'single' persons include married man who did not bring their families with them to the scheme. There are seven of them in the sample and they are indicated by *

The work force is young; slightly more than half (57.7 per cent) is below 32 years old. Ages range from 16 to 60 (one case of each) with an average of slightly over 30 years. Compared to the labour force at the SOP oil palm scheme (see Chapter 9, Field Report Number 8) the workers at Bukit Peninjau are slightly older. This is partly due to the fact that the group of Ibans from the Lubok Antu area generally consists of older men and women who in some cases are grandparents. Iban labourers are, on the average, older than labourers of the other ethnic groups. The Melanau, Land Dayak and Kedayan labourers are mainly single men, and, except for a few married men without families, are in their late teens or early twenties. Similarly, more Iban labourers have their

families on the scheme compared to labourers of the other ethnic groups.

7.3.3 Education of Labourers

About half of the respondents indicate they have been to school. The majority of these are young, unmarried men who were recruited in groups by SLDB. One Melanau and one Chinese have completed lower and upper secondary school respectively. On the other hand, a very big proportion of older, married men have had no formal schooling. Age more than ethnic background, is the main determinant of whether one has been to school or not.

Table 7.6 shows the formal educational background of the labourers by age group.

TABLE 7.6 FORMAL EDUCATION BY AGE GROUP

Age group	16-21	22-31	32-41	42-61	Over 61	Total
Primary school	8	7	5	-	-	20
Secondary school	1	1				2
No schooling	3	6	5	9		23

7.3.4 Former Occupation

Respondents were asked their occupation prior to moving to the scheme. The answers are listed in Table 7.7.

TABLE 7.7 FORMER OCCUPATIONS BY ETHNIC GROUP

Occupation	Iban	Other groups
Farmer/padi planter	21	4
Logging/sawmiller labourer	2	4
Fishermen	-	4
General labourer	2	1
Armed Forces		1
Trader		1
Sailor		1
Tri-saw puller		1
Carpenter		2
Unemployed/helping father in the farm		1

Twenty-one out of 25 Iban workers at Bukit Peninjau indicate their former occupation as farming. Iban's pre-occupation with padi planting is clearly indicated; whether one is young or old, married or unmarried, male or female, padi growing is an essential part of life to rural Ibans. Only four Ibans indicate non-farming occupations (two labourers in logging

camps and two general contract labourers) as their former occupation. However, 19 out of the 25 Ibans interviewed indicate they have had experience working as wage earners at one time or another. Working for wages outside one's village is part of the Bejalai tradition of the Iban. On the other hand, the majority of members of other ethnic groups were engaged in non-farming occupations. Only two Kedayans and two Land Dayak youths indicate they were formerly farmers, in fact, all four are recent school-leavers who only helped their parents on the family farm. The Melanaus as a group show a great diversity of occupation.

7.3.5 Household Composition

The size of family households at Bukit Peninjau is relatively small. In computing household size, single men who share houses with other single men or who occupy houses alone are excluded. The average household size is 4.5 with a range of from two to eight (see Table 7.8). The smallest household consists of a husband and wife, while the largest is made up of middle aged parents with six children ranging in age from three months to 13 years. Both the husband and wife are working.

The relative smallness of households can be attributed partly to the following factors:-

(a) the groups of Ibans who migrated from Lubok Antu came with big bilek families; but in finding the scheme houses too small, many families which originally consisted of married and/or grown up children broke up into smaller families to be conveniently accommodated in the small houses;

(b) other labourers are young and their families are small as they have just started to have children;

(c) there are indications that some labourers have left some of their children in their former villages with the grandparents or other relatives.

There are, however, five households containing additional persons besides the main family group. They include two families each incorporating a son-in-law (both newly married); a family incorporating the household head's aged mother; a family incorporating the household head's mother and grandmother; and a family incorporating a cousin who is working in the scheme. Except for the last case, all the above are Iban households.

It can be seen from Table 7.9 that over 50 per cent of the dependents are below 16 years old, and are not eligible for employment in the scheme. The number of dependents who also work as labourers on the scheme are six males and twelve females. The females are all Ibans are are either wives of labourers or unmarried daughters. The number of females who work is slightly less than half the total females who are

TABLE 7.8 HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

House No.	1 - 11		12 - 21		22 - 31		32 - 41		42 - 61		Over 61		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	1				1	1	1						4
2		1			1				1	1			4
3	2	2	1	1		1	1						8
4	1	1	2	1	1				1				7
5	1			1	1								3
6			1			1	1						3
7	1	2				1	1						5
8	3	1			1	1							6
9				1					1	1			3
10					1	1							2
11	2								1	1			4
12									1	1			2
13		2			1	1							4
14	1	3	1						1	1			7
15			1	1						1			3
16	2					1	1			1			5
17	1			1			1						3
18	1		1						1	1			4
19	3				1	1							5
20	1		1	1					1	1			5
21					1	1			1	2			5
22	1	1	1		1	1				1		1	7
23	1					1	1						3
Total	22	13	9	7	10	12	7	-	9	12	-	1	102

Note This table is based on 23 households.

TABLE 7.9 AGE STRUCTURE AND SEX OF DEPENDENTS

Age group	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
1 - 6	12	10	22	27.3
7 - 11	10	3	13	16.0
12 - 16	5	3	8	9.8
17 - 21	7	2	9	11.1
22 - 31	3	13	16	19.7
32 - 41	-	-	-	-
42 - 61	-	12	12	14.8
Over 61	-	1	1	1.3
Total	37	44	81	100.0

Note This figure excludes the wives.

eligible to work (in Table 7.9, there are 26 females who are above 17 years old); this is due to the fact that:-

- young wives are too busy with small children at home; and

- other women are too old to work.

The average number of workers in a family household is slightly less than two (1.8).

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TABLE 7.10 SOURCES OF INFORMATION BY ETHNIC GROUP

Sources of information	Iban	Melanau	Land Dayak	Kedayan	Malay	Chinese	Total
Government officers	15	8			2		25
Political leaders	-		2				2
Community leaders	2						2
Friends/relatives	8	2		3			13
Radio/newspapers			2			1	3

The majority of respondents came to know of the scheme through government and Board officials. Specifically, these officials include the Residents of the First and Second Divisions, District Officers, recruiting officers from SLDB and the Labour Office in Miri. The majority of the Ibans were informed through the Residents and District Officers; the group from Lubok Antu were actually approached and persuaded by these officials to move to the scheme. The Melanaus and a few Ibans from Mukah were informed about the scheme by an Assistant Settler's Development Officer (ASDO) from the Board, who went to the area specifically to recruit workers. The groups of Third and Seventh Division Ibans also detained information from their respective District Officers; and the mobile young men in our sample from the Labour Office in Miri. These young men (Ibans on bejalai, Malay and Melanau wage earners) were already in the area looking for work after they had been retrenched from their former jobs. The majority are not likely to stay long.

Second in importance as a source of information are relatives and friends; news travels quickly in villages through word of mouth. However, information spread by this media is apt to be unreliable, unless the receiver becomes interested enough to attempt to confirm what he hears, from the official source. However inaccurate, informal news passing from one villager to another is an important source of information.

The group of Land Dayaks, mostly young men, received information from a Land Dayak political leader who persuaded these youths to work on the scheme, as they were under-employed on their fathers' farms. One Chinese and two Land Dayaks said they first heard the news from newspapers/radio; they got interested in the idea and made subsequent inquiry from SLDB offices in their towns. Newspapers or the radio as a source of information has a limited audience. Both are useful only

in so far as they make the public aware of an idea, but elaborate follow-up work must be undertaken in order to provide more adequate information.

The nature of the information received by the respondents varies greatly. The groups of Ibans from Lubok Antu allege they were told they would be settlers on a land development scheme in which they would be allocated a ten-acre plot of land planted with oil palm, and an additional two acres for planting other crops. Also, in the scheme, each family would be provided with a house supplied with running water, lighting and other facilities.

The Land Dayaks were usually correctly informed about working conditions in the scheme, and the hardships they would have to face as labourers. However, they state they were not correctly informed about wages and other remuneration. They were told (allegedly) that they would be paid a fixed monthly salary of $120, plus overtime pay if they worked extra hours. The Melanau youths received the most accurate information about Bukit Peninjau. However their problems were different. The Labour Office usually refers potential workers to the SLDB office in Miri so that they can inquire about working conditions themselves. Most of those referred by the Labour Office are comparatively satisfied with the scheme. The accuracy of the information transmitted through community leaders and/or friends depends on the original source of information. The Kedayans who originally lived in the vicinity of the scheme and who were informed by relatives and friends, seemed to know what was actually happening on the scheme prior to taking up appointment. Their decision to move onto the scheme was made realistically, and they seem to be the most satisfied group of labourers.

It must be stressed that the accuracy of the information given is an important factor in determining the satisfaction and happiness of the workers. Our findings at Lambir Rubber scheme also support this view. Migrant labourers who get the right picture of scheme conditions prior to taking up employment, know exactly what to expect and their acceptance is then a matter of personal choice. On the other hand, those who get distorted information feel they have been misled, and blame Government for bringing them into the scheme, and for the hardships they subsequently face. This feeling of being misled is the central cause of Ibans discontentment. They came with high expectations (formed with the initial information they received); and unfortunately such expectations cannot be realised on the scheme, as conditions, especially with respect to land ownership, are quite different to what they anticipated.

7.5 REASONS FOR MOVING TO THE SCHEME

The reasons given by respondents for moving to the scheme vary from one ethnic group to another, and also vary according

to the age and marital status of the respondent. Table 7.11 shows the various reasons by ethnic group and marital status.

TABLE 7.11 MOTIVATION FOR MIGRATION

Reasons	Iban		Melanau		Land Dayak		Kedayan		Malay		Chinese	Total
	M	S	M	S	M	S	M	S	M	S	S	
To own plots of land in the scheme	13				1				1			15
Merely to work	4	2	2	3				2		1		14
To try new jobs with a hope of getting better income	1	1	3	1	1	1	1					9
To see Miri (second visit)	3	1		1		1					1	7

Note (1) The last three categories are not mutually exclusive.
(2) All of those who are married but have left their families behind, seven persons in all, are included in the 'married' column.

With the older married Ibans who consider their movement to the scheme as a migration (pindah), the expectation of a plot of land planted with oil palm, and land for other crops was the main attracting factor. Except for the Tuai Rumah from Mukah, all the other married Ibans who are over 30 years of age say they would not have come to the scheme had they been told they would not be allowed to plant padi. The four married Ibans who say they come to the scheme merely to work are in their middle and late twenties, and all formerly worked in timber camps in the Fourth and Fifth Divisions. They too express a desire to stay on the scheme, if the Government allocates them land for padi planting. Three Ibans said they are on a social visit, they are in fact on bejalai without any intention of staying permanently, given the present conditions on the scheme. The Tuai Rumah from Mukah said he came to the scheme out of curiosity, simply to obtain first hand experience of what scheme life is like; now he has seen enough and has no plans to stay longer.

To traditional Ibans, to grow padi is essential; "padi to the Iban is not just a crop. Hill padi cultivation is their way of life, and has become, for the Iban, their hall-mark ..., padi cultivation distinguishes men from animals (jebu)... It was to the Iban his very existence (pengidup) and the focus of his cultivation" (Jensen, E., 1966). All his religious and ritual life are connected with padi cultivation, and the spirit or soul of padi. In past decades, Iban migration to the Fourth Division was prompted largely by a desire for more land to grow padi so that they might live a respectable life within their community.

Working against this background, it comes as no surprise that Ibans who migrated to the scheme from the Lubok Antu District, indicated that they came to the scheme to acquire the ten-acre plot of oil palm and other land "promised by Government". To them, moving into Bukit Peninjau is only one of their many traditional migrations in search of land. It is also not surprising that the greatest need they feel at present is for land for growing padi and other crops. This striving to acquire farm lands will continue at all costs until Government recognises and fulfils what the Iban feel to be their desperate need. At present, the majority of married Ibans are planting padi on a small scale, on Government land at the fringe of the oil palm planting. According to them, they must grow padi even on a very small scale in order to keep the padi spirit alive, particularly of their padi pun or sacred rice, which is necessary for ritual purposes, thereby maintaining their traditional religion. If one views Iban traditional religion in the same way as other religions, in so far as it contains a series of set rituals and belief systems, one should not take the idea of trying to change Ibans from a padi-planting community into a non-farming community too lightly. It is not possible to make them abandon padi cultivation overnight; any attempt in this direction without their consent will be resisted, and will not produce the desired result. To change the Iban traditional way of life from being a subsistence farmer to a wage earner needs, among other things, a very effective extension/educational programme. Any attempt at change which comes from outside and does not take into consideration the interests and cultural system of the people will be resisted, and this is one of the reasons why the labour force is so mobile.

The other ethnic groups, with the exception of one married Land Dayak and a Malay, do not consider land as a motivating force for their moving to the scheme. The Land Dayak actually married an Iban and has put himself under one of the Tuai Rumah; the Malay is an Iban by birth, who left the Police Force in order to join the scheme as a settler. The others, mostly young people, wish merely to work as wage-earners and many have engaged in wage employment previously. Some come for a social visit at SLDB expense. Many of these youths were unemployed in their own village, some were helping their fathers on the farms, while others were part of a mobile labour force in Miri or its vicinity, in search of one job after another. This group of young labourers will not stay long in any single job, especially if the working conditions are below their expectation.

Land shortage per se is not a factor pushing people away from their homes to work at Bukit Peninjau. The Ibans, Kedayans and Land Dayaks generally have large areas of temuda land for planting padi and other crops. However, the land being mainly interior and hilly land, is not suitable for profitable farming, and there is little chance of it being developed by Government. Due to their remoteness and unsuitability for major development projects, the Government encourages farmers who depend on such lands, to move to development schemes.

7.6 LABOUR STABILITY AND LABOURERS' ASSESSMENT OF WORKING CONDITIONS

The rate of labour turnover remains high. Labourers come and go at any time of year and many stay for only a few months. For example, according to SLDB records on 15th May, 1973, there were 31 Land Dayak labourers in the scheme at the time; one month later the number was reduced to 24, and the majority of them only came during late April and early May. Similarly, a group of about 40 Melanau labourers came on 9th June, 1973, but by 15th June, 11 of them had given a month's notice that they intended to leave the scheme. Many more youths expressed a desire to leave the scheme if they could get other jobs. In fact, 62.5 per cent of the respondents below the age of 30 indicate that they would leave the scheme very soon, and return to their homes.

TABLE 7.12 LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT BY ETHNIC GROUPS

Length of employment	Iban	Land Dayak	Melanau	Kedayan	Malay	Chinese	Total
Less than 3 months	6	3	9		1		19
3 - 6 months	2					1	3
7 - 12 months	1			3			4
Over a year	16	1	1		1		19

TABLE 7.13 LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT BY AGE AND MARITAL STATUS

Length of employment	16 - 21		22 - 31		32 - 41		42 - 61		Total	
	M	S	M	S	M	S	M	S	M	S
Less than 3 months		6	4	3	3*	1*		2	7	12
3 - 6 months	1		1	1					2	1
7 - 12 months		1		1	1	1			1	3
Over a year	2	1	5	1	2		8		17	2

Tables 7.12 and 7.13 show the length of employment of labourers by ethnic group, age and marital status. It can be seen from these tables, that older, married people (with families on the scheme) tend to stay for a longer time than younger, single men. The same finding applies to the labourers at SOP estate (Chapter 9). It is easier for single men to move from one job to another and, or, from one residence to another; but for a family man the question of moving has to be taken seriously. In terms of ethnic background, the Ibans are less mobile than the other groups; this is mainly due to the fact that the Ibans are older and married, and, moreover, the groups from Lubok Antu consider their moving to the scheme as a final migration. These Ibans, and a few others from other places who joined them later, express the desire to stay per-

manently on the scheme provided they are given land for planting padi. Their number is very large in proportion to the total married labour force over the age of 30 years. The majority have been on the scheme for more than two years.

Land Dayaks and Melanaus who are mostly in their twenties and unmarried, have no intention of staying for a long time on the scheme; both groups express a desire not to seek other employment in the Fourth Division, but to return home. The Kedayan youths are an exception; many have stayed for over six months on the scheme; they say they are quite satisfied with life in the scheme and have no intention of leaving yet.

The majority of labourers are not satisfied with working conditions, or with life in general, on the scheme. Only about one-third of the respondents indicate they are satisfied and happy to stay for some time. These include the Kedayans, Malays, a few young Ibans and the two married Melanaus and a Land Dayak family. The Kedayans, as a group, have the least complaints to make about the living and working conditions on the scheme. The reason seems to be that they are nearer to their homes; they indicate that they return home every weekend to help their parents on the farm, and presumably they also obtain part of their food provisions from their parents' farms to be brought to the scheme. The married Melanaus and Malays are quite happy, mainly because they are provided with free housing; they say if they had to work in the town, they would have to spend around $50 per month on housing alone. To these people, good houses act as an important incentive for staying on a scheme.

The Ibans' complaints centre on non-availability of land to cultivate. They feel that they are unable to live a normal and happy life without planting padi. They joined the scheme on the premise that they would be settlers with their own plots of oil palm, but on arrival were employed as labourers. The three Tuai Rumah whose views reflect those of their followers resent their status as labourers.

Generally, the labourers' complaints centre on the following issues.

7.6.1 Wages and Cost of Living

The wages are too low. In absolute terms, a wage of $4 or $5 a day seems reasonable; but as the price of essential commodities keeps increasing, and more so with the relatively higher price of goods at the scheme's only grocery store, a wage of $5 a day is barely adequate to support a family. People from the rural areas, where cash is difficult to obtain, overvalue money; this is one of the reasons why rural people are willing to leave their farms to work for $4 or $5 a day. On the other hand, they under-estimate the market value of what they produce and what they could obtain from the bush for their own consumption; so much so, that when they arrive on

the scheme and have to purchase all necessities, including fuel for cooking and rice, they find that a wage of $5 is just adequate for them to survive and leaves nothing to send home or to save. The Melanau and Land Dayak youths admit that this is actually their fault; in their kampong, they thought a wage of $5 a day was a lot of money, but in reality they were very disappointed by its small purchasing power. This is especially true for fish and vegetables (which come from Miri or Bekenu) which are expensive on the scheme, if they are available at all; and the single men rely mainly on expensive canned foods.

7.6.2 Working Conditions

Many labourers, especially the newcomers and young workers, complain that the discipline imposed on them during working hours is too strict. Many complain they are not allowed to take occasional breaks of five to ten minutes for natural and other purposes. They say one cannot relax for even a short while even when tired. The Field Assistants are too strict, and often shout at the workers when the latter show a tendency to slow down. Since most of the complaints about working conditions come mainly from the young and new workers, it is felt that the change from being a self-employed worker to a strictly disciplined employee as demanded by SLDB is too abrupt. A longer transitional period may be necessary for them to adjust to the new and disciplined way of life.

Labourers also complain of the early hours at which they have to start work. Although the roll-call starts at 5.45 a.m., they have to get up as early as 4.00 a.m. in order to prepare their food and have ample time to walk from their houses to the place where roll is called. Many also complain of the distance they have to walk to their homes after work as SLDB does not provide homeward transport.

7.6.3 Village Facilities and Amenities

Since the scheme village was only about three months old at the time of the survey interviews, the comments of the people about the inadequacy of village facilities and amenities may be unfair as a long term commentary. Whilst the labourers are happy with the free accommodation provided, they consider the social facilities and amenities inadequate.

One of the main problems is the absence of a proper source of clean water. The water supply system planned for the village is not yet complete, and no house is supplied with a tank to collect rain water. In many cases, labourers are obliged to use what water there is available in the drains and ditches for bathing, washing and drinking.

A clinic is not yet available on the scheme; the labourers have to use the clinic facility at the Health Sub-Centre at

Tun Openg Township which is six to seven miles away. Regular visits by mobile clinics would help to ease the situation.

There is only one grocery store on the scheme. Labourers often complain of the high cost of essential commodities of the store. They also complain of frequent shortages of essential foods such as rice, sugar and milk.

The houses are well constructed but rather small. Built on stilts, each house consists of a small living room, a bed room and a kitchen. The Iban labourers do not appreciate this; the glass windows are a waste and out of place. In many instances the windows are never opened; because according to Iban informants, they are afraid thay they might break the glass and they have been told that they would have to pay for any replacements out of their own pocket. Similarly, the raised concrete dapor (or cooking place) and the raised washing basin are out of place to many Iban women. The fact that the dapor is constructed in such a way means they have to own a kerosene cooker. As far as the Ibans are concerned, that is a waste and an unnecessary taxing of their limited cash. Therefore many cook underneath the house using fire wood. Longhouses would provide better accommodation; not only would they cut down the cost of construction, but more important, provide a social atmosphere within which the Ibans are familiar.

Many young labourers complain of the total absence of sports and recreational facilities to occupy their free time. They feel bored and lonely.

7.6.4 The Lack of a Sense of Security

Many informants, particularly the older ones feel a lack of security in the scheme. Many are beginning to worry about what will happen to them when they become too old and are unable to work; who will look after them and where they will stay are problems that worry them. Even the houses they say are not their own; management could evict them any time it pleases. This feeling of insecurity strengthens their desire to own plots of land within or outside the scheme, to which they might turn when they are no longer required to work as labourers.

7.7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Except for the Ibans from Lubok Antu District who were forced by circumstances to migrate, the labour force is young and on the whole highly mobile. Workers come from rural areas and many have attended at least primary school. Many are disillusioned with what traditional farming as an occupation can offer for their future, and so look towards wage-employment as an alternative. For potential migrants to the development scheme in the Study Area, similar groups, especially the old-

der, family men, could be attracted, but better incentives may well have to be provided to induce them to stay.

For the Ibans, the most sensible incentive seems to be a combination of wage-employment and accessible land for planting padi and other crops. One can persuade Ibans to take up employment anywhere; this is in line with their traditional bejalai; but to induce them to stay, padi land must be made available. The general observation has been that whatever occupations Ibans take during their youth, they will turn back to padi growing when they are older and have a family. Even given a structural change, it seems virtually impossible to ask the Ibans to abandon padi growing entirely and be satisfied with estate life, unless the rewards for doing so can be made very substantial and their security assured. The rewards will need to be in terms of wages and other renumerations, job promotion, sick leave and other social benefits. It is also necessary for social facilities and amenities, such as a water supply, a clinic and recreational facilities, to be made available when the settlers move in. If such conditions are not met, SLDB could face a high labour turnover and dissatisfaction among the labourers; this would be an unfortunate situation, when experienced and skilled manpower is so badly needed.

Social change is a slow and complex process, especially when the change involves people's habits and culture. To expect rural people to adopt a new way of life in a matter of weeks or even months is to expect too much. Imposition of discipline, rules and regulations must not be too strict in the early period when the labourers first arrive; an apprentice period is necessary. Any change imposed from above may be effective but could be short-lived. On the other hand, change achieved through the willing participation of the people concerned is likely to have a most lasting effect. It is therefore apparent that more effective information on scheme conditions of employment should be publicised, though, possibly, the Settlers Development Division of SLDB. Whilst this information should be positive, it should also advise prospective workers of the differences they may encounter from their own locally established way of life.

CHAPTER 8

FIELD REPORT NUMBER SEVEN

THE DANAU SMALL-HOLDERS' OIL PALM SCHEME

8.1 BACKGROUND

In the early 1960's, the Commonwealth Development Corporation proposed the establishment of an oil-palm estate of around 5 000 acres in the Fifth Division. Contained in the proposal was a plan to start a small-holders' scheme on individually owned land surrounding the estate. Negotiations for both plans began in 1962 and several Bisaya community leaders were sent on a study tour of oil-palm schemes in Peninsular Malaysia. Unfortunately, the plan to set up the estate was dropped due to unsuitability of the soil and the high land compensation demanded by Bisaya land-owners. However, a small group of Bisaya remained interested in starting a small-holders' scheme on their land; and they appealed to the Department of Agriculture to implement the scheme. In 1966, the Government decided to implement two small-holders' schemes, one at Danau and the other one in Mukah. The Mukah plan was subsequently dropped due to land acquisition problems; but the project at Danau got under way in January 1970.

The scheme now covers an area of 676 acres planted with oil palm at 60 palms per acre. This excludes the 50 acres bought by the Department of Agriculture for experimental purposes and for an office and residential buildings. Originally, the land was owned by 54 Bisaya families. Before the establishment of the scheme, the area was covered with sago palms, and patches were used for growing padi and rearing buffaloes. The land was held under individual titles and customary right claims; but as a condition for establishing the scheme, all titles and claims were surrendered to the Government. The acreages surrendered range from 5 to 50 acres per family. In return, the Government promised to develop the area with oil palm and to establish a junior stock mill which would be handed over to the participants when the palms started producing. It was also agreed verbally that those participants who surrendered more than 10 acres would receive compensation, and that the compensation would come from those who surrendered less than 10 acres. This means that the Government sub-divided the area into 10 acre plots for re-distribution among the participants, no dislocation of villages or people was necessary.

8.2 PRESENT ORGANISATION

8.2.1 The Participants

There are 54 participants in the project; all are Bisaya who live in four kampongs (villages) on the fringe of the scheme. The Bisaya are traditionally padi growers and cultivate both

wet and dry padi. They also rear buffaloes; and the area is noted for its numerous buffaloes, and many were exported to Brunei annually. They also own large areas of rubber gardens which they tap seasonally. No pepper is yet grown. According to informants, the Bisaya have adequate land and shortage is never a problem.

8.2.2 Management of the Scheme

The Department of Agriculture is solely responsible for developing the scheme from initial planning to the time when the participants are ready to manage the whole operation themselves. Stationed at the scheme, there are: an Assistant Agriculture Officer, who is directly in charge of the project; an Agriculture Assistant and a Junior Agriculture Assistant. In addition, there are 10 semi-permanent employees engaged as tractor drivers and overseers(mandor), and 41 casual labourers. The last two groups of employees are made up of the participants themselves. Casual labourers are paid $6.15 per working day.

The work carried out in the scheme is no different from that on any other oil palm estate. Unlike the Bukit Peninjau scheme (see Chapter 8), workers at Danau start work at 7:15 in the morning and finish work at 3:00 in the afternoon with a 1½ hours lunch break. Since workers stay at various points at the fringe of the scheme, they come to work on their own, without the need of organised transport. Despite the fact that household heads work regularly on the scheme, they are still able to plant padi, rear buffaloes and tap rubber. According to informants, scheme work has never interfered with traditional farming activities; and they have always been able to divide their work force and time between working in their padi fields and on the scheme. The management staff confirms this; they say only a slight decrease (about 10 per cent) in the number of workers is observed during the peak padi planting season.

The scheme is planned for development in three phases. The first phase, which started in January, 1970, covers an area of 84.5 acres; and a number of the palms are already bearing fruit; the second phase, (covering an area of 300 acres) was started in mid 1970 and the third phase was planted towards the end of 1971 and covers an area of 299 acres. Planting of the third phase is not yet completed.

Social relationships between the workers and the agricultural staff seems to be very good; and they appear to mix very well with each other. According to the agricultural staff, the workers are cooperative and very keen to work. There is an absence of social distance between the workers and the management staff as is found in Bukit Peninjau scheme. This is

expected; as the management in Danau is playing more of an extension role as opposed to the employing role assumed by the staff at Bukit Peninjau.

To help the Department staff run the scheme smoothly and to give the villagers a sense of participation in its management, a "Goodwill Committee" was formed in 1970. It consists of 13 members all elected by the participants from among themselves. The committee acts as a spokeman for the participants in conveying their problems and needs to management. Similarly, any decisions or instructions originating from the Management are channelled through the committee. Its role as a liaison body again is important in giving the participants a sense of involvement in the affairs of the scheme.

8.2.3 Cost of the Project

The Department of Agriculture is responsible for meeting the entire cost of establishing the scheme, excluding, the cost of constructing the main drainage and irrigation system which is borne by the Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID). The responsibility of the Department of Agriculture will also include the cost of constructing the junior stock mill. The cost of establishing the scheme has proved to be excessively expensive. This is partly due to the fact that the land on which the scheme is located is low lying and swampy, and subject to frequent flooding. In order to reduce flooding, an extensive drainage system had to be constructed.Construction of the main drains was undertaken by DID; while subsidiary drains were built by the Department of Agriculture. In addition to the construction of gravel-surfaced roads, which are necessary for access to the scheme, a large number of bridges and culverts have had to be built. It was also necessary to fence in the entire scheme area, in order to keep the village's buffaloes from destroying the palms. Up to 31st May, 1973, the Department of Agriculture spent a total of $889 374 on the scheme. This amount excludes the sum spent by DID for constructing 642.50 chains of drainage.

The entire cost of establishing the scheme will be borne by the Government. However, once the factory is in operation, it is planned to make deductions for:-

a) the capital cost of the factory,

b) cost of fertilisers, pesticides, etc. subsequently used, and

c) maintenance of roads, bridges and drains.

8.3 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The organisation of Danau Scheme presents an interesting contrast to that of existing SLDB schemes in the Lambir-Subis

area. Here is a case of a development project in which social planning is given a central place. The people's involvement in the planning and operation of the scheme started from the beginning. So far, management has not failed to listen to the wishes of the people and has tried as far as possible to recognise their needs in implementing the project. The "Goodwill Committee" has proved useful in helping the participants to crystalise their problems and wishes, as well as in providing an avenue for meaningful dialogue with management.

The participants are satisfied with the project. They are convinced that it is for their benefit and that Government has incorporated their ideals in the course of establishing the scheme. They feel they have an important role to play in the operation of the scheme, and that its success depends upon them. The participants are enthusiastic workers and are willing to cooperate with management in keeping the project going smoothly. From the view point of social planning, the project is a success.

It was learned from both participants and agricultural staff that many other farmers in the vicinity are keen to surrender their lands for future expansion of the scheme. The Department of Agriculture, however, is not considering expansion at the moment; the cost of establishing the present scheme has proved to be very expensive, while its future economics are not known. It must be noted here that the relatively high cost of establishing the scheme has very little, if any, connection with the way the scheme is organised in social terms, but is due mainly to the nature of the land on which the scheme is located which requires the construction of a costly drainage system.

However, as this is a pilot project and the only one of its kind in Sarawak, its success is important for the future establishment of similar schemes on Native Customary Land in the State, where farmers mutually agree to surrender their customary land rights for consolidation and re-allocation for development.

Plans regarding the future organisation and operation of the scheme have not yet been finalised. Whether the participants will get titles to their 10 acre plots of oil palm also is not yet known. What is known is that a Farmers' Organisation will be set up when the mill is in operation, with responsibility for the organisation of the participants to work the scheme, as well as the marketing of the palm oil and other by-products.

CHAPTER 9

FIELD REPORT NUMBER EIGHT

SARAWAK OIL PALMS LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This paper reports the findings of a brief sociological survey of the Sarawak Oil Palms (SOP) labour force carried out between 20th and 23rd December, 1972.

The purpose of the survey was to gather information on the following questions:-

a) the background of the current labour force in terms of ethnic affiliation, age, sex, former occupation, place of origin and motives for coming to the SOP estate;

b) stability, length and continuity of employment;

c) changes in labour force composition over time; and

d) labourers' assessment of working conditions and the perceived advantages and disadvantages of SOP employment.

Two findings stand out as particularly significant to the planning of future development schemes in the Study Area: First, the majority of labourers interviewed own land, but prefer estate employment to working their own holdings; and, secondly, some, particularly younger men, look upon the estate as a means of escape from routine farm work. These results suggest that there exists a population that is rural in background but prefers daily wage work to agricultural self-employment, at least at the present time, given what they see as the existing rewards of independent farming. On the other hand, estate employment is not highly regarded and is generally viewed as the least desirable form of wage work.

9.2 LIMITATIONS

Three days were spent interviewing supervisory personnel and consulting company labour records. Interviews with labourers were conducted in the evenings. An effort was made to select interviewees who represent a cross-section of the total labour force; 14 informants were chosen providing data on a total of 28 labourers. Informants include 12 general labourers; one mandor, (or overseer) and one trainee field conductor. Eight informants are Iban, three Malay, two Kedayan and one Melanau. Questionnaire results should be interpreted with considerable caution considering the small sample involved.

Data regarding the present labour force, and changes in its size and composition, were compiled from SOP progress reports and the labour registers kept by the scheme supervisors and were checked against daily labour rolls and supplemented, where necessary, by additional information collected from the supervisors and their assistants. Figures for the present labour force are probably too great due to the fact that resignations are not always recorded and often occur without the management's knowledge.

9.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RRESENT LABOUR FORCE

The SOP estate is located within the Lambir-Subis Development Area, between 26 and 28 miles south of Miri, on the Miri-Bintulu road.

Table 9.7 shows the composition of the present labour force by sex and ethnic group; included here, and in subsequent tables, are only those labourers who are directly employed by SOP on a regular basis. Not included are temporary contract labourers. Table 9.2 gives a percentage breakdown of these figures.

TABLE 9.1 EXISTING LABOUR FORCE BY ETHNIC GROUP AND SEX

	Male		Female		Total	
Iban	248		63		311	
Kedayan	65	91 (1)	27	36	92	127
Malay	26		9		35	
Melanau	11		1		12	
Chinese	6		-		6	
Kelabit	2		2		4	
Kenyah	1		-		1	
Land Dayak	1		1		2	
	360		103		463	

Note (1) Company figures combine these two groups. On the other hand, Melanau are listed separately, although many members of this group describe themselves as Malay, and possibly for this reason our own figures depart somewhat from those of the company.

TABLE 9.2 PERCENTAGE COMPOSITION OF THE LABOUR FORCE BY ETHNIC GROUP AND SEX

Ethnic Group	Percentage by sex		Percentage of the total labour force
	Male	Female	
Iban	79	20	67.1
Kedayan	70	29	19.8
Malay	74	26	7.5
Melanau	91	8	2.5
Chinese	100	-	1.2
Kelabit	50	50	0.8
Kenyah	100	-	0.2
Land Dayak	50	50	0.4
Total percentage	78	22	100.0

9.3.1 Ethnic Composition

More than two-thirds (67.1 per cent) of the current force is Iban. Since the beginning of recruitment the proportion of Iban in the work force has steadily increased, while that of Malay and Kedayan has correspondingly decreased. The present percentage figures for the two groups are roughly the inverse of what they were at the beginning of 1970 (see Table 9.4), when Malay-Kedayan labourers made up almost 85 per cent of the total work force. This trend closely parallels the change in ethnic composition that has occurred at Lambir Land Development Scheme, and is even more striking in as much as two efforts at large scale Malay recruitment were made by SOP. The first involved the recruitment of Malay workers from Peninsular Malaysia, arranged through the Federal Government, and the second the recruitment of Sarawak Malay from the First Division. Both efforts failed, and the workers recruited, with very few exceptions, remained for only a short time.

Percentage figures for ethnic groups represented by only a small number of workers have remained relatively constant.

9.3.2 Place of Origin

In addition to changes in ethnic composition, the place of origin of members of the largest groups has also changed. Iban workers were originally recruited from the local area, initially from the nearby longhouse at Semburok, while Kedayan

workers, who constituted the majority of the original labour force, were recruited exclusively from the local Sibuti area. While Kedayan workers continue to come from Sibuti, their numbers and proportion of the total labour force has decreased. As at Lambir, the majority of Iban, on the other hand, now come from outside the Fourth Division. In contrast to Lambir, the Third Division, particularly the Saribas and secondly the Kanowit area, is the major source of migrants, although the Second Division is also important. Most Saribas migrants reportedly own rubber gardens which are old, largely unproductive and in need of replanting or replacement by other crops. Significantly many hope to resettle permanantly in the Fourth Division.

9.3.3 Labour Force Composition by Sex

The current labour force is predominantly male. Males make up over three-quarters (78 per cent) of the work force, and, while the proportion of females has increased slightly since 1969, the change is small, and, in general, composition by sex has remained relatively constant.

Women in the labour force are, in the overwhelming majority of cases, either wives of workers or unmarried daughters. Those who are married are frequently young women, and female workers, in general, tend to be younger than men, and remain for shorter periods of time in continuous employment. As general labourers, women receive $3 per day as compared to $4 per day for men. SOP makes relatively liberal provisions for maternity, paying transportation and medical costs and the woman's wages during the time of her recovery, and these provisions are often cited by workers as favourable features of estate employment.

9.3.4 Age and Marital Status

The work force is young; nearly 42 per cent is 21 years old or younger. Ages range from 12 to 65 with the mean age slightly over 25 years.

The majority of workers, particularly those in the most youthful age categories, are unmarried. The term "single", however, includes all persons who are currently without a spouse, and therefore contains those who are divorced or widowed, as well as those who have never been married.

Table 9.3 presents a breakdown of the current labour force by age and marital status. Information is incomplete for 81 workers.

TABLE 9.3 EXISTING LABOUR FORCE BY AGE AND MARITAL STATUS

Age Group	Married	Single	Total	Percentage of total
12 - 16	3	38	41	10.7
17 - 21	27	91	118	30.9
22 - 31	65	59	124	32.5
32 - 41	33	10	43	11.3
42 - 61	48	7	55	14.4
62 and over	1	-	1	0.3
Total	177	205	382	100.0

9.4 CHANGES IN WORK FORCE COMPOSITION

Table 9.4 shows changes in work force composition by sex and ethnic group over six-month intervals since April, 1970, the first month for which adequate information is available.

9.4.1 Change by Ethnic Group

The major change in this regard has been the replacement of Malay-Kedayan workers by Iban and shift in the place of origin of Iban workers from the local area to the Third and Second Divisions. This change is related in part to historical factors. Active recruitment by SOP began just as work on the Miri-Bintulu road was coming to an end. The overwhelming majority of workers on the Sibuti stretch of the road were Kedayans, and as they were dismissed, they sought employment with the estate. Until the completion of the first block of labour lines, SOP provided daily transport to and from Bekenu for Kedayan labourers. With the completion of the lines - and the requirement that workers live on the estate - many resigned, and since that time the proportion of Kedayan in the total labour force has steadily decreased.

9.4.2 Seasonal Variation in Labour Force Size

As long as the majority of the labour force was locally recruited, SOP experienced considerable difficulty with absenteeism, high turnover and seasonal resignation. The rate of turnover is still high, but less than previously, and, in the management's view, is now at an acceptable level.

It proved impossible, in the short time alloted to the survey, to obtain an adequate measure of seasonal absenteeism

TABLE 9.4 CHANGE IN WORK FORCE COMPOSITION OVER TIME (1970- 1972)

Month	Ethnic groups	1970						1971						1972					
		Male		Female		Total	Total per cent	Male		Female		Total	Total per cent	Male		Female		Total	Total per cent
		Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent			Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent			Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent		
February	Iban	15	79	4	21	19	12.7	59	73	21	26	80	32.1	116	75	39	25	155	53.8
	Malay	115	91	12	9	127	84.7	128	81	29	18	157	63.0	91	74	23	26	123	42.7
	Chinese	2	100	-	-	2	1.3	2	100	-	-	2	0.8	3	75	1	25	4	1.4
	Melanau	1	100	-	-	1	0.6	6	75	2	25	8	3.2	2	100	-	-	2	0.7
	Kelabit	1	100	-	-	1	0.6	1	100	-	-	1	0.4	2	100	-	-	2	0.7
	Javanese	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100	-	-	1	0.4	1	100	-	-	1	0.3
	Land Dayak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100	-	-	1	0.3
	Total	134	89	16	11	150	100	197	79	52	21	249	100	216	77	72	23	288	100
August	Iban	48	75	16	25	64	24.7	62	73	23	27	85	42.7	148	77	45	23	193	61.7
	Malay	146	81	34	19	180	69.5	88	83	18	16	106	53.2	81	76	26	24	107	34.2
	Chinese	2	100	-	-	2	0.8	2	100	-	-	2	1.0	5	83	1	17	6	1.9
	Melanau	5	100	-	-	5	1.9	3	100	-	-	3	1.5	4		-	-	4	1.3
	Kelabit	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	100	-	-	2	1.0	1		-	-	1	0.3
	Javanese	1	50	1	50	2	0.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	1		-	-	1	0.3
	Land Dayak	6	100	-	-	6	2.3	1	100	-	-	1	0.5	1		-	-	1	0.3
	Total	208	80	51	20	259	100	158	79	41	21	199	100	241	77	72	23	313	100

and resignation. However, some indication of the problem is provided by Table 9.5 which shows the net monthly gain and loss of workers. Quite clearly the period of January through April, which corresponds with the rice harvest season, is a period of labour outflow. Considering only resignations and discharges (Table 9.6) the pattern is roughly the same, although less pronounced, and a second period of outflow, from June through August, is revealed, corresponding with the felling and planting season. This period is masked by intensive recruitment as it coincides roughly with the palm planting season.

These tables record only permanent departures; seasonal outflow due to temporary absence is reported to be even more marked. Workers are permitted three consecutive days absence without notice. A formal request must be made for leaves of longer duration, and according to management these requests are seldom refused and usually occur at peak in the agricultural cycle.

TABLE 9.5 SEASONAL VARIATION IN WORK FORCE SIZE

Month	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	Combined gain/loss
	Net gain/loss					
January	-	- 4	+52	-62	+ 5	+
February	-	+ 8	- 8	- 4	-20	-24
March	-	- 1	- 3	-34	+ 4	-34
April	-	+ 1	+31	-14	-20	- 2
May	-	- 7	+19	-11	+21	+22
June	-	+ 6	+27	+ 3	+10	+46
July	-	+20	+51	-	+ 3	+74
August	+ 7	+ 3	+12	+ 6	+ 7	+35
September	+ 4	+17	+11	+20	+24	+76
October	-	+ 5	+47	+ 5	+14	+7
November	- 4	+14	+19	+53	+42	+124
December	nd	- 5	- 4	+28	nd	+19

Labourers who plan to resign are required to give SOP one month's notice, but non-compliance with this rule is widespread. Similarly, SOP must give labourers a month's notice before discharging them, unless they fail to perform their duties.

TABLE 9.6 MONTHLY LOSS OF WORKERS*

Month	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	Total
January	-	9	5	62	39	115
February	-	3	8	24	60	95
March	-	7	8	39	19	73
April	-	-	7	28	54	89
May	-	8	17	30	12	67
June	-	15	14	15	27	71
July	-	-	18	18	36	72
August	9	15	16	11	29	80
September	8	-	14	5	13	40
October	-	1	14	10	14	39
November	4	8	19	31	9	71
December	nd	-	4	20	-	24

Note * These figures show gross loss, while Table 9.5 shows gain/loss.

9.5 LABOUR STABILITY

The rate of labour turnover remains high, and could pose a problem later on as the need for an experienced labour force increases. At the moment, over 60 per cent of the labour force has been employed for less than a year, while only 14 workers, representing slightly more than three per cent of the total, have been employed for three years or longer (that is since December, 1969). The average length of employment is 4.6 months. The detailed breakdown of length of employment is shown in Table 9.7.

TABLE 9.7 LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT BY ETHNIC GROUPS AND SEX

Length of employment	Iban		Kedayan		Malay		Melanau		Others		Total number	Percentage of total work force
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Less than 6 months	111	29	17	12	8	-	-	-	5	3	185	40.5
6 to 11 months	45	11	17	7	4	4	1	-	1	-	90	19.7
12 to 23 months	76	19	8	5	3	-	3	-	1	-	115	25.2
24 to 35 months	10	3	12	3	9	4	7	1	3	-	52	11.4
36 months or more	3	1	8	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	14	3.2
Total	245	63	62	27	26	8	11	1	10	3	456	100

Tables 9.8 and 9.9 show length of employment by marital status and age. Predictably older, married workers are likely to remain for a longer term of service.

TABLE 9.8 LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT BY MARITAL STATUS

Length of employment	Married		Unmarried	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Less than 6 months	58	32.7	116	53.7
6 to 11 months	34	19.2	22	10.2
12 to 23 months	40	22.6	56	25.9
24 to 35 months	34	19.2	19	8.8
36 months or more	11	6.2	3	1.4
Total	177	100	216	100

Six of the 14 workers interviewed have definite plans to leave the estate. Two Malay workers are currently seeking employment on or near the sea, preferably as sailors, and will leave as soon as they have found other jobs; one Iban is saving money to invest in a business; and three workers, two Kedayan and an Iban, have made plans to return to their farms with money they have saved. Of the remainder, all but two workers said they would take another job if they could find one, but at the moment they have no prospects or definite plans to leave SOP. Two workers expressed a desire to remain with the estate as long as possible; both said that they were content and did not expect to find a better job. The majority of workers expressed concern that they would be discharged and describe the chief disadvantages of SOP employment as low pay, lack of incentives for continuous service and impermanence or insecurity of employment.

TABLE 9.9 LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT BY AGE

Length of employment	12-21	22-31	32-41	42-61	62 and over	Total
Less than 6 months	87	48	17	22	-	174
6 to 11 months	18	17	9	12	-	56
12 to 23 months	39	37	11	10	-	97
24 to 35 months	17	18	4	13	1	53
36 months or more	2	7	5	-	-	14
Total	163	127	46	57	1	394

In general terms, the workers describe estate work as suitable only for those without education or special skills and regard it as a last resort for those unable to find other forms of wage work. They say that there is no incentive to remain with the estate. There are no increments in pay, no increased assurance of job permanency, nor opportunities to acquire special skills for which they might receive higher pay or be able to use to find alternate employment. The one exception is the trainee field conductor, who has a Form Five education and considers his training as preparation for a job for which there will be great demand as more oil palm estates are developed. For the general labourer, SOP employment is seen as a temporary means of earning cash either to take back to the worker's original home or to live on until he can find other employment. One informant, an Iban man in his late 50's, said that he came to SOP out of curiosity simply to see what scheme life was like, and plans to return to his home in Saribas as soon as his curiosity is satisfied. Most younger workers from other areas of Sarawak indicated a desire to settle permanently in the Fourth Division.

9.6 REASONS FOR TAKING UP EMPLOYMENT

All but one of the workers interviewed own land under title or have access to native customary land. Holdings range in size from four or five acres to over thirty acres of titled land. Clearly landlessness is not a significant factor forcing people to take up employment on the estate.

On the other hand, most workers see themselves as forced by circumstances to join the estate. More than half of our sample report that it is impossible, or extremely difficult, to make a living on the land they own. Even when possible, farm incomes are said to be lower than earnings on the estate. A majority of informants say that at least part of the land they own is planted in rubber. One worker said that if rubber prices rose sufficiently he would return to tapping; others were uncertain or said that their trees are old, of poor quality or unproductive, and, in general, all express doubts that rubber could ever give comparable incomes. In particular, the workers report that it is difficult to obtain cash by traditional farming. The largest landowner in our sample, a Kedayan labourer from Kampong Kejapil, said that while he could easily support his family by working his land, the only marketable crop he could grow is padi for which the cash returns from sale are very low.

On the other hand, there is some indication that workers from rural areas where cash is difficult to obtain overvalue money and under-estimate the market value of what they produce for their own consumption. Consequently, when they must purchase all of their necessities, many are disappointed to find that they are able to save little, if any, of their earnings.

Hoping to make quick savings and return home, they find themselves staying month after month with little to show for their efforts.

While older informants say that they would prefer independent farming, if they could make an adequate income, a number of younger workers see the estate as a way of escaping from the farm and the hard work and poverty they associate with their original longhouse or kampong. While all workers have a rural background, all but two have worked previously for wages, while a third came to the estate directly from school. Half of the sample came to the estate only after having failed to find another job. Thus the labour force is highly oriented towards wage work. Three workers said they would not return to farming under any foreseeable circumstances. While others said that they prefer farming to estate employment, the majority felt that they could not make an adequate living by working the land or considered a better paid, more secure form of wage employment preferable to either independent farming or estate work.

In general, labourers are relatively satisfied with working conditions. Most consider housing adequate, although there is some complaint about the lack of a dependable supply of drinking water and the short period of time each day that piped water is available for washing and bathing. Workers are housed in double dwelling units. According to management calculation each unit accommodates 3.7 workers. Each half-unit consists of a verandah, two bedrooms, a living room and a kitchen with an attached bathing enclosure. Houses are laid out in straight rows without landscaping or other improvements to relieve the drabness of the setting. Connecting paths and footbridges, particularly between separate blocks of houses, need improvement.

Religious services are conducted in individual houses and there are no special facilities available on the estate, although transport is provided to Bekenu for major religious observances, such as Christmas or Hari Raya. Medical service is available at a Government clinic located three miles from the labour settlement, and a lower primary school is present on the estate. There is a small shop on the estate with a limited stock of essential goods. Most workers do the bulk of their shopping in Bekenu and travel to Miri only for major purchases. The trip to Miri is expensive (round trip: $3.60 by bus; $6 by taxi). There is a weekly film show on the estate (every Saturday night) for which the workers pay a small admission fee of 50 cents per family. At the moment films are shown outdoors, but a community hall is under construction which will serve as a theatre when completed.

At the moment there is no labour union. The only organisation in which the labourers are represented is a Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) made up of management staff and

elected representatives of each major ethnic group. The committee meets monthly, or whenever there is business to discuss, and concerns itself with matters of general interest to the labour community except for wages and working conditions. Settler representatives are paid $5 per month by the SOP for their participation.

9.7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The labour force is young and highly impermanent. Few workers look upon the estate as a long term employer; this is reflected in the highly unbalanced sex ratio and the predominance of unmarried workers in the labour force. The average length of employment is 4.6 months.

The great majority of labourers own land; most, however, report an inability to realise a comparable income from independent farming. The majority are oriented towards wage work and a significant number of young workers wish to escape farming altogether, while others would prefer another more permanent form of employment outside agriculture.

APPENDIX I

APPENDIX I
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