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Development and Socio-cultural Changes in Rural Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

In this article the writers acknowledge the salience of modern technology, albeit other factors, in the determination of Malaysia's economic development. They emphasise the complexity of the relationship between economic development and socio-cultural changes, most notably with explicit reference to the FELDA schemes. The point being made is that an appreciation of the process of change is essential to a proper understanding of the nature of development.

ABSTRAK

Penulis-penulis di dalam artikel ini, mengakui sumbangan teknologi moden bersama-sama faktor-faktor yang lain dalam proses pembangunan di Malaysia. Mereka menegaskan betapa rumitnya perhubungan antara pembangunan ekonomi dan perubahan-perubahan sosio-budaya, yang telah dikaitkan dengan rancangan-rancangan FELDA sebagai contoh. Pokok perbincangan ialah suatu penilaian terhadap proses perubahan penting sekali untuk memahami fenomena yang disebutkan sebagai pembangunan.

INTRODUCTION

During the passage from underdevelopment to development, several interrelated processes occur simultaneously. In an economic sense, development entails the transformation of simple subsistence economies into complex monetary economies. In the process, an increase in the proportion of production that is sold or exchanged and a decline in the proportion of consumption that is self-produced take place concurrently. The decline in the proportion of agricultural labour force is characteristically accompanied by an increase in the proportion of labour force engaged in various non-agricultural activities such as manufacturing, commerce, trade and services. The expansion of these activities is concomitant to the process of urbanization. Thus, simple societies consisting of polyfunctional groups are transformed into complex societies in which groups of individuals have clearly differentiated or specialized economic and social functions (Kay

1975). These economic and social structural transformation also involve changes in the productive capacity and output of the economy and society.

This process of economic development, defined as a long term and sustained increase in real output of a given population, depends, to some extent, on the progress of science and technology. Advances or innovations in ideas, tools and know-how perceived as progress of science and technology are important instruments in economic development. Machines, high yielding varieties (HYV) and chemical product are widely used in the once traditional economic development. Machines, high yielding varieties (HYV) and chemical products are widely used in the once traditional agriculture in order to raise productivity, output and income. In another respect, modern factories including new machineries and processes produce more goods more efficiently thereby raising output, productivity and income. The development of infrastructural facilities such as transportation, communication, power and water is also instrumental in the economic development process.

The above general statements on the relationship between economic development and progress in science and technology are made to illustrate that science and technology have recently emerged as important instruments in socio-economic development. This is not denying that other factors such as manpower, natural resources, capital investment and political stability are less or not important in making economic development possible in many developing countries.

In Malaysia planned economic development began in 1956 when the Five-Year Development Plan for the Federation of Malaya called the General Plan of Development (1956–60) was launched. This has been followed by a series of Five-Year development plans. Although development policies, objectives and emphasis differ from one plan period to another, the overriding goal of development is to transform the traditional-rural-subsistence economy and the colonial export economy (dual economy) into a modern and more diversified one. Equally important but of more recent origin is the goal to transform a plural society into one that is more integrated and harmonious. The major development programmes include rural development (including land development), economic expansion and diversification, the provision of infrastructural facilites and social services. The record of socio-economic development during the last two decades has been rather impressive. Some of the usual or common indicators of development are shown in Table 1.

The process of economic development that normally involves economic and societal transformation results in numerous socio-cultural changes in communities undergoing development. Some of these changes include those in the patterns of economic and social relation, attitude, life style, value system, family structure or organization and social mobility.

TABLE 1. Malaysia – some indicators of socio-economic development

Indicator	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Percapita (M$)	731	858	1172	–	1836
Percent of GDP from Agriculture	38	32	31	28	22
Manufacturing	9	10	13	16	21
Services	39	41	42	45	45
Share of Labour Force in Agriculture	–	55	51	45	41
Manufacturing	–	7	11	14	16
Services	–	35	32	35	37
Percent Urban	27+	–	29	–	37
Crude Birth Rate per 1,000 population	40.9	36.7	32.5	30.3	–
Crude Death Rate per 1,000 population	9.5	7.9	7.0	6.2	–
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 Live Births	99	50	41	33	–
Kilometers of road ('000)	–	15	17	–	–
Number of Motor vehicles per 1,000 population	–	72	–	170	–

Source: Various Malaya/Malaysia Plans Malaysia: *Population and Development* NFPB, 1981.

The aim of this paper is to highlight some of these changes resulting from major fields of development namely the mechanization of farms and fisheries, and large-scale land development and settlement schemes in Malaysia. These areas of development are chosen in view of the fact that they largely involve rural population.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND MODERNIZATION

Agricultural development and modernization programmes together with massive social and economic infrastructural build up haven been taking place in rural Malaysia since the 1960s. These programmes provide the basic infrastructure and are designed to ensure that farmers make use of other essential support services, and to expose farmers to new ideas and values that would enhance development and modernization in agriculture. From the First (1966 – 70) to the Fourth Malaysia Plan (1981 – 85) a major portion of the rural development expenditure, had been channelled towards rural modernization programmes, namely new planting and replanting of tree crops such as rubber, drainange and irrigation of padi land, and new land development and settlement schemes. Rural modernization programmes have introduced modern technologies into the various agricultural activities such as rubber small-holdings and padi farming. Consequently, these activities become increasingly mechanized and commercialized.

This paper focuses on the mechanization of the pada or rice sub-sector not only because this sector comprises approximately 14% of the total cultivated area in Peninsular Malaysia, but also because it supports about 300,000 families or $^1/_5$ of the national population (Ishak Shaari and K.S.

Jomo 1980:4). This sub-sector is given high priority for development because padi production is a low-income activity and there is a high rate of poverty among rice farming. As such there is the need to raise productivity in rice farming, to improve farmers' income and to bring development benefits to this economically depressed sector.

The effort to develop and modernize rice sub-sector has been directed to several major padi growing areas of the country. The schemes to drain and irrigate two of these areas, Muda in Kedah and Kemubu in Kelantan have been financed by the World Bank. The purpose of drainage and irrigation in padi areas is to enable double-cropping which in turn requires high yeilding varieties (HYV), chemical inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides and farm machineries to cope up with the new and tight schedule of padi farming. The provision of irrigation facilities has expanded double-cropping areas, improved the quality of padi land which was formerly either rain-fed or had not been properly irrigated and opened new areas for cultivation.

The largest single area (about 105,300 ha) practising double-cropping is the Muda Area in Kedah and Perlis. The Kemubu scheme in Kelantan provides irrigation for about 29,250 ha in an area where productivity has been rather low and the majority of farmers live under semi-subsistence conditions. Other double-cropping areas include Seberang Prai, Krian and Tanjung Karang. Areas planned for large scale irrigation are Rompin-Endau, Kuala Langat, Northwest Selangor, and Lower Trengganu all covering more than 263,250 ha (Farmers' Organization Authority 1977:18). To date the drainage and irrigation projects carried out in the Muda, Kemubu and Besut areas have benefitted approximately 109,00 farm families and contributed 57% of the total padi output in Peninsular Malaysia (Fourth Malaysia Plan 1981: 265). The use of machines to at least plough the land and chemical fertilizers is practised virtually by all farmers in these areas.

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGES RESULTING FROM FARM MECHANIZATION

Before mechanization and commercialization were brought into the padi sub-sector, the areas were traditionally farmed and managed. Every piece of land was alienated mainly for single-cropping and was entirely dependent on rainfall. This single-cropping was subsistence oriented and institutional structures were organized around subsistence-oriented values.

Increased mechanization in farming operations including harvesting, meant that peasant farmers were confronted with something new in their culture. This confrontation and ultimate acceptance resulted in increased productivity[1] and income[2], as well as other economic gains received by

farmers (Afifuddin 1978: 252; Ishak Shaari and K.S. Jomo 1980; Wan Maziah 1979: 61 and Lim Teck Ghee et al. 1980: 29). Nonetheless, the benefits enjoyed by farmers vary from one area/region to another due to such factors as the rate of adoption of HYV technology, soil and climatic conditions and the varying level of government assistance. In developing rice regions such as Kemubu, Besut, Krian and Sungai Manik, technology and infrastructure have not brought the expected changes as compared to the fast developing rice regions of Muda, Seberang Prai and Tanjung Karang, where technological advancement has increased cropping intensity and agricultural efficiency.

This increased mechanization does not only have an effect on the economic relations among the rice peasantry and between them and other sectors, but also on the social and cultural aspects such as the extended family, social mobility, power distribution, beliefs and others.

Technological innovators may not intend to destroy the pre-existing traditional values; their aim may merely be to solve some problems more efficiently or produce goods and provide services with better quality and in increasing quantity than before. Nonetheless, they cannot avoid tampering with the pre-existing values or in the process destroy the fragile thread that binds all the values of pre-modern communities into a meaningful whole (Goulet 1976: 20). Through this modern technology,traditional societies receive change stimuli which directly challenge their normative values. These challenges come in the form of doing things differently – planting and harvesting crops, education children, interacting, accumulating and distributing wealth and others.

Initially the adoption of HYV technology with its stringent planting schedule increased the demand for hired labour. This resulted in 'labour shortage' which raised agricultural wage rates much to the advantage of landless labourers and farmers without adequate land and who derived extra income from wage employment in the peasant sector. Increased mechanization of farm operations gradually reduced the overall demand for hired labour. Consequently wage rates were pushed down and there was a decline in the opportunity for earning off-farm income especially for the poor households (Jegatheesan 1980; Afifuddin 1974: 43; Ikmal 1980: 31).

The displacement of agricultural workers contributed to the widespread rural unemployment and underemployment. This situation combined with the various 'pull factors' from outside the areas have resulted in migration from the rural areas (Ishak Shaari et al. 1978; Wan Maziah 1979). Migration has also come about as a result of changes in the role, functions and forms of interaction within the family as an institution. Extended family has slowly been replaced by the nuclear family, which in turn is no longer bound firmly to the bonds of familism. In the past, the family formed important economic unit and worked closely together. The social relations of production include relationships between family mem-

bers who carried out specific tasks or activities in the production. With increasing mechanization and diplacement of labour, the villagers especially the youths, found none or less work for them to do and so they migrate to other areas in search of other jobs. This has contributed towards the disruption of the once closely knit extended family who now no longer posed as a centre for the social and economic orientations.

Increased mechanization has also led to the accumulation of larger farms, especially in the Muda region. This has resulted in uneven distribution and increasing polarization of the farm size (Ishak Shaari and Lim Teck Ghee 1980). This accumulation of large farms invariably affects the pattern of wealth distribution. Those with more capital and other factor endowments have managed to gain disproportionately more than those with less (Afifuddin 1978: 254).

Another aspect of the social and cultural change resulting from farm mechanization is the loss of the traditional village institution and practices. *The gotong-royong* (the traditional form of reciprocal cooperation or help) has declined and in its place is reciprocity of labour based on monetary exchanges. Wage-labour groups (which, usually comprise of small landless tenants of farm labourers) provide services at the current market prices for labour (Afifuddin 1978; Wan Maziah 1979; and Shadli Abdullah 1978). Under the assault of technology, work can no longer be seen as expressing cosmic relationship; it becomes a mere performance of a task whose only meaning comes from the external rewards, usually monetary, attached to it. Time now has to be used efficiently and profitably. Unlike in the pre-mechanization days and under the single-cropping system, there was adequate time for staggered operations, as such there was time for performing other work/task and for social interactions. However with double-cropping farmers are busy trying to meet their work schedule. This eventually resulted in the once close relationship based on cooperation changing to one that is more individualistic in nature. Each person now looks out more for his own interest. Each farmer is busy on his own farm and hardly has the time to help work other farms. Now practically every labour that is needed has to be paid for.

The introduction of modern infrastructure also generates new arrangements in the rural social organizations. In the traditional economic system a large number of production units — individuals, families or villages — operate quite independently of others and little coordination of efforts or specialization of tasks is required. Where villages were once quite independent of one another in farm activities, the working of the newly introduced big scale irrigation system requires a higher interdependent arrangement based upon the sharing of water and upon the simultaneity of farm operations. The irrigation system requires a shift and intensifies the degree of dependency of the farmers upon their immediate neighbours in the *padang* (field) community and on water from irrigation canals which

supplement water from nature or at times substitute the nature's role. Hence conflict may arise when the resources to be shared are limited in supply, as in the irrigation water flow, and some farmers resort to their own anti-social means to put right the situation. In fact, during the early days of the implementation of this new element in the organisation, there was much conflict among farmers who would not or could not follow the strict time schedule for irrigation as required of them to enable the success of irrigating and draining within particular irrigation blocks. These conflicts have since been minimised.

Increased mechanization has also loosened the village boundaries as a result of new types of organisational arrangements. Villages need no longer be clustered or nucleated with high degree of self-sufficiency in social and economic needs. There are now also linear type settlements based on the irrigation canals. These new settlement arrangements to a certain degree changed the interaction pattern among the villagers. These villagers become more open than those in the strongly-structured and clustered groups (Afifuddin 1978: 265).

The community membership can now be classified into two groups namely 1) *orang kampung* (residential neighbours) referring to those living within the same village and 2) *orang padang* (field neighbours) which consist of all those individuals who own riceland which is irrigated from a single watercourse. These people may come from as many as ten or fifteen different hamlets. There is very little contact between two groups of people (Afifuddin 1978: 267). In fact, the social processes that occur within each of the group do not necessarily affect the other group although they may be located within the same ecological and cultural boundaries (Afifiduddin 1978: 268).

The irrigation system also brings with it enlarged network of farm roads which provide physical linkages. These linkages facilitate social and economic ties within a wider context. These in turn enable the economy to be further integrated into the regional and even the national economy. Through these linkages too the villagers are more exposed to outside influences thus rendering them to be more susceptible to changes.

Finally, the belief system of the rice peasants has also been affected. Such rituals as *memuja semangat padi* or other rituals connected with the supernaturals are slowly diminishing. The peasants have begun to realise that to a certain degree their destinies are after all determined by the doings of man himself.

DEVELOPMENT AND MODERNIZATION OF FISHERIES SUB-SECTOR

Being a dominant sector in which the incidence of poverty among the households was as high as 46.1% in 1980, the development programmes

and projects in the agricultural sector generally aim at increasing the income of farmers, livestock holders and fishermen through increasing the productivity levels, creating and expanding the employment opportunities as well as modernizing the traditional agriculture (Fourth Malaysia Plan 1981: 263). Just as in the other agricultural sub-sectors, the economy of the fisheries sub-sector need to be improved and elevated. It was generally felt that the poverty and underdevelopment in this sector was mainly due to the fact that technological progress and hence development benefits have somewhat alluded or failed to reach the fishermen. As such, conscious efforts are made to change the situation. The primary concern of most development projects in the fisheries sub-sector is to raise productivity and hence increase the income of fishermen while at the same time reduce the incidence of exploitation.

The direct participation of the government in the fishing economy after 1971 is actually based on the New Economic Policy. The Fisheries Development Authority of Malaysia (MAJUIKAN) was established in 1971 to spearhead the development of commercial fisheries. Various programmes and projects were undertaken with the objective of improving the socio-economic position of the fishermen and the supply of fish in the country (Fourth Malaysia Plan 1981: 268). Steps to eradicate poverty in the fisheries sub-sector mainly emphasised on modernizing the facilities used for fishing, expanding the territorial waters for fishing and developing the marketing operations. These efforts are further intensified through the government providing 1 subsidies[3] to fishermen to enable them to obtain mechanized boats, nets, transportation facilities and 2 credit facilities. In a broader context, increased mechanization and commercialization also include knowledge in engineering techniques, management, market relations network and ownership of factories to process the catch. In other words, fishing activity has changed from a traditional small scale subsistence activity to a bigger and more complex enterprise that needed

TABLE 2: Boat mechanization and fish production

Year	Production ('000 metric tons)	Percent of Boats Mechanized
1950	154	3.5
1955	137	19.5
1960	169	38.0
1965	253	54.7
1970	341	74.0
1972	359	78.4

Source: Hamid, A.A. (1979) p. 37

larger capital overhead and sophisticated technology (see Kamaruddin 1981; Sharifah Zaleha 1974; and Han Chee Rull 1981). The government is also directly involved in providing necessary infrastructure such as building flake ice factory, more efficient transportation facilities and landing jetties.

Mechanization of fishing boats, first by outboard motors which could easily be fitted to the traditional boat, and later by inboard diesel engines which have greater economy and reliablility, has been the major development in fishing during the post-war years (Ward 1964, 115). Progress of mechanization during 1950s, 1960s and 1970s may be closely associated with the subsequent increases in fish production (Table 2).

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CHANGES

Basically, the traditional economy of the fishermen is similar to that in the other agricultural sub-sectors although there are differences based on the different techniques and tools involved in the production processes. In the fishing economy, production activity largely depends on the ownership or control of the means of production, like boats, nets and other facilities needed for catching fish. Different from the agricultural farm peasants where land forms the basic production unit, tools of production or the capital goods that the family possessed or owned form the basic unit of production for the fishermen.

> As far back as 1940, R. Firth had observed that "..... the introduction of powered boats, ... would tend to change the existing pattern of economic relationships in the community .... The increased costs would demand a re-arrangement in the established system of distributing earnings and there would be more likelihood of the gap between wealthy and poor fishermen being widened .... Since in this community economic relationships are closely bound up with other social relationships, from kinship to recreation, the structure of the peasant society would be affected (p.20, 1st edition)" (Firth 1966: 346).

With increased mechanization in the fishing sub-sector, the economic structure, organisation and the social relations of production of fishermen begin to change. The economy which was initially based on the peasant mode of production is now replaced by an industrial fishing economy with all its capitalistic characteristics which need huge capital outlay and more sophisticated technology.

Although modernization in the fishing activity has resulted in increased productivity[4] and hence had decreased the incidence of poverty among the fishermen[5], just as with increasing farm mechanization and commercialization, it also resulted in uneven benefits received by the fishermen. The group that is superior in economic status and is able to generate capital can easily outdo the traditional fishermen. This economically superior group has succeeded in raising their income and gaining control the fishing economy, compared to those engaged in the traditional

small-scale fishing because the former possesses the capital needed to finance the industry, has access to the use of modern technology and to more orderly and efficient marketing network. Increased production cost has also resulted in changes in the income distribution which consequently widen the gap between the rich and the poor in the fishing community.

In a situation where fishing industry has undergone rapid changes as a result of increasing mechanization and commercialization, the small-scale fishermen find that they have to establish a closer relationship or to align themselves more with the capitalist group, the *taukeh ikan*[6] especially when they need help in terms of marketing their catch or finance. The *taukeh ikan* who normally act as the middleman is generally looked upon as a source for financial or technical help (Kamaruddin 1981; Jahara 1977; Sharifah Zaleha 1976). Under this taukeh system the social and economic relationships that are established between the middleman and the fishermen can be viewed as an indigenous version of the patron-client relationship (Potter, Diaz and Foster 1967) which involved inconspicuous superior-inferior positions because of the reciprocal interactions between the two that transcend the purely economic considerations. Despite the reciprocal relationship between the *taukeh ikan* and the fishermen, the former stands to gain economically at the expense of the latter. The increased alignment with the middleman in order to acquire capital, the feeling of indebtedness and loyalty by the fishermen to them and the fact that the regulation laid down in the agreement concerning marketing[7] of the catch are not strictly adhered to, have all contributed towards the perpetuation of the middlemen system even after trawling has been recognised and accepted as another enterprise in the fishing economy.

Based on his intensive research on the fishermen, Firth (1966: 144) concluded that the work organisation in the fishing sub-sector is 'brittle'. This looseness in the work organisation was attributed to various factors. One of these factors in the presence of two categories of fishermen: the non-owning fishermen who seek employment in fishing units owned by others and the owner-fishermen who own very small type equipment and who cannot depend solely on their equipment for sustenance. These two categories of fishermen also provide labour for owners with relatively larger fishing equipment. Other factors include the attitude of the fishermen towards work and the lack of rigid rules and regulations governing employment (Sharifah Zaleha 1976: 28–29). When a small-scale owner-fisherman chose not to go to sea he would ask another to operate his fishing unit for him based on a understanding that the operator is merely helping the owner, that the proceeds from the catch will be shared between them based on the predetermined ratios under the panggu8 system and that the arrangement could be terminated without prior notice or at any time depending on circumstances. In the trawler industry, despite the attempt to systematse employment, labour relations as a whole have not

undergone many changes. In fact, it can be said that the 'brittle' characteristic as described by Firth still persists in the work organisation (Sharifah Zaleha 1976: 37). This is because boat owners may just withdraw their boats or the trawler boats hauled in for repair, repainting etc. In such situations the crew are unemployed and they may resort to the small-scale in-shore fishing as an alternative. This 'brittle' nature of the work organisation also forms part of the reasons for the migration of fishermen from one area to another.

Accompanying the technological progress and the expansion of the fishing activity is the emergence of wage-earning fishermen (*awak-awak*). Traditionally there are the self-subsistence fishermen on the one hand and the *taukeh ikan* on the other. Now there is a third group, the wage-labour fishermen who are given fixed wages by their employers. This group is created because trawlers and other modern fishing gear call for increased manpower to man them. Fishermen using traditional equipment are also encouraged to become crew members of the trawler boats, but under the capitalist economic system where exchange is seen or expressed in monetary terms, labour can only be obtained through paying them wages (Han Che Rull 1981). Money is now seen as playing a significant role in all economic dealings and transactions. These new monetary considerations have its effect on voluntary cooperation once highly held in the traditional fishing practices, not only in the form of labour, but also in preparing the boat or at least part of the fishing not used. It can be safely said that the processes of mechanization and modernization have slowly and steadily transformed the traditional fishermen into proletariates (Kamaruddin 1981: 81).

Competition from the more advanced fishing boats has worsened the productivity of those using the traditional gear based on familial labour. Although technological progress has succeeded in increasing the overall productivity in the fishing industry, the small-scale fishermen are facing difficulties in obtaining the much needed capital. Consequently, only a group of fishermen manage to own the means of production while the rest become wage-labourers or *awak-awak*. These wage-labourers do not possess the means of production and they work following instructions or directions given by the *jeragan*[9] (the head in a fishing unit). If once before, the traditional fishermen could depend on labour contributed by the members of his family and/or the community, now they have lost these labour to the more productive units.

Mechanization in the fishing sub-sector has not only made an impact on the physical and social mobility but also on social relations, the belief system, the family institution and other aspects of the socio-cultural life.

Generally traditional fishing activity had been somewhat influenced by the processes of adaptation to the environment and the climatic conditions. In fact, the traditional organisation to a certain extent has been

influenced by the processes of adaptation not only to the marketing economy but also to the environment. Fishermen have to take into consideration such elements as the weather, sea conditions, winds etc. before going out to the sea. The uncertainties of these elements did not only require the fishermen to constantly make changes and adjustments to suit the situations, but had also contributed a great deal to the traditional beliefs and rituals practiced by the fishermen especially in connection with the sea as for example, the *memuja pantai* rituals. Now with better powered boats and other modern equipment, fishermen need no longer leave their fate to nature whenever they go out to sea. Their going to the sea is now less influenced by the vagaries of weather, sea conditions, the high and low tide, and the supernaturals. Consequently, the ritual and the beliefs connected with the sea are slowly eroded.

The perceived lucrative trawler industry has succeeded in attracting many traditionally small-scale fishermen to join it. Increased productivity and hence increased income has enabled the fishermen (especially the wage-labour fishermen) to enjoy a higher standard of living than before. They are now able to afford television, refrigerator, motorcyle and other items once considered luxurious and beyond their means (Lee Kok Hoong 1981).

Although the wage-labour fishermen (*awak-awak*) receive relatively higher income compared to the subsistence oriented fishermen, they do face a higher unemployment risk due to the 'brittleness' of the labour/work organisation. Nonetheless, this fact has not deterred the small-scale fishermen from entering the modern fishing industry. Consequently there are less and less small-scale fishermen as compared to the awak-awak. Those who remain in the traditional fishing activity are normally the older group of fishermen while the more able younger ones leave to seek 'greener pasture'. This move from being a small-scale fishermen to an awak-awak can be attributed to several factors such as the inability to compete with the capitalist group, who not only own better powered boats, but who also in some ways control the prices of fish in the market. Also, the new technology has managed to increase productivity which results in increased income for the wage-labour fishermen as compared to the small-scale fishermen (Lee Kok Hoong 1981: 71 – 73).

In the past, fishing was mainly a family oriented activity, but now under the capitalist economic system it has generally transfomed into an activity carried out for others. Despite fishing activity being carried out via different techniques, familial relations are still generally intact in the sense that fathers and sons of brothers can be found to work together in a fishing unit as awak-awak. On the other hand, while the sons are out to work as awak-awak, the fathers could be carrying on with small-scale fishing to supplement the income earned by the sons.

NEW LAND DEVELOPMENT AND SETTLEMENT

New land development and settlement has always been given very high priority in Malaysia rural development programme. Malaysia development planners have adopted a vast land development and settlement project as key element in the strategy for promotion economic growth because the country has abundant underutilized labour and undeveloped land suitable for agriculture, and extensive knowledge of perennial crop technology (Wafa 1974: 1). A number of agencies have been established to undertake the development of land for agricultural purposes. These agencies have planned and implemented different types of land scheme (Bahrin, Perera and Lim 1979: 49). As shown in Table 3, by far the single largest land development and settlement agency is the Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA), which was established and began operation in 1956).

TABLE 3. Malaysia – Land development by various agencies 1961 – 1980

	'000 hectares
FELDA	272.2
FELCRA	20.7
RISDA	12.7
Regional Authorities	22.6
State Agencies	338.7
Private Sector	107.4
Total	774.1

Source: Second Malaysia Plan 1971 – 75
Fourth Malaysia Plan 1981 – 85

FELDA has, up to 1980, developed 287 schemes covering about 272,200 hectares of new land in the various parts of the country. Two important crops grown are oil palm (58.5%) and rubber (32.2%). FELDA has settled in these schemes some 64,063 previously poor rural families (Abu Hassan 1982). In view of FELDA vast land development programme, this part of the paper will attempt to highlight some of the socio-cultural changes resulting from Felda type land development and settlement scheme.

SOCIO-CULTURAL CHANGES RESULTING FROM LAND DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF FELDA

The FELDA land settlement schemes in Peninsular Malaysia provide a good model of planned social change. After two decades of planning and implementation, there are various reports of such changes. However, these changes vary from one scheme to another depending on the age of the schemes and the types of crop grown in the respective schemes. This

section reports on some of the socio-cultural changes that are commonly observed in a typical FELDA scheme.

The land settlement schemes as undertaken by FELDA since 1956 involves the movement of people from a rural and traditional setting into a new environment which is well served with a wide range of social amenities and infrastructure which are lacking in the settlers' original villages. This, in itself, according to MacAndrew (1977), constitutes a major change in the living conditions of the the rural population who have benefited from such a high level of modernization, planned in each FELDA settlement.

However, this would only be enjoyed when the schemes have achieved some degree of maturity because the provision of such facilities and services in each scheme is phased. The range of facilities is limited when the first group of settlers join the scheme, but gradually they are being added as more settlers are being settled. Hence it is not really a sudden change, but rather a gradual process. It is nonetheless a very distinctive one. This should no come as a surprise because among other things, the FELDA settlements are planned to bring about changes in the living conditions of the rural poor.

The changes in occupation and work pattern among the settlers, on the contrary, does not allow for such a slow process. Once they are placed in the schemes, orientation courses are arranged by FELDA officers in each scheme to familiarise them on the system of work that emphasises on the discipline and the new skills that have to be learned (Alladin Hashim 1977). The monthly subsistence allowance which is paid to each settler based on the amount of work completed has influenced the settlers a great deal to utilize their time constructively and work according to the rules set by FELDA. The differences between the working pattern in the former villages and the FELDA schemes have been observed:

> In this (village) life, his work day and time table is mainly has own. He works to a personal rhythm of life depending to some extent on his crops or business but in unstructural situation where he works when he feels like it, at his own pace and by his own method....He has been in the past life his own master in whatever he did. Now he must face a day with set hour and time table and if he is to get paid, a set requirement of work. This again is a major change. He learns not only to utilize time itself as a major factor in his life, but to adjust t a new set of conditions in which time is quantifiable (MacAndrew 1977).

The new skills that the settlers have to learn or relearn present an occupational change, as MacAndrew (1977) noted:

> Whatever the settlers' background, work in a FELDA scheme involves a direct occupational change. If it is a rubber scheme, the settler must learn to tap the rubber and with it, all the neccessary skills of keeping up his plot and, because of the more modern inputs into a FELDA scheme, how to apply and utilize a variety of new methods (such as the application of weed killer or fertilizer) to obtain a good yield. In an oil palm scheme, he is dealing with a crop probably completely outside his experience or that of most of his fellow settlers and he must again learn a whole new array of skills that are involved in upkeep of oil palm.

The change in social mobility can be viewed from two perspectives. Firstly, as the rural population enter the FELDA scheme, they are in the

process of being uplifted socially and economically from the less productive, poor, landless and subsistence farmers to the modern and more productive farmers who own a piece of economic size holding and enjoy a middle class income, living in better quality houses furnished with modern appliances. In addition, the schemes also offer the settlers many opportunities of secondary occupations. Studies (MacAndrew 1977, Rohana Abdullah 1978, Sharifah Salmiah 1975) have shown that many of the settlers in various schemes engage in secondary occupations, such as business, industry, transport, services and wage-earning. These occupations give them extra monthly income. In this respect, the settlers are not just the modern farmers with relatively high income but also successful farmers. In his study MacAndrew (1977) draws attention to a settler in Ulu Jempol, Pahang, who was appointed a director of the FELDA Cooperative and also appointed to the FELDA Board of Governors as its first settler representative. Although perhaps less impressive, similar social upward mobility is also being experienced by settlers in other schemes because many FELDA schemes, particularly the old ones, set up its own companies, corporations and cooperatives which provide the avenues for the settlers to move upward socially and acquire new skills in business administration and management.

Another aspect of mobility is the intergenerational mobility which involves the settlers' children who have moved into services, white collar jobs or occupations which require skills.

In the FELDA schemes, one could also see the changing role of women. This is one of the significant changes in the FELDA communities (Sulong Mohamad 1978). The chairperson of the Women's Institutes (W.I.) and the midwives of the respective schemes are elected to represent the women section of the population in the Settler Development Committee. The women also participate actively in the running and administration of the schemes. It is important to note that it is not left to the male section of the population alone to determine the fate of the scheme. This perhaps is a major breakthrough in the traditional structure of village administration commonly found in traditional villages in Malaysia.

The women are also active in other social activities and functions. They organise home economics courses, sewing classes and running shops and kindergartens in the schemes. Training, covering aspects like nutrition, child psychology, family budgeting, family planning, leadership, administration, bookkeeping and basics in business are given to them by FELDA. Their daughters who have basic qualifications are also given a course so they can become kindergarten teachers. In short, the role of women in FELDA schemes have been recognised and that they have an equally important role to play in the community development of their schemes.

Another important change, which is a planned one, concerns the attitude and thinking of the settlers. The first of these is their attitude towards money, which has been regarded as a resource and should be used prudently in order to generate further income. This change in attitude has resulted in a great number of them who have saved their money wisely in Settler's Fund, National Savings Bank and Pilgrimage Fund Board. In addition, they also invest their money either by setting up their own shops, forming companies and corporations, buying shares in companies set up by the Community Development Communittee, or investing in Amanah Saham Nasional (National Trust Fund). A recent newspaper report indicates an encouraging response among the settlers in Jengka Triangle schemes towards buying shares from Amanah Saham Nasional. Many of them have also invested their money for house improvement or rebuilding the old houses.

The settlers also have high popes of a good career for their children, with a strong preference for a government job. The second alternative is a job in business. With such as aspiration we would, of course, expect that they would also attach great importance to their children's education. In Jengka 10, MacAndrew (1977) reported that:

> All respondents replied "yes" when asked if they wanted their children to go on to further education after secondary school, and all indicated university as the type of education desired. When asked "what kind of job they wanted their children to have when they leave school". Seventy two percent stated a preference for a clerical one, and 27.3% indicated a business career as being the most desirable.

Another indicator of how they place great importance to their children's education can be seen through the establishment of kindergarten which they set up on their own efforts, initiative and money. This is one of the urban facilities which are spreading very fast to practically almost all FELDA schemes.

The settlers have also developed a diverse interest, and formed their own groups. This is indicated by a growing number of various clubs, associations, and committees in various schemes. Thus, their social activities have changed somewhat. The presence of these clubs, associations and committees has seen a more organised social life and activities in the schemes. A great number of them belong to either one or more of these clubs, associations and committees. In Ulu Jempol, there are at least 18 such clubs, associations and committees (MacAndrew 1977). This has widened their thinking or scope on the social responsibilities and activities towards their own scheme. Thus, they have also shown a great involvement towards social activities in the schemes. Since FELDA schemes consist of settlers of diverse backgrounds and places of origin, such an attitude was lacking in the early stages of scheme development.

The last aspect of change will be dealt with here is the settlers's link with their former villages. Perhaps, with the exception of a few schemes in

which the settlers come from nearby areas, it was shown that the settlers' link with their former village is weak (MacAndrew, 1977, Rohana Abdullah, 1978, and Sharifah Salmiah (1975). In Kg. Awah, Pahang and Bukit Ramun, Johore, Sharifah Salmiah (1975) and Rohana (1978) respectively have shown that the settlers, after having lived for some years in the schemes, return to their former villages only occasionally (once a year or less). When they do return, they normally stay less than a week and mainly to deal with family matters (MacAndrew, 1977. In reporting the changing condition in Bandar Pusat in Jengka Triangle, the New Sunday Times (August 31st, 1981) indicated that:

> The mass exodus that used to happen every Hari Raya (Ramadan celebration) as workers "balik kampung" (returning to former village) is not so evident now. More people are staying put and celebrating at home (in the scheme).

This is a great contrast to the early days of the scheme development. This changing situation has led MacAndrew (1977) to comment that "this lack of ties of the home village, in one sense, is suprising in terms of the normally strong Malaysian attachment to one's home village." It appears that the settlers have come to regard the schemes as their own village which they have pride in them and provide them with better and secure future. Besides families, they have no other attachment to their former villages because they have little to claim on to and to be proud of.

In summary, in terms of income, living condition and attitudes, FELDA settlers emerge as a new social class in Malaysian society. As a group, they merit a different classification, called the settlers. They have become modern through a package development programme called FELDA package deal.

CONCLUSION

Without any attempt to define socio-cultural changes, this paper has highlighted some of these changes occuring in rural societies as a result of development and the application of modern technology to the hitherto traditional activities. Mechanization and commercialization of agriculture (rice farming, fisheries and large scale land development have not only increased productivity and income but have also brought changes in the social, cultural and political realms of the farmers. Their horizons have been broadened to such issues as political mechanism involved in padi pricing and the social distribution of wealth, power and esteem. The farmers and fishermen have also learned to accord monetary reward in exchange for services rendered and this has lessened voli tary cooperation based on reciprocity. Changes are also to be found in tl attitudes and the psychological make-up on the farmers as well as in the .amily institution, interaction pattern of the people and social organizations.

NOTES

[1]Since double-croping under MADA in the Muda region started in 1970 productivity has increased from 6.66 gtg./acre/annum to 20.57 gtg/acre/annum. (Afifuddin, 1978: 254). According to the Fourth Malaysia Plan (1981:277, padi production has increased from 1,434,600 tonnes in 1970 to 1,913,200 tonnes in 1980.

[2]Among padi farm households in 1972 income had increased between 23% to 123% and this has further increased as the development projects mature. (FAO/World Bank Cooperative Programme, "The Muda Study – A First Report" Vol. 1 – Text Rome, Sept. 1975: 36). See also S. Jegatheesan, 1977: 34.

[3]15,500 fishermen had benefitted from the provision of subsidies by the Department of Fisheries for the acquisition of boats and gears (fourth Malaysia Plan, 1981: 4). It was estimated that those who benefitted from the subsidy programme experienced about 70% increase in their income from an everage of M$175 per month to an average of M$297 per month during the normal season.

[4]The modernization of the fishing industry and the provision of support facilities enable fish landings over the years to increase from 340,000 tonnes in 1970 to 866,000 tonnes in 1980. Its contribution to the agricultural output increase from 4.4% in 1970 to 11.2% in 1980 (Fourth Malaysia Plan, 1981: 279).

[5]The rate of poverty has descreased from 73.2% in 1970 to 45.3% in 1980 (Fourth Malaysia Plan, 1981: 39).

[6]The Taukeh ikan controls the marketing aspect of the local fishing industry and/or who owns large fishing vessel (s). He provides services as a fish dealer, moneylender, boatowner etc. to poor fishermen.

[7]Under the agreement signed with local fishermen cooperative society when undertaking to operate the trawling gear, the fishermen agree that the society will undertake to market the catch of the trawler boats registered under it.

[8]The share of panggu system is practiced to solve the problem of distributing income due to the uncertainties in terms of the catch that the fishing unit is able to bring back. The system observe the rule of equity and how many shares of panggu that an individual fisherman is entitled to will depend on the form of contribution he makes to the whole expedition. The share can take the form of the catch itself or in the form of the proceeds from the sale of the catch (Sharifah Zaleha, 1976; Kamaruddin, 1981; Han Chee Rull, 1981).

[9]The jeragan is also called taiking or angkung according to different unit or localities. He is also called the head or 'kepala' because he heads a unit.

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