5

GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE RESETTLEMENT
OF KAMPUNG TAMPAKAK

Introduction

This chapter focusses on the changes in Kampung Tampasak particularly that of women's lives, accentuated by their resettlement, among which were: (1) change in land tenure and resources use; (2) decline in traditional values and agricultural practices; (3) changing village structure and patterns of household/community composition; (4) changing division of labour; and (5) gender relations. Here the 'eight elements' of Cernea's model of impoverishment in involuntary displacement will be examined, though not one to one, against the empirical evidence gathered from Kampung Tampasak. This chapter concludes by analysing the effects of these changes on women, men and children at the community, family and individual levels, so as to bring out the gender impact of the resettlement. Clearly, resettlement affects both women and men, bringing about different significant changes in their lives. It is therefore necessary to examine these changes separately and to look at 'gender' as a set of power relations intersecting all aspects of life and all categories of people. This is different from the 'women in development' or 'women only' approaches that look at women in relation to development per se.

Changes Accentuated By The Resettlement

Change in Land Tenure and Resources Use

One of the major consequences of resettlement, particularly to make way for dams, is the loss of land and resources (see, for example, Goldsmith and Hildyard 1984; Thukral 1992; McCully 1996; Cernea 1999). It was mentioned in Chapter 4 that 17
out of 28 women (61 per cent) and 32 out of 49 men (65 per cent) had their own land without official titles or deeds, namely NCR and LA land. Of these, 15 women and 25 men had been affected by land acquisition. These lands, although recognised under customary law, were often excluded from compensation payment. As members of a community who had little recourse to the government's claims on their land, and the authority's insistence on official documents to prove ownership of land, this has resulted in their rights to customary lands being erased. According to Cernea, loss of land is compounded by the loss of an essential resource on which most families grow food for themselves and their families. This loss in turn leads to a scarcity of natural resources. The burden of finding alternative sources for the scarce resource, such as water, fuel wood, fodder or wild vegetables often falls on the shoulders of women (see Plate 9).

Plate 9
Land is for living. When the families were moved to the new resettlement site, there was no land to plant paddy or vegetables within the area. Thus, the villagers had to walk a distance to gather food crops. This woman is on her way home with her wakid (native back basket) of vegetables.
In the analysis which follows, I have adopted a 'rating system' to quantify the data on perception among the households relating to 10 major natural resources. I begin by grouping the different categories of resources according to how the households rate their status, i.e. the perceived scarcity, ease of gathering, and perceived quality of the resource. Each of the responses is given a weighted rating from '0' to '4'. The '0' means the household has rated the status at lowest or least value and the '4' means the highest or most value. The households based their rating of the status of the resources mainly on a comparison with the situation before their resettlement. The mean rating is then calculated for the households on the perceived change in quality, scarcity and ease of gathering of resources after resettlement.

For determining the status of the resources, any rating of '0' and '1' are grouped within the category of 'extinct' for perceived scarcity, 'very difficult' for ease of gathering, and 'very bad' for perceived quality of the resources. A rating of '2' is considered 'scarce' and 'no change' while any rating of '3' and '4' suggest there is 'no change', 'moderately easy' and 'good'. This study reveals that most of the households had observed a decline in the degree of availability (scarcity), ease of gathering, and the quality of 10 major resources as a result of resettlement.

Table 5.1 below shows the number of households who were using or gathering the natural resources before resettlement, whereas Chart 5.1 summarises the mean household rating on the status of natural resources after resettlement.
Table 5.1
Households involved in using or gathering of natural resources, before resettlement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natural resources</th>
<th>Households involved (Percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water from river</td>
<td>30 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest vegetables</td>
<td>30 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish</td>
<td>29 (97%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest fruits</td>
<td>29 (97%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest animals</td>
<td>28 (93%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuelwood</td>
<td>27 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest medicines</td>
<td>27 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber</td>
<td>25 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw materials for crafts (e.g. rattan, bamboo)</td>
<td>20 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fodder</td>
<td>20 (67%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results are calculated using only valid respondents and not the total number of households surveyed (30), thus the percentages do not necessarily add up to 100%. Valid respondents here mean those who are currently using the resources.

Chart 5.1
Perceived change in quality, scarcity and ease of gathering of natural resources after resettlement

According to the households, in terms of the quality of natural resources, they rated forest animals as being in the worst state (mean rating of 0.78) due to forest clearing for the dam site which had disturbed their habitat. Water from the river (mean rating 0.90) was also perceived by the households as one of the most degraded resources.
due to the damming of the river. On the ease of gathering the resources, the households found collecting water from the river as the most difficult (mean rating of 0.67) since the river has been dammed up. Other resources that were perceived as difficult to gather were forest vegetables (mean rating of 0.90), forest animals (mean rating of 0.97) and forest fruits, fish and timber (all mean rating of 0.98). The households perceived materials for crafts such as rattan and bamboo as the scarcest resource (mean rating of 0.74) after resettlement, due to forest clearing for the dam site. Another resource that is perceived to be scarce is water from the river (mean rating 0.87) since the river has been dammed up. In contrast, fuelwood (mean rating 1.35) is the least scarce because of alternative sources such as gas and kerosene. However, firewood is still used especially for cooking meals during festivals and ceremonies (see Plate 10).

Plate 10
Siblings at work. Firewood is the least scarce resource since most families now have a gas stove for cooking, however, it is still used for cooking during festivals and ceremonies.
Decline in Traditional Values and Agricultural Practices

Displacement from land also meant that families have lesser opportunities to practice their traditional way of rotational agriculture where families and friends helped each other through mutual cooperation, or gotong royong, in cultivation, harvesting and other tasks that required extra labour. Previously, even when members of the family worked outside the village, relationships between families, relatives and neighbours were close-knit because of personal obligations and responsibility towards one another such as in farming.

Today, however, many families are experiencing the effects of change in the resettlement site where their way of life is being replaced by a monetised economic system. Some individuals have become too preoccupied with their private business to recognise the need to keep up with family and community relationships. Some others have begun to incur debts when their subsistence livelihood is lost, since cash is required for almost everything in a monetised economy. Ng (1999: 88) identified a similar trend among the resettled Ibans of Batang Ai in Sarawak where, due to the reduction in many sources of subsistence production, the people had become almost totally dependent on purchased items for survival. The community’s dependence on cash was also due to the reduced access to, and control over, the key community resources, namely land and forest produce.

Changing Village Structure and Patterns of Household/Community Composition

Prior to resettlement, the traditional village of Kampung Tampasak was scattered and houses were either located along the straddle of a river or near forested areas. With the construction of the dam, the Babagon and Tampasak Rivers were impounded and
large tracts of the forested areas were cleared to make way for the dam. The original Kampung Tampasak was relocated to an area situated in the lower fringes of the village. Many of the women, in a focus group discussion, told me that the resettlement site was congested and it had limited space for their children to play:

"Our children now play along the road, which is dangerous because it is so near the drains, and also, there are cars and vans. But what can we do, our children are so used to running freely within the forest!"

In the resettlement site, the houses are within walking distance. While there is the advantage of being able to call for help quickly in an emergency, many however find this proximity daunting. Many also emphatically maintain that:

Everything had already been decided for us – the site of the resettlement, the type of house, size and colours. Previously, we designed and built our own houses, often with help from members of the community or hired hands. We also had ample space between houses where the forest itself acted as a natural buffer.

Many of the families also felt that the cost of the houses, estimated by KPD as RM38,000 per unit was too high as the houses were poorly constructed from inferior materials. A 27-year old bachelor noted that he had spent RM10,000 on a house he was building for himself, which was half completed, and added that his house was made of good quality wood, "unlike the substandard KPD house we were getting."

The move from a village to a resettlement site had meant that the 30 families had to adopt a new lifestyle, including the adoption of new occupations and the concomitant adjustment to a new surrounding. This change has serious implications on the whole way of life of a community associated with land, on which indigenous peoples’ identity and culture is based, as discussed later in this chapter.
In the old village, extended units were the most common type of living arrangements. Because the compound around the house in the old village was big, this allowed for extensions whenever family size increased. Today, however, nuclear families are more common because dwellings are too small. Consequent upon the provision of houses by project authorities, married siblings or children previously living under the same roof have chosen to live in their own houses. Thus the families have been spread out in different houses. Those who were not given houses have to continue to live with their parents, siblings and relatives in one house.

Changes are also reflected in the family in a number of ways. Firstly, family members are forced to join the labour market when they cannot find enough food for their families from the land. Secondly, in a situation where women and men need to look for waged work, it is easier for the men to migrate to towns, cities or neighbouring countries such as Brunei and Singapore. Based on a field visit to a resettled Iban community in Telaus in October 1990, Ng (1999: 88) found that eight men had left the longhouse to go as far as Belaga and Brunei to work in the logging camps. However, for the women, only four were away, two of whom worked as servants in Brunei. Alternately, the men would go up the river to hunt or fish, while the women would remain to work on the scheme and to look after the household. Because women’s options are not as numerous as the men’s, women generally stay behind to take care of the children and house.

Thirdly, in the absence of men, women assume the role of head of the family. In Kampung Tampasak, nearly one-third (30 per cent) of the households are female-headed, whether temporarily (due to the husband’s migration), or permanently (due
to separation or death). Thus there are more women-headed households, not just due to widowhood and desertion by spouses, but because of economic reasons as well. This fact points up the drawback of the nuclear family unit: that the women remaining in the house cannot easily call on other members to help in the domestic chores or economic activities outside the household. By contrast, in extended families, extra labour from kin and neighbours can always be found if necessary since they all live under the same roof. As a 30-year old mother expressed it:

My four young children stay with me. My husband goes to work outstation as a driver because we do not have land to support the family now. So I am not just a housewife but also the head of the family when my husband is not around. This life is very different from that of the old village. Before, I just leave my children with my relatives when necessary. Now, I have to go and look for my relatives here who stay in a different house, or outside the resettlement site.1

*Changing Division of Labour*

*Domestic tasks*

Tables 5.2 and 5.3 below summarise the general trends in the domestic chores performed by the women and men in the households of Kampung Tampasak, before and after resettlement respectively.

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1 One of the women who participated in a focus group discussion held on 25 February 1998.
Table 5.2

Gender distribution of major domestic tasks performed by the households, before resettlement (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>% performance by type of labour</th>
<th>Average time spent (minutes)</th>
<th>Frequency (per task)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary doer</td>
<td>Secondary doer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>J</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food preparing &amp; cooking</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing clothes</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweeping the house</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drying &amp; keeping clothes</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minding children/sibling</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning the compound</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing dishes</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairing/sewing clothes</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting fuel wood</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting fodder</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring for sick members</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetable gardening</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fetching water</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring for the elderly</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairing house</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transporting to/from school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: F – Female; M – Male; J – Joint
The results are calculated using only households involved in the tasks and not the total number of households surveyed (30) in the study, thus the percentages do not necessarily add up to 100%.
Table 5.3

Gender distribution of major domestic tasks performed by the households, after resettlement (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>% performance by type of labour</th>
<th>Average time spent (minutes)</th>
<th>Frequency (per task)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary doer</td>
<td>Secondary doer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>J</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing clothes</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drying &amp; keeping clothes</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food preparing &amp; cooking</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweeping the house</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washing dishes</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairing/sewing clothes</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning the compound</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minding children/sibling</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring for sick members</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetable gardening</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting fuel wood</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repairing house</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting fodder</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fetching water</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring for the elderly</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transporting to/from school</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: F – Female; M – Male; J – Joint

The results are calculated using only households involved in the tasks and not the total number of households surveyed (30) in the study, thus the percentages do not necessarily add up to 100%.
According to the majority of respondents, the women shoulder greater responsibilities than men, both before and after resettlement. These responsibilities include washing clothes, cleaning, childcare, food preparation and cooking. In the original village, the women’s workload is often shared out with other women or with help from their husbands and children. However, following resettlement, domestic work is now carried out by women, with less help from their husbands.

*Productive tasks*

The data in Table 5.4 shows that after resettlement, the division of labour in productive or non-domestic activities was transformed due to the loss of customary land and forest access. In the old Kampung Tampasak, a majority of the ‘working’ women were involved in the open market vending, selling items such as cultivated *sirih* (betel leaf) and vegetables (12 women), hill paddy planting (18 women) and mixed crop farming (19 women). During the resettlement, 3 women vendors, 15 hill paddy farmers and 15 mixed crop farmers had to stop their activities because they did not have land to farm following their acquisition. After the resettlement, some of the women market vendors resumed their activities by bundling betel leaf (*daun sirih*) gathered from close by areas or buying their vegetable supplies from the adjacent districts of Ranau and Tambunan to sell them at the markets in Penampang and Kota Kinabalu (see Plate 11). Women who previously planted paddy now grow them on land they own elsewhere, or on plots of rented land. The resettlement also saw an increase in women taking up paid employment in the private sectors, 10 women as compared to 3 before they were resettled.
Women and children bundling betel leaf (daun sirih). The women derive some income from selling betel leaf at the local weekly market or tamu.

As for the 'working' men, before the resettlement, they were found mainly in farming (5 hill paddy farmers, 6 wet paddy farmers, 8 mixed crop farmers), government employment (7 men) and private companies (10 men). After the resettlement, 3 wet paddy farmers and 5 mixed crop farmers were affected by the loss of land, while on the contrary, the number of men in waged employment increased by 7 men for government employment and 13 men for private company employment. Proportionately, therefore, fewer men were affected by the resettlement compared to the women. A possible reason for the increased in waged employment could be the accessibility of the community to the town since the resettlement site is near a main road leading to Kota Kinabalu and other towns such as Tambunan.

One of the more obvious change resettlement has brought about was the increase in the number of women and men working for companies, and additionally, the number
of men working with the government. The findings revealed that there were 3 women and 10 men working for companies before resettlement, but this number increased to 10 women and 23 men after resettlement. The number of men in government employment increased from 7 to 14. The increase in both private and government sector employment could be attributed to two factors. First, those earning an income were mostly school leavers who had totally abandoned their role in farming. Thus, they shifted to the market economy. Second, most of the women and men were more mobile after the resettlement and the nearest town to look for waged employment was 15 km. away. The power to earn money has serious implications for the households and community who were used to a system of minimal cash, but now introduced into a wage-capital relationship, as will be shown later.

Table 5.4
Comparison of number of persons performing productive tasks
before, during and after resettlement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Persons involved</th>
<th>Before resettlement</th>
<th>During resettlement</th>
<th>After resettlement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village sundry shopkeeper</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passenger van driver</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamu (open market) vendor</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill paddy farmer</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wet paddy farmer</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed crop farmer</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government employee</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private company employee</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract worker</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own business</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: F – Female; M – Male
The results are calculated based on the number of persons from the households involved in the productive tasks and not the total number of respondents interviewed. Thus the numbers do not necessarily reflect the number of respondents interviewed.
Nevertheless, from Table 5.4 above, some general trends can be seen:

- Farming remains an important activity for the Kampung Tampasak community. Despite their relocation to an area where land is limited, they found ways to continue growing rice and other crops, e.g. the renting of land or the cultivating of land elsewhere (which involved a temporary move out of the resettlement site during various seasons of the planting cycle);
- There are proportionately more women than men remaining as farmers after the resettlement (32 women as compared to 11 men);
- There is an increase in the number of persons operating their own business after the resettlement, in particular the men; and
- Women are becoming more visible in waged occupation after the resettlement, which indicated that women’s burden have increased due to the need to work for an income to sustain the family. This also indicated that there is greater mobility for women after the resettlement due to the accessibility to the town.

**Gender Relations**

How have gender relations been affected as a result of resettlement? The implications for women’s position is enormous because indigenous women’s traditional rights to land and resources, which is viewed as equal to men, has been ignored. Take the case of the loss of women’s tradition in rice planting. This loss has meant an erosion of women’s control and authority over the land and its usage. The inability to cultivate has also meant the loss of income for women who previously had a source of income from rubber trees or crops such as vegetables and betel leaf (sirihi) that they sell at the markets prior to resettlement. Three women, all in the 70s,
lamented to me, "Life for us is like a caged pig now. We are dying. We have lost our lands and forests and income from the land."

With cash being an important symbol of status and power in the resettlement site, this has weakened women's status as they now have to depend on the men to provide them the family funds. In her study on the resettled Iban of Batang Ai, Hew (1990: 10) pointed out that, "The abrogation of women's rights implies that women will be dependent on the goodwill of the tuai bilik (head of household) to procure their rightful share." This lower status of women is also reflected in the lack of recognition of women's contribution to activities such as cooking, child care, washing clothes, cleaning and other housework that sustain the household from day to day. This puts women in a lower position in the family vis-à-vis the income earners. Those who have stable income or salary are perceived to have a higher status in the community. Thus, social differential is becoming obvious among the individuals and households.

However, it has to be stressed that 'fulltime housewives' are not the only ones affected. Unemployed men and the elderly with 'nothing to do' in the resettlement site are similarly affected, as they become almost totally dependent on the earning members for survival. The elderly are considered 'of no use' in a cash economy expressed in the procurement of a waged job or income-earning capacity. The present non-recognition of the elders as custodians of indigenous knowledge and wisdom also means the non-recognition of their previous position as community leaders. It is not surprising that a 75-year old man finds that the ways of his grandchildren are "much better than mine because they are clever now," referring to
their opportunities for education and later the prospects of securing jobs that pay, as compared to his wisdom of the indigenous way of life associated with the land and forest.

On the whole, therefore, resettlement has affected the community, the family and the individuals. I now turn to the concrete dynamics at the household and individual levels to look at the impact of resettlement on the economic, cultural, social and gender aspects of the affected community.

Gender Impacts of Resettlement

Economic aspects

Resettlement has adversely altered the lives of the villagers and created a disturbing development in the resettlement site. Throughout my stay in the resettlement site, I noticed older women and men staying at home, having lost their farmland and with no new provision in the new site. After more than six years of resettlement, there is nothing for them to occupy themselves with. With the loss of lands on which they depended on for their subsistence base, many farmers now find life in the resettlement site stifling. This is especially for the older folks who have hardly any opportunities for waged labour outside as compared to the younger women and men who have opened small sundry shops in their homes, established eateries in the extended portions of their houses, or found work in the expanding informal labour market in towns like Kota Kinabalu or neighbouring Brunei.

2 Except brewing and consuming rice wine, or tapai, an activity enjoyed by many idle women and men. Thus there is a marked increase of alcoholism, as discussed later in this chapter.
When land loss reduced the food sources of the affected community, this also brought about a change in livelihood. Before resettlement, women and men of Kampung Tampasak had an economic base, which was their land. After resettlement, however, the fulltime farmers were particularly faced with economic insecurity. They became increasingly dependent on the market economy for their subsistence needs because they could not find enough food for themselves and their families from the land. Thus many women and men had to migrate outside of the family, village and community into larger urban and industrial centres to look for waged work. Women, comparatively, are often paid less because of prevailing social and gender bias that view women’s work as supplementing the household’s income rather than as an individual worker. Accompanying children, if any, earn nothing at all or less than the women. Family life and well-being are also affected when members leave to join the labour market. Also, the scarcity of fodder and lack of space for animal dwellings were deterrents to keeping livestock, especially pigs that previously roamed freely in the village compound.

With the right of entry to the project site controlled by Jetama, the project concessionaire, families with farmlands in higher grounds unaffected by the submersion of land for the Babagon Dam found that they cannot access the area. Many of the landholdings are under customary law, which gave equal rights to both women and men to use the lands, either as individual or joint holdings. Thus many women had cultivated the area with rubber trees and fruit crops to obtain income for the family and themselves. As customary lands are not entitled to compensation, including the resources and crops, the economic loss is borne by the women, which they view as unjust. In fact, during a focus group discussion, all the women remarked
that they are suffering from the loss of income from the rubber trees, since they cannot go to tap because “John Holland has closed the road”. One woman even claimed that previously she earned between RM800 to RM1000 per month during the tapping season, depending on the price of rubber and “how hard I work to tap the trees.” But she now depends on her husband, who works in a private agency, to give her money to spend, “even to buy a pair of shoes!”

Various studies show that when women’s access to and control over land and other resources is lost or reduced – whether through displacement, deforestation or other land development projects – their livelihoods are severely affected and their fears aggravated (see, for example, Gomes 1990; Thukral 1992; Heyzer 1996, Suaram 1999, Ng 1999). Women’s lack of land rights also has profound effects on their personal and economic autonomy (Hew 1990; Ng 1999). An illustrative case in point is the situation of women in the Asap Resettlement Scheme in Tubau, Sarawak, from the Orang Ulu indigenous communities displaced to make way for the now deferred Bakun Hydroelectric Project. In the old settlements, women had easy access to nearby home gardens and fields by walking, or to fields further away by driving their own boat. In the present Asap resettlement site, where the farms are far away and land transport too expensive, the women have to remain behind while the men go to the farm (The Star, 10 August 1999; SUARAM 1999).

3 Interestingly, the community always sees John Holland, the dam builder, as the agency controlling the project and ‘making all the rules’.

4 Although her husband is a wage earner before the resettlement, she rarely asks money from him for her personal expenses since she earns her own income from farming.
With the increasing need to get money to buy all the household needs and daily expenses (belanja dapur), women now have to search for alternative income sources to either supplement the family income or provide for the family in female-headed households or where there are no other working members. Thus there is a growing presence of women in the informal sectors, which is where women are most likely to find work.

In addition, the proximity of the resettlement site to the main roads made it easier for women to access public transportation. This has enhanced the opportunities for at least two women to dabble in buying vegetables, tobacco and betel leaves from other districts for re-packing and selling at the nearby tamu or local market (see Plate 9).

In my interviews, 15 of the 30 households (50 per cent) had a female member of the family involved in such work, as follows:

- 4 women are doing packaging of foodstuff into sachets, which a neighbour mediated for them from the same food packaging factory nearby where she works. The women packers are paid between RM3 to RM3.20 for 60 sachets;
- 2 women are working in a factory as seasonal workers; earning about RM300-RM400 a month;
- 6 women are selling vegetables in the market in Donggongan, the nearest town to Kampung Tampasak about 14 kilometres away by road, or in other markets. Since they have no land to grow their own crops, these women get their vegetable supplies from Ranau and Tambunan, two neighbouring districts well known as vegetable growing areas in Sabah (about 120km and 52 km away respectively from Kota Kinabalu, the capital city); and
• 3 women are selling noodles as well as sundering in the extended portions of their houses.

Because they are ‘home workers’, except for the two factory workers, the women see themselves, or are seen by other family members as ‘not working’ when I asked about their occupation during my survey. In addition, two of the women involved in the packaging work have their daughters helping them after school, or during the weekends. The children’s contribution are also not recognised or accorded any value since they are seen as ‘helping our mothers in this easy task’.

Cultural aspects

Land is central to an indigenous community’s identity as indigenous peoples. It is part and parcel of their spiritual and cultural tradition, besides being an essential resource for their livelihoods. Customary laws related to land is born out of the practical and spiritual relationship that the indigenous people have with land (Lasimbang 1996: 184).

Like other indigenous societies, the indigenous community of Kampung Tampasak also have their customary rights to land that their ancestors have established by opening up the forest on a reciprocal basis to make farms for cultivation (Majalah Kampung Tampasak, vol:001/1996). As land is pivotal to the existence, identity and well-being of the indigenous community of Kampung Tampasak, the compulsory acquisition of their lands for the Babagon Dam project is an outright disregard for their rights over customary lands. Even if the titled lands that they own are compensated, this can never really reinstate the resettlers to their previous position.
Apart from the lack of adequate compensation, resettled communities find their economic lives completely overturned because previous lands are acquired and now everything else has to be paid for with money. Thus far, some families have fared reasonably well due to substantial cash payments they received. The compensation has allowed some families to invest in bank savings or shares, or set up their own businesses. For many subsistence families, however, they have suddenly lost their previous status as autonomous farmers, women and men alike. The loss of land and self-sufficiency, which means also the loss of economic independence, has also led to the loss of self-esteem. The lack of recognition of indigenous women’s pre-existing position as landowners under the adat puts women in a much lower position compared with the men.

While families with lands elsewhere could work on them, those without any land other than the submerged lands in Kampung Tampasak, have to resort to borrowing land from relatives or other landowners to grow rice. Rice planting has been an important cultural tradition among indigenous communities in the rural areas. Apart from carrying on the rice planting tradition, access to land allows families to produce rice and other food crops to subsist thus lessening the hardship or risk of relying heavily on cash incomes for survival.

A series of questions were directed to a group of women and men regarding their views on having to lease other people’s lands for crop growing especially rice. The findings reveal that the women and men perceive the matter differently; women appear to be more affected, although both women and men felt that the loss of land and the resort to lease land is ‘shameful’. For example, one man said, "My wife
cannot give up planting rice so she uses a relative’s land nearby. It is not proper according to our adat, or custom, to borrow land, but we have no choice.” A man with nine children views the use of another person’s land for them to grow rice and vegetables as ‘practical’ since his meagre income as a driver is insufficient to sustain the family’s daily needs. In contrast, here are what some women say about their change in status from autonomous farmers to landless peasant or user of other people’s land:

“Prior to resettlement, land means food security, especially for us with little or no schooling, and are married young. Now I feel disappointed (hampa) that I have no land to cultivate. (A 30-year old mother with four children aged 1, 3, 5 and 8).”

“Land can be passed down to several generations; but now I feel ashamed and lack self-esteem because I have lost my rights to the land. Our land has been submerged (Bebberapa generasi boleh dibawa, tapi sekarang saya merasa malu dan kurang bersemangat kerana tiada hak tanah. Tanah sudah tenggelam [nolonod]) (A 36-year old woman with three sons aged 8, 11, and 15, and a daughter aged 13).”

“It is not very comfortable, piggy-bagging on other people’s land. Also, the rice we harvested are divided equally, seems like we are at the losing end (Rasa tak senang, macam tumpang saja. Tanaman juga bagi dua, rasa tak untung) (Wife of the man cited above, with nine children with age ranging from one plus to 18 years).

Indigenous knowledge and identity associated with land has been effectively reduced or lost, which in turn resulted in loss of respect for the elderly. This has also widened the gap between the young and old, especially since the elderly are now ill equipped to teach the children about the modern worldview. A 32-year old man expressed it aptly, “There are no more forests left. I cannot recognise the medicines. Also because I use the hospital and modern medicines now.”
The worldview of the elderly, after all, is born out of the practical and spiritual relationship with land, and their wisdom is seen through the knowledge associated with land. For example, they know the names of animals and plant species dwelling in the forest, or the uses of the different plants for medicinal purposes and healing. In addition, the only woman left in the village embracing the indigenous religion is also a healer and ritual medium who often obtained the ritual paraphernalia needed from plants in the forest or elements in her natural environment to carry out her ceremonial observances. Due to the conversion to Christianity among her fellow villagers, many of them barely appreciate her knowledge in the belief system of the indigenous communities. Nevertheless, it is heartening to know that among the community in Kampung Tampasak, as with some other indigenous communities, there is a growing awareness of the importance to appreciate and preserve their indigenous knowledge in order to pass down the knowledge to the younger generation.\(^5\)

Resettlement had also resulted in social and cultural disruption. The close-knit and egalitarian social fabric of the old Kampung Tampasak shows rapid degeneration with different cash payments meted out to the affected families. This has created tensions in the community without the community itself realising it. Disunity and competition is seen to have taken place in the negotiation of compensation, both in cash and kind.

\(^5\) The awareness of the importance to preserve indigenous knowledge is due largely to the existence of a network of indigenous people's organisations in Sabah, Sarawak and Peninsular Malaysia called the National Indigenous Peoples' Network, or JOAS which has been actively advocating for the recognition of indigenous peoples' rights to land and other rights. JOAS is supported by local NGOs such as the Partners of Community Organisations (PACOS) in Sabah and the Centre for Orang Asli Concerns (COAC) in Peninsular Malaysia.
I relate here a case of dispute over the houses to illustrate this erosion in the community’s unity.

*Case of dispute over the houses*

House replacement had been awarded only to those families who had their houses evaluated by the Land and Survey Department and agreed to by the State Inter-Agency Resettlement Committee. Only 30 families were given the house provision. As a result, many were left out although they had nuclear families requiring their own dwelling since the unit was too small for extended families.

In 1994, the people-initiated village organisation called *Koisaan Manampasi Pitabangan Gulu-Gulu* (KMPGG) was established. The KMPGG made an appeal to *Koperasi Pembangunan Desa* (KPD) the agency responsible for the resettlement housing, to build new units for another 12 families. The housing issue was later taken over by the government-appointed Village Development and Security Committee, or Jawatankuasa Kemajuan dan Keselamatan Kampung (JKKK) established in the resettlement site in 1996. With little or no coordination between the KMPGG and JKKK, the 12 families concerned found themselves forced to ‘take either the side of the JKKK or KMPGG’ when three individuals’ names were written off the list of ‘deserving 12 families’ in Phase II of the housing project and substituted with ‘three names related to the politically-appointed leaders’.

But, in the meantime, an entirely new set of problems arose. A local non-governmental organisation called PACOS, working closely with the affected villagers, even prior to their resettlement, was mistakenly seen as ‘fuelling the
dispute’, when only one member of the community had complicated the issue by mere association with the said NGO. However, because of the credibility of PACOS among the indigenous communities in Sabah, Kampung Tampasak included, and its long-standing support for the Kampung Tampasak community and KMPGG in their struggle against the Babagon Dam and later their resettlement, the confusion was nevertheless cleared up.\textsuperscript{6}

Despite this, it has to be said that the history of the housing dispute is replete with such instances of hostility and finger pointing at ‘manipulative elements’ on the one hand, and empathy for ‘ousted victims’ on the other hand. Thus the housing issue had become one of the most prolonged internal conflict between the formal (JKKK) and informal (KMPGG) leadership as well as individuals associated with the JKKK or the KMPGG. In between these two factions are the fence-sitters with the attitude that ‘whoever wins, we win’ but are nonetheless always criticising the actions taken by both the JKKK and KMPGG, prompting a woman previously active in campaigning with KMPGG for the community’s rights, to remark that, “they are the worst lot. They do nothing but condemn us. Yet when we are successful, they equally benefit from our hard work.” The housing dispute was eventually settled by KPD agreeing to increase the number of houses in Phase II from 12 to 15 houses. The three houses, however, took away the allocation for the community hall, instead of KPD or the project concessionaire bearing the cost.

\textsuperscript{6} Today PACOS continues to provide its support to Kampung Tampasak and KMPGG. The case of the kindergarten is a good example, where funding was secured with the help of PACOS. PACOS also provided the teachers with training and teaching materials, through its community education programme.
Describing her situation, one of the woman victims said, "Being a single mother, I find myself totally helpless when my name was removed. The so-called leaders like the JKKK did not even sympathise with me. Where would my four children and I sleep if we did not get the house?"

This is not to say that only the women were affected by the dispute. Rather, the dispute and its roots need to be looked at and understood in a much wider context than the issue of the mere lack of sufficient physical houses. The larger implication of this is that any decision without the full participation of the people, and especially women and men in much less secure positions, are bound to fail. Such is the case in Kampung Tampasak, where the village and social units are breaking up.

In the present village structure, the JKKK is seen as the 'proper system' to liaise between the villagers and government. Thus the JKKK administers the village affairs pending the appointment of the village head. Yet, in many of the resettlement issues affecting the people such as the house allocation, demand for grazing land and Kampung Reserve status for the resettlement site, it is the KMPGG and segments of the people who pursued the matter, although lately there seems to be more collaboration between the JKKK and KMPGG.

Resettlement has also led to the disruption of relationships within the family as well as community. As families re-established themselves in the new site and as the element of money impinges on their lives, their centuries-old culture, social, economic and spiritual way of life are invariably disrupted. Concurrently, a community which earlier subsisted on economic activities dependent on the land
now has to abandon a whole way of life and in its place, embrace the ‘modern’ lifestyles regardless of what such change will do to their own culture, including that of economic independence and leadership.

**Social aspects**

After displacement, social problems such as alcoholism, juvenile delinquency and debts seem to have become more evident. These problems are not necessarily a direct consequent of displacement alone but as several researchers (notably Thukral 1992; Cernea 1996; Mahapatra 1999) have emphasised, forced uprooting increases the risk that people will face cultural, economic and power shocks in the new environment after relocation and they express this shock through various forms. Recounting her visit to a resettled community in Kohadiya, Indian researcher Thukral (1996: 1502) noted, “...there was a rise in alcoholism among the displaced population. The rise in social disturbances reflected by alcoholism, prostitution, gambling and theft has also often been noted in earlier instances of displacement, e.g. Ukai, Hirakud, and those affected by the Kutku dam in Bihar.”

Cernea in his theoretical model has shown how “the destabilisation of community life is apt to generate a state of anomie, crisis-laden insecurity, and loss of a sense of cultural identity” (cited in Mahapatra 1999: 210). My findings in Kampung Tampasak indicate that individuals, women and men alike, as well as families, manifest social disarticulation in such areas as debts, drinking and idling. However, it is difficult to make any definite statement on the link between the increase in social problems and displacement as much depends on individual experiences, their social and economic backgrounds and their own perceptions.
In terms of debts, this can take two forms. In one, the new lifestyle in the resettlement site has witnessed many families buying consumer goods, electrical products, vehicles, and investing in home improvements. While some families said they spent practically their entire cash compensation on these goods, a significant number of families simply swooped up commodities like hi-fi sets, television, sofa sets, refrigerators and video players with a certain degree of excitement and are now left with ‘instalment payments’ to clear.

The youths in particular succumbed to ‘take first pay later’ items such as cans of beer, soft drinks and snacks from sundry shops operated by fellow villagers. They obviously did not settle their petty debts, for I saw an “Outstanding Debtors” notice handwritten in Malay pinned outside one of the sundry shops, followed by the names of six boys and one girl, and the unsettled amounts since December 1997.

The list below gives an idea what these amounts are:

Hutang Terbangkagai
Berikut nama yang belum menjelaskan hutang dalam kedai ini
(List of persons with money owing to this store, dated 26.12.1997)
1. WG (girl) – RM 15.10
2. GG (boy) – RM342.70
3. JS (boy) – RM28.50
4. JG (boy) – RM 50.00
5. AB (boy) – RM22.70
6. BL (boy) – RM 27.80
7. LG (boy) – RM 287.60

When cash compensation meant as provision for food expenditure and the future is squandered quickly on ‘modern’ lifestyle goods and indulgences, including liquor, the community is likely to be reduced to a state of destitution (see, for example,
Thukral 1992, McCully 1996). Resettled communities, including Kampung Tampasak often have to confront the problem of daily survival affected by displacement because they do not have any choice but acquiesce to the loss of their original homes and lands. Women are invariably more affected than men because women are generally assumed to be responsible for managing and sustaining their households, thereby having to bear much of the burden where the food or money shortage occurred due to poor planning, or where the purse strings are controlled by the men in the family. Women are also constantly worrying about their families, over matters such as their daily diet, nutrition, and availability or not of household food supply. Women, it seems, are burdened with greater household responsibilities, which inevitably bring about more stress for them. Such mental health risks have not been studied in depth, but it would not be surprising to find the severity of mental stress among women to be higher than in men.

Another social problem that is prevalent is alcoholism. Many studies have shown that resettlers, especially from indigenous communities handling such large sums of cash compensation for the first time, are totally misguided and squander almost their entire cash compensation on consumables especially alcohol and liquor. To take one example, Viegas (1996) has identified the problem of ‘liquor was available in abundance’ among the Hirakud Dam oustees in Orissa State, India even after 30 years of displacement.

No structured study has been done on the problem of drinking or alcoholism in Kampung Tampasak. But when I stayed in the village during fieldwork, I saw drinking as a common occurrence. Almost everyday, women, men and at times even
children, were drinking beer, *tapai* (brewed rice wine) and *talak* (local liquor). When asked about the over-indulgence in drinking, the villagers were initially hesitant to talk about it. Slowly, however, through meetings and conversations they acknowledged the problem. In fact, many individuals candidly told me “Kadazandusun people like to drink” and even counted the names of 15 women and men who are heavy drinkers since in the old village. In one case, a 32-year old bachelor who enjoyed drinking, lamented, “Money earned through hard labour goes wasted on liquor!”

The peak drinking period is naturally on payday and on occasions when someone returns from Labuan, where alcohol and beer are available cheaply,⁷ or from Brunei with their cash earnings. I even had numerous occasions to join drinking sessions outside the porch or veranda with the host family and neighbours! During the course of these sessions, I watched individuals who had a little too much to drink, blabber deep-rooted emotions. They still harboured strong feelings of resentment over the loss of their homes and lands, and inadequate compensation. The more sober ones reminiscence about the old village, their life before resettlement, and their seven-year struggle against the Babagon Dam and their displacement. But a majority of the people in an intoxicated condition were not able to sit and think collectively. Consequently they became noisy and aggressive, although bouts of aggression are normally short-lived. Two such situations were observed during my fieldwork. In one case, two brothers who got drunk began quarrelling over a gambling bet, and in

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⁷ For example, a carton of beer costs RM55 in Labuan as compared to between RM90 and RM95 in Donggongon town.
the other case, a man was mad at his wife for drinking with some neighbours and neglecting their sick child. Both cases occurred separately after midnight.

Drinking is not cheap and is an economic loss for those with small incomes. Even the local brewed rice wine — lihing, montoku or tapai — costs between RM3 per small bottle to RM35 per large jar. A can of beer is not less than RM4. Why then is drinking so prevalent in Kampung Tampasak? How has it affected the livelihood and day-to-day existence of the community? What has been the impact of alcoholism on women and men?

For Kampung Tampasak, drinking was already a phenomenon in the old village but the problem in the resettlement site arose when some began to drink far more than was typical in Old Tampasak. As a KMPGG leader pointed out:

Before we only have tapai, which we made locally, and when it runs out we just go home to sleep. Now it is so easy for us to buy beer from the shop or from so-and-so with supplies ... also, a number of the young people here work in Labuan and when they return, they bring tax-free beers home. With the houses so nearby, we can call anyone within minutes for a drinking bout. Besides, beer drinking is a new social status in the resettlement site. Everyone, it seems, want to be a part of this new found status.

However, drinking is not merely because of the availability of cash or beers or people to drink. The addiction is symptomatic of a bigger problem, and in fact studies have pointed out that drinking is a social problem related to a society being sick. The uprooting of Kampung Tampasak has resulted in the disruption of their tradition-bound community and created a culture shock, which the affected people are unable to comprehend. The loss of their history, culture and identity associated with land aggravate the pain of resettlement leading to the erosion of self-esteem.
Coupled with the lack of support social institutions, the break down of communal support networks, and with ‘nothing much to do’ in the resettlement site, it is clear that many of the women and men in Kampung Tampasak turn to drinking as a way out of their hopelessness and boredom. In fact, the people did exactly that, as is well expressed by a 59-year old man: “Never forget the drinks, even if we are imprisoned here after being forced out by John Holland (Minuman jangan lupa, walau macam penjara di sini kena halau oleh John Holland).”

Another emerging problem for the women in particular was delinquency among the youth. The close proximity to each other, to the roads, and to the urban centres all pose difficult new problems of social control of the young. The women explicitly expressed this concern about their children. For instance, a 46-year old woman found out that her son played truant for a month without her knowledge, while another suspected her teenage sons are watching pornographic tapes. I cannot be certain of the link between this increase in social problems of children and the new environment in the absence of such data, but according to the mothers, “The children are so difficult to discipline now, because they can easily gang up now and get themselves into all sorts of troubles, like fighting and petty thefts.”

Previously, the children had limited opportunities to get together since they had to walk at least a few miles through the forest path to look for their peers. Besides, there were sufficient activities in the forest to keep them occupied such as picking fruits, hunting for small animals and birds, or frolicking in the river. Otherwise, the children follow their parents or elder siblings to the farm to help out. This increase in social problems means greater emotional insecurity, pressures and fears for women,
since they are more often the ones left behind in the resettlement site while their husbands go to work.

Specific impacts on women and children

The Kampung Tampasak community was not consulted before the decision was made for the construction of the Babagon Dam. Moreover, the persons representing the community were those who were generally appointed by the government, like the JKKK member. While it is often the case that men were appointed, this by no means implies that the community was able to participate in the decision-making and administrative processes. It was even more difficult for women to be heard or adequately represented in the decision-making processes on issues related to the community. The absence of women in the JKKK contributed to their issues and needs being neglected or not presented.

Despite the active role and participation of women at the local village and inter-village campaigning prior to the resettlement, they are now struggling to find a role for themselves. Take the case of 31-year old JJ, a former woman leader and community organiser in the old village. She was a spokesperson for the Alliance of Village Committee Against The Babagon Dam and led the community in presenting signature petitions and demands to the various government officials in the early 1990s. During the transition period, she was struggling to find a role in the community. This was rather difficult as there was no longer any burning issues in the village and both the KMPGG members and villagers became complacent. After the resettlement, with a husband who was always busy with contract work and odd jobs to earn an income and a child to mind, JJ devoted little time to the village and
KMPGG activities. Like the other women in the resettlement site, JJ was already finding life boring as a ‘fulltime’ housewife. Then she decided to open a small eatery in the extended portion of her house, which was doing quite well and the earnings enabled her to complement her husband’s irregular wages. The stall also provided a meeting point for the neighbours to talk and relax, which boosted the popularity of household. However, this is not the case for the majority of the women who have been relocated to the resettlement site.

Resettlement, as seen earlier, has led to substantial changes in the structure of village and social fabric of the community. Many of these changes adversely affected the community in general and the women in particular, an example being the reduced space for women in the resettlement site. They are now confined to the 24 by 30 square feet house. In the old village, women had the forest, which does not only provide them with a variety of resources but also a place to relief pain, tensions and worries. An interesting example is that of a 31-year old woman with five children, who went into the forest to hunt or gather palms or wild shoots whenever she felt stressed. As she sums it:

There are so many things familiar to me in the forest – the animals, medicines, shoots, and palms. I know the trails well so I often roam around to look for food. At the same time, it relaxes me. Here at the resettlement site, I can only wander as far as the last house, or the playing field. There is no place to ‘hilang tekanan’ (release one’s stresses).

Furthermore, at the resettlement site, the compound is too cramped to raise poultry, pigs or do gardening. Such activities have largely been associated with women, but are now discontinued due to a lack of physical space.
Due to the loss of land, women farmers who cannot farm or earn any wages now need to ask for money from their husbands since employment opportunities are mainly taken up by men, or younger women and men. The loss of land and forest has resulted in the loss of traditional knowledge and forest resource management capabilities, domains where women had a significant role. Thus once removed from customary land and forest access there is a change in women's work, thereby affecting women's status and position in the family and community.

Experiences of resettlement differ between women and men, and among women. The example of a 31-year old woman, ZM, illustrates this point. She recalled how she herself worked rearing pigs, tapping rubber and planting in the backyard after her husband went to work and the children were at school. After resettlement, however, she found herself in a completely new role, that of a fulltime housewife. While she admits that her present life is 'boring', she observes that there is no choice since she has no skills to do other work except farming and hunting.

The women-headed household, which is a substantial 25 per cent of the total household, suggests that to some degree they are economically independent. Because the burden of providing for the family falls on their shoulders, they have no choice but to work in order to support the family. On the one hand, this may be seen as a burden for women but on the other hand, women who head their own families have more autonomy in decision-making and control over resources, including their earnings.
Resettlement has also adversely affected the children in the following aspects: first, children’s space for playing is restricted to the roads, playing field behind the houses, and the dam site. Previously, they freely enjoyed exploring the river and forest during the school holidays and weekends. However, these areas are now putting children’s safety to risk, being unguarded and unsuitable. For instance, vehicles heavily ply the road dividing the two rows of houses especially during the day. Similarly, the children have to sideline themselves when the adults want to use the playing field for their game of football. Second, with the loss of the forest, there is no opportunity for the children to explore nature and learn about the animals and plants in the forest, which effectively means that the younger generation is losing their indigenous knowledge associated with the land and forest. Take the example of medicinal plants: it is not just the adults but also children who do not know how to identify them anymore. Third, due to the proximity of the resettlement site to the main road, children are exposed to all kinds of influences, especially the ‘modern’ urban lifestyle that they embrace or imitate vigorously, thereby losing interest in learning and preserving their indigenous culture and knowledge. Fourth, resettled children suffer a setback in education when they are unable to re-establish themselves in a new environment and new school; the numerous cases of truancy among the children are clear examples.

Summary

When the decision was made to proceed with the Babagon Dam project, the state government organised a task force, consisting of representatives all the relevant government and private agencies to act as the coordinating machinery for all the agencies involved in the resettlement of the affected community, Kampung
Tampasak due to the dam project. As in most projects, the people were not involved directly in the decision-making processes although attempts were made to explain to the people the necessity of the project and the reasons for the land acquisition. Seemingly, development for the people has been defined by the authorities only in terms of tangibles such as infrastructure.

At this juncture, it must be pointed out that the government perceived the dam project as an aspect of improving the lives of the affected community, but the people do not perceive it as such. The detailed examination of the Kampung Tampasak resettlement experiences confirm empirically and theoretically the basic assumption that displacement has failed to offer a better living and housing solution to the affected community. Instead of improving the lives of the people, the study reveals that the resettlement has caused major changes in their livelihoods and a number of important socio-economic changes. These changes have significant consequences on the affected community and households, as well as between women and men within the households in terms of gender relations, economic, cultural and social aspects. These changes are, among others, the decline of traditional agricultural practices, values and community way of life, introduction of market and consumer products due to scarcity of forest resources, difficulties of hunting or gathering, and the lack of quality natural resources, and the emergence of a more identical village structure.

While the resettlement has brought about changes that largely impacted the community negatively, there were also positive outcomes, among other things, access to better transportation and communication means. This in turn enhanced the mobility of people. In this connection, it must be mentioned that women who
previously had lesser opportunities to travel due to transport problems and distance could do so more easily now. Similarly, those who own their own vehicles are able to move about more easily now. This fact shows that Cernea’s conceptual framework of ‘risks’ has not differentiated the impoverishment risks faced or perceived by different people.

Another outcome of the resettlement is in an increase in waged workers, a proportion of whom were originally subsistence and small-scale cash crop farmers. Due to this change in economic livelihood, there is now a widening of household economic/income disparity leading to a more socially and gender-stratified society in the community. The signs are visible in the growth of cash as a new status symbol and, subsequently, widening of gender and social disparity. The signs are also visible in the emergence of more defined gender relations, roles and responsibilities at household and community levels. Thus, other mediating factors such as leadership status, marital status, class, and education have implications on the position and status of the households and individuals, aspects which Cernea did not consider in his ‘risks’ model.

Due to the changes and impact on the affected community, as we shall see in the following chapter, this provided the basis of a need for reconsidering the approach to resettlement.