

Community Infrastructure Development Planning towards Rural Development in Sarawak

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Abstract: The development of community infrastructure is essential for a region and its community's socio-economic growth. This book adopts the qualitative approach by case study design with Song District, Sarawak as the study area, involving methods that included in-depth interviews with multiple key actors in the government and communities and direct observation to examine the community infrastructure planning in Sarawak. Based on a study carried out in Song District, Sarawak, the book findings shows that although there has been progress in the district's development of community infrastructure, there were a number of challenges to delivering community to certain locations within the district, in addition to satisfying the community needs. The book reveals several challenges of the community infrastructure planning process namely influence of geographical factor, management of financial resources, cooperation and collaboration of stakeholders and community involvement. In terms of governance, the study highlights that governments at all levels needs to be aware of their responsibilities, utilising networks and collaborations with other agencies and community to enhance local decision-making in developing community infrastructure in rural areas. In sum, the book suggests that the presence of strong institutional actors and coordination involving government at all levels and community is important in dealing with the many challenges and governing a successful community infrastructure delivery to fulfill the needs of the rural community. Consequently, this book also recommended some improvements on the approach and mechanisms governing the rural community infrastructure planning in Sarawak.

Keywords: Rural infrastructure, Sarawak planning, governance, stakeholder engagement

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING towards Rural Development in Sarawak



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**Penerbit
UTHM**



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INFRASTRUCTURE
DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING** towards
Rural Development in Sarawak

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

ANT	Actor Network Theory
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DARA	South-East Pahang Development Authority
DID	Drainage and Irrigation Department
DO	District Officer
DOSM	Department of Statistics Malaysia
DPF	Dasar Perancangan Fizikal
DPLB	Dasar Perancangan Luar Bandar
ECER	East Coast Economic Region
EHV	Extra High Voltage
EPU	Economic Planning Unit
ETP	Economic Transformation Programme
FELDA	Federal Land Development Authority
GTP	Government Transformation Programme
HDA	Highland Development Agency
IADP	Integrated Agricultural Development Projects
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IRD	Integrated Rural Development
JBALB	Sarawak Rural Water Supply Department
JENDELA	Pelan Jalinan Digital Negara
JENGKA	Jengka Regional Development Authority
JKR	Public Works Department
KADA	Kemubu Agricultural Development Authority
KEJORA	Southeast Johor Development Authority
KESEDAR	South Kelantan Development Authority

KETENGAH	Central Terengganu Development Authority
KKDW	Ministry of Rural and Regional Development
KPLB	Ministry of Rural Development
KWKPK	Ministry of Women, Early Childhood and Community
LCDA	Land Custody and Development Authority
LPA	Local Planning Authority
MADA	Muda Agricultural Development Authority
MCMC	Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission
MIPD	Ministry of Infrastructure and Port Development
MP	Malaysia Plan
NAP	National Agricultural Policy
NCER	Northern Corridor Economic Region
NDP	National Development Policy
NEM	New Economic Model
NEP	New Economic Policy
NFP	Network Facility Providers
NGO	Non-Government Organisations
NKEA	National Key Economic Area
NKRA	National Key Result Areas
NPP	National Physical Plan
NPPC	National Physical Planning Council
NRDA	Northern Region Development Agency
NUA	New Urban Agenda
NVP	National Vision Policy
OPP	Outline Perspective Plan
PELITA	Lembaga Pembangunan dan Lindungan Tanah
PLI	Poverty Line Index
RDA	Regional Development Authority
RES	Rural Electrification Scheme
RGC	Rural Growth Centres
RPC	Regional Planning Committee

RPSS	Rural Power Supply Scheme
RTC	Rural Transformation Centre
RTP	Rural Transformation Project
SA	State Authority
SALCRA	Sarawak Land Consolidation and Rehabilitation Authority
SALURAN	Sarawak Multimedia Authority Linking Urban, Rural and Nation
SARES	Sarawak Alternative Rural Electrification Scheme
SAWAS	Sarawak Alternative Rural Water Supply
SETP	Sarawak Socio-Economic Transformation Plan
SCORE	Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMA	Sarawak Multimedia Authority
SMART	Sarawak Multimedia Authority Rural Telecommunication
SLDB	Sarawak Land Development Board
SPC	State Planning Committee
SPU	State Planning Unit
SPV	Shared Prosperity Vision
SSP	State Structure Plan
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal
URDA	Upper Rajang Development Agency

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Further, our colleagues deserve a warm thank you for their consistent support and encouragement throughout our research journey. We cherish their readiness to engage in discussions about this book, and the wealth of suggestions and ideas they shared has served as a profound source of inspiration in completing this book.

PREFACE

The development of community infrastructure is essential for a region and its community's socio-economic growth. However, issues on disparity of community infrastructure development exists between urban and rural areas affecting the ability for rural transformations in societal and economic aspects. In Malaysia, as rural regions continue to struggle with the development of community infrastructure, more attention has been given to the community infrastructure planning approach and amplified in rural planning and development strategies. The East Malaysian state of Sarawak continues to face challenges in its development of rural areas in particular with the lack of community infrastructure needed by communities in certain rural settlement. The delivery of community infrastructure to rural areas remains challenging due to the feasibility factors in Sarawak's rural setting. Hence, this book aims to investigate the community infrastructure planning in rural areas in Sarawak focusing on the governance of the community infrastructure planning process. Through the Actor-Network Theory perspective, this study examines the issues of community infrastructure planning, roles of stakeholders and the governance of the planning process. This book adopts the qualitative approach by case study design with Song District, Sarawak as the study area, involving methods that included in-depth interviews with multiple key actors in the government and communities and direct observation to examine the community infrastructure planning in Sarawak. Based on a study carried out in Song District, Sarawak, the book findings shows that although there has been progress in the district's development of community infrastructure, there were a number of challenges to delivering community infrastructure to certain locations within the district, in addition to satisfying the community needs. The book reveals several challenges of the community infrastructure planning process namely influence of geographical factor, management of financial resources, cooperation and

collaboration of stakeholders and community involvement. In terms of governance, the study highlights that governments at all levels needs to be aware of their responsibilities, utilising networks and collaborations with other agencies and community to enhance local decision-making in developing community infrastructure in rural areas. In sum, the book suggests that the presence of strong institutional actors and coordination involving government at all levels and community is important in dealing with the many challenges and governing a successful community infrastructure delivery to fulfil the needs of the rural community. Consequently, this book also recommended some improvements on the approach and mechanisms governing the rural community infrastructure planning in Sarawak.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The development of infrastructure such as roads, telecommunications, electric supply, water supply and sewerage are an integral part of development of a region for productivity and growth (Calderón & Servén, 2004; Srinivasu & Rao, 2013; World Bank, 2019). Being a crucial component of development, infrastructure is implied directly or indirectly in 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and most of their targets. As the world seeks to meet ambitious targets, such as the SDGs, New Urban Agenda (NUA) and the Paris Agreement on climate change, the role of infrastructure is becoming more widely recognised. In 5 of the 17 SDG goals (SDGs 3, 6, 7, 9 and 11), all of the targets are influenced by infrastructure while 121 of the 169 SDG targets is influenced either directly or indirectly by infrastructure development (ICE, 2019; Thacker et al., 2019; UN Habitat, 2018).

Based on the principles of sustainable development, in terms of economy, infrastructure supports national economic goals and enable communities to generate economic activity by connecting people to places with employment, education and healthcare service, through transportation and telecommunications infrastructures (EIU, 2019; Thacker et al., 2019). With growing awareness on environmental aspects, infrastructure assets play a key role in conserving natural resources and reducing the impact of climate change through innovative green infrastructure as a response to challenges in unprecedented urban growth ensuring resilience, as

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUALIZING COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a brief overview of the rural development planning and community planning and conceptualises the issues underpinning community infrastructure planning. The overview of rural development planning starts which firstly providing the definition for real areas, followed by discussion of rural issues. the literature review of rural development and planning practices is then discussed. The chapter then presents the scope of community infrastructure and the international experience of community infrastructure planning. Discussions on the actor network perspective is also presented. The actor network perspective offers a useful theoretical framework to determine the extent to the governance of community infrastructure planning in rural areas.

2.2 Defining Rural

Despite the frequent use of the term rural area, there is no standard international definition of rural (FAO, 2018). Individual countries may have different definition of rural and even within a country itself, federal agencies and researchers may use a different definition of “rural”. Definitions of “rural” may range from simply defining rural as what is not urban to more completed definition relying on several criteria or dimensions (FAO, 2018; Ratcliffe, Burd, Holder, & Fields, 2016). The reason for the varied definition of rural is due to the context of identifying

CHAPTER 3

RURAL COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING IN MALAYSIA

3.1 Introduction

As the development of rural community infrastructure goes hand to hand with rural planning and development, in this chapter, it aims to provide an insight into the rural community development planning within the Malaysian context. The chapter begins with providing an overview of the socio-economic of Malaysia. It then presents an overview of development planning in Malaysia which includes discussion of the planning structure, Government's development plans and development policies. This chapter continues with a discussion on the rural development in Malaysia. Moving on to the context of the book's scope, the background of Sarawak is presented. The discussion then looks into the development planning structure in Sarawak, the evolution of rural development practices in Sarawak, the rural development strategies and finally the community infrastructure projects and programmes.

3.2 Malaysia Socio-Economic Background

Malaysia (refer to Figure 3.1) is a country located in Southeast Asia which encompasses an area of 330,524 square kilometres. The country is separated in two regions by the South China Sea: the Peninsular Malaysia situated to the south of Thailand and north of Singapore; and East Malaysia, which is located on the island of Borneo bordering Brunei Darussalam and Kalimantan, Indonesia. Malaysia is a federation consisting

CHAPTER 4

A CASE STUDY OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN SONG DISTRICT

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide the context of this research by describing the current situation of community infrastructure planning in the case study area. As a result, this will offer insight into the issues examined and the peculiarities of the case study. This chapter will be divided into four sections. Following this introduction, the second section briefly discussed the profile of the case study (Song District). This is followed by the current situation of the community infrastructure development and planning in Song District in section three and finally a summary of this chapter is then explained in the final section.

4.2 Profile of Song District

The Song District is located at the central region of Sarawak State (see Figure 4.1). It is one of the four districts in the Kapit Division, the largest administrative division in Sarawak. The district is situated by the banks of the Rajang River and its tributary, the Katibas River and covers an area of 3,935.2km². As of the year 2019, the district population is 24, 200 people (DOSM, 2020c). The Song District is considered a predominantly rural district with a low population density of 6 people per square kilometres. In terms of the socio-economic background, in the year 2019, Song District recorded a low median and mean monthly household income of RM 2,662 and RM 3,443 respectively (DOSM, 2020c). In addition, the incidence of absolute poverty is 6.0% and has a Gini Coefficient of 0.353 (DOSM,

CHAPTER 5

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING GOVERNANCE

5.1 Introduction

As presented in the previous Chapter 4, the Song District has undergone significant development in its community infrastructure in the last few decades through government initiated rural development policies and initiatives, although it was identified that there are certain areas which lack access to certain community infrastructure. Hence, this section of the chapter is interested in the issues and challenges of community infrastructure planning in the rural areas in Sarawak. The insights of this section are gathered from the case study of Song District and in-depth interviews with relevant stakeholders. Essentially, a total of 21 in-depth interviews were conducted with two group of participants: i) government agencies (8 informants) and ii) community representatives (13 informants whereby the opinion of the question of what the issues and challenges in community infrastructure planning in rural areas in Sarawak are is discussed and compared with the community representatives' experiences and opinion of the on-the-ground situation in Song District. Generally, the findings from the interview finds that the informants agree that development of infrastructure in rural areas in Sarawak remain a challenge. Four themes of challenges in community infrastructure planning governance and process as shown in Figure 5.1. First, is the influence of geographical factor on the delivery of resources, second is budgetary issues and management of financial resources, third is cooperation and collaboration of stakeholders, and fourth is community involvement.

CHAPTER 6

GOVERNING COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the governance of community infrastructure planning for rural settlements in Sarawak. As the community infrastructure planning process is a multi-actor process, it is necessary to examine the roles of the various stakeholders in community infrastructure planning process in Sarawak. This chapter highlight the empirical analysis that is examined and interpreted based on actor network perspective. This chapter illustrates two areas for discussion which is i) the various stakeholders' roles in the community infrastructure process and ii) the role of governance in the community infrastructure process.

6.2 The Role of Multiple Key Actors in Rural Community Infrastructure Planning

This section presents the roles of the stakeholders involved or related to the community infrastructure planning in Sarawak is presented. These finding is based on information gathered from interviews with the informants and also secondary data sources such as the government ministries or agencies' website and reports. As in the case for the situation in Sarawak State, the governance of the community infrastructure planning process is driven by the actions of all levels of government and their agencies and local level actors such as community. Figure 6.1 shows the community planning

CHAPTER 7

RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS IN RURAL COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PLANNING GOVERNANCE

7.1 Introduction

This book investigates the process and governing framework for community infrastructure planning for rural settlements in Sarawak. Through this, the book was able to recommend measures to improve the current practice of community infrastructure planning. This section will recommend improvements on in the governance of community infrastructure planning involving the roles of the stakeholders and the existing process and procedures. The policy implication of the recommendations will also be discussed.

7.2 Recommendations For Improvement in Community Infrastructure Planning Governance

Firstly, policies and development plans interact with global influences and local conditions to ensure the delivery and development of community infrastructure in rural areas. To ensure community infrastructure development is manifested in rural development planning practices, a comprehensive development plan that lays out the development planning strategies towards achieving the single goal complete coverage of community infrastructure should be considered as one of the options. Given this knowledge, relevant agencies involved in the delivery of community infrastructure in Sarawak still struggle coordinate among themselves in planning for community infrastructure development. Indeed,

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY AND WAY FORWARD

8.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the book by providing an explanation of how community infrastructure planning occurs in rural areas in Sarawak. This book has provided a comprehensive understanding of the community infrastructure planning for rural settlements in Sarawak; looking into how the governance of community infrastructure planning process is able to ensure the delivery of community infrastructure to meet rural community needs and who are involved in the process. As such, this book provides an opportunity to explore the current community infrastructure processes and governance in the rural development of the state of Sarawak and theorise the integrated and multi-actor view on rural community infrastructure planning. Drawing from an actor network perspective, the book through a discussion of the findings and analysis offers several insights of the governance of the community infrastructure planning process. The community infrastructure planning has been part and parcel of development strategies for many countries globally, although, considerations to circumstances of various internal and external factors demands varying approaches to improve community infrastructure delivery as explored in this book.

8.2 Key Findings of this Book

The qualitative investigation of community infrastructure in rural settlements in Sarawak offers several theoretical insights. A detailed case

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COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING towards Rural Development in Sarawak

The development of community infrastructure is essential for a region and its community's socio-economic growth. This book adopts the qualitative approach by case study design with Song District, Sarawak as the study area, involving methods that included in-depth interviews with multiple key actors in the government and communities and direct observation to examine the community infrastructure planning in Sarawak. Based on a study carried out in Song District, Sarawak, the book findings shows that although there has been progress in the district's development of community infrastructure, there were a number of challenges to delivering community to certain locations within the district, in addition to satisfying the community needs. The book reveals several challenges of the community infrastructure planning process namely influence of geographical factor, management of financial resources, cooperation and collaboration of stakeholders and community involvement. In terms of governance, the study highlights that governments at all levels needs to be aware of their responsibilities, utilising networks and collaborations with other agencies and community to enhance local decision-making in developing community infrastructure in rural areas. In sum, the book suggests that the presence of strong institutional actors and coordination involving government at all levels and community is important in dealing with the many challenges and governing a successful community infrastructure delivery to fulfill the needs of the rural community. Consequently, this book also recommended some improvements on the approach and mechanisms governing the rural community infrastructure planning in Sarawak.



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