

Kampung Sayong in Transition: Analyzing Urbanization's Impact on Malay Settlements Patterns and Social Fabric

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ABSTRACT

The process of urbanization in developing countries is characterized by a double-edged sword, especially with regard to indigenous communities. This research aims to analyze how has urbanization and the socio-economic effects on the traditional settlement patterns and Malay community in the village of Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar, Perak, Malaysia, over the period between 1900 and 2022. This research employs both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques, such as questionnaires, interviews, observation, and data from tools such as SPSS V11, Google Earth mapping, and drone technology. The findings reveal a nuanced picture: the process has provided much-needed advances in physical development, employment prospects, and network access. It has caused the decline of conventional farming practices and the breakdown of social relations, which has characterized the village. The findings of this study underscore the importance of urban planning approaches that will preserve claims to tangible and intangible cultural assets, as well as issues related to land tenure, lack of adequate housing, and environmental conservation. Thus, this paper has benefited the global discussion on sustainable urbanization. It provides information from the Kampung Sayong Kuala Kangsar Perak with lessons that policymakers would require to attain sustainable modernization while protecting the Malay local cultures.

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1. Introduction

Urbanization is among the characteristics of the 21st century that is transforming the modern world's physical geography as well as social relations and cultures globally. With the world population increasing daily, especially in developing nations, city expansion is at its peak. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the global population will increase from 6.1 billion in 2001 to 9.3 billion in 2050, more than 60% of which will reside in urban areas of the developing world (United Nations, 2021). This is especially evident in Southeast Asian nations such as Malaysia, where urbanization is indeed on the rise and causing a

major shift in the lifestyles of people in these societies. This study is grounded in the theories of Ekistics and urbanization. The conceptual framework involves analyzing the relationships between urbanization, socio-economic changes and cultural preservation. At the same time, studies conducted by Dahlan (1981), Hadi (1993), McGee (1975), and Shari (1993) showed urbanization trends had changed various human aspects, motivations, urban image, and culture. Again, Abdullah et al (2022) compounded that all these associations are interconnected and change the physical of Malay settlements. By applying these theories, the study provides a structured explanation of the

transformation in Kampung Sayong, analyzing the relationships between urbanization, socio-economic changes and cultural preservation. This approach supported by established academic literature on urbanization and its impacts on traditional communities

Malaysian urbanization has its own characteristics of economic development and cultural preservation. The country has experienced the establishment of new megacities like Kuala Lumpur and Penang with tall buildings and economic activities (Jong et al., 2018). Nevertheless, there is a great deal of mystery beneath the mask of progress for many Malay communities since they experience challenges to their pre-modern way of life, ethnical customs, and farming occupations. Some problems with expanding urbanization into rural areas include eviction, converting farmland into urban layout, and diminishing cultural practices (McGee, 1964, 1975, 1995, 2009; Nadarajah, Abdullah, & Yahaya, 2017; Kamaruddin, 2019; Hadi, 2001, 2010). This research aims to analyze how has urbanization and the socio-economic effects on the traditional settlement patterns and Malay community in the village of Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar, Perak, Malaysia, over the period between 1900 and 2022.

This transformation poses pertinent and important questions about the sustainability of urban development in Malaysia. With the growth of population, cities have to grow to accommodate the needs of the growing population, such as housing, basic amenities, and infrastructure (World Bank, 2022). However, they face several challenges today, such as housing insecurity due to high property prices and affording middle-class Malay families quality homes, increasing the divide between the elites and the working poor (Tan et al., 2020; Shamsuddin et al., 2021, Abdullah et al., 2022). Informal settlements that are generally cramped and poorly developed to support their inhabitants' needs remain common in our large cities. This mirrors the larger inequality and social exclusion trends in the world at large (Khan et al., 2021; Lau et al., 2018).

The cultural significance of urbanization is equally remarkable. For Malay communities, urban development is followed by the degradation of the historical landscapes, which are important for their culture. Such places like the Kampung Baru in Kuala Lumpur are areas of conflict where the modern planning concept clashes with the need to retain a society's traditional and cultural feel (McGee, 1994; Dahlan, 1997; Mustafa et al., 2020; Bakar et al., 2019; Hadi, 2001, 2010). With these communities facing the effects of urbanization, there is a need to have a discourse that tries to incorporate the views and input of these communities in the planning of the urban area. This emanates from the need to change the policies and planning strategies towards development by embracing social-cultural practices that recognize cultural values (McGee 1975, 1994). At the same time, it is important to develop ways and methodologies that would suffice for the expanding population (Ramli, 2021; Ahmad & Wong, 2022; Hadi, 2001, 2010).

As a result, there is a growing discussion of sustainable city development aimed at meeting the needs of growth and empowering the identity of communities and the environment

(Lechner, 2020). The Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU) is an organization that seeks to promote new urban designs that are pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use, socially interactive, and ecologically sound (CNU, 2023). In Malaysia, adopting such principles can act as a foundation towards creating an urban setting capable of supporting growth and, at the same time, cultivating the cultural life of the people (Nor et al., 2019; Dahlan, 1997; Abdullah et al., 2022; Hadi, 2001, 2010).

1.2 Urbanization and Ekistics Theory in Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar

Urbanization is a worldwide process, changing cities and communities for the better and the worse. Malaysia has been experiencing the expansion of towns affecting local towns like Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar, and the Perak royal town (Figure 1). This paper considers the development of the process of urbanization in the context of Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar with respect to the historical timeline of the Malay community between 1900 and 2024. It draws connections to broader global issues, providing insights into the complexities of urban growth and its effects on marginalized populations. The Ekistics Theory by Doxiadis (1968, 1972, 1974, 20025) offers a comprehensive analysis of the evolution and foundational principles of human settlements., framed within the context of Ekistics, the science of human settlements. It begins with a historical overview, tracing the development of human settlements from primitive villages to complex urban environments such as town, cities, metropolises and megapolises, highlighting the intricate man-made systems that support these settlements. The five elements essential to understanding human settlements: nature, man (Anthropos), society, shell (buildings) and networks. These elements are interdependent and influenced by various factors, including economic, social, political, technological and cultural systems. The first principle is Contextual Potential that emphasizes the importance of the natural environment and its logical connection with human activities, highlighting how humans interact with their surrounding to optimize their potential, ensuring a harmonious relationship with nature. The second principle, Minimization of Energy, focusses on reducing energy expenditure in daily routines to achieve comfort and sustainability, underscoring the need for efficient design and resource management in creating sustainable settlements. The third principle, Privacy that addresses the need for protective spaces and boundaries to ensure privacy, noting differences between Western and Eastern views. The fourth principle, Optimization of the Human-Nature Relationship, involves balancing physiological and aesthetic needs with the environment, emphasising the importance of adapting settlements to inhabitants. The fifth principle, Successful Human Settlement is achieved through dynamic balance between humans and their environment, integrating the other four principles to create settlements that foster happiness and satisfaction. This principle is highly relevant to current global urbanization trends. As urbanization continues to accelerate with projections indication that 70% of the world's population will live in urban areas by 2050, the need for sustainable and well-planned human settlements becomes increasingly critical in the Kuala Kangsar future development.

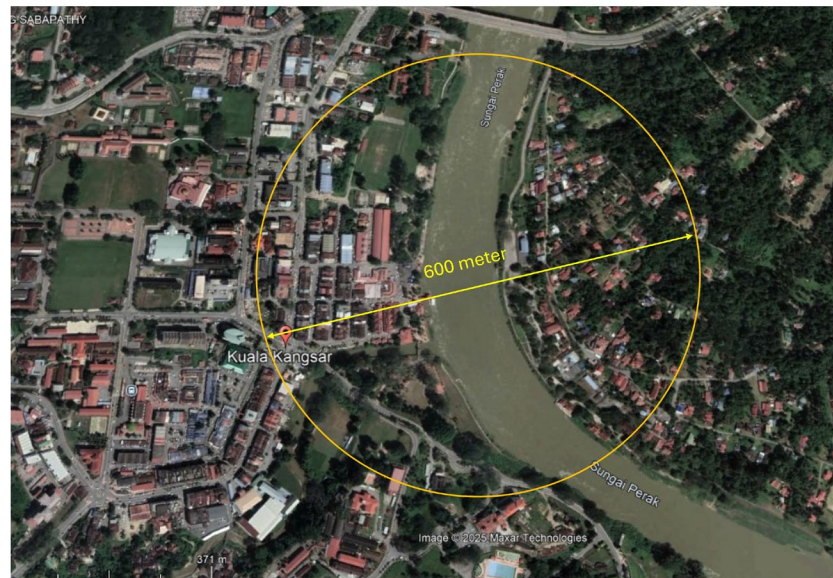


Figure 1 The location of Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar.

1.2.1 Historical Context of Urbanization in Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar

Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar's transformation began under British colonial rule in the early 20th century, establishing it as an administrative center. The introduction of infrastructure and economic activities attracted a diverse population, marking the initial phases of urbanization (Kong, 2020; Lee, 2019). However, colonial land policies often marginalized the Malay community, disrupting traditional land ownership practices (United Nations, 2022; Hussin, 2013; Khalid, 2016; Shamsuddin, 2011; Loh, 2019; Hassan, 2021; Abdullah et al., 2022). Post-independence, Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar experienced accelerated urban growth, driven by government initiatives aimed at modernization (Aziz, 2021). The shift from agriculture to diversified industries created new economic opportunities and led to disparities within the Malay population, many of whom continued to rely on traditional livelihoods (World Bank, 2020; Chua, 2023).

1.2.2 Land Rights and Ownership

Land ownership remains a critical issue in the context of urbanization. The encroachment of development projects on Malay Reserved Land highlights a broader global trend of land rights conflicts (International Land Coalition, 2021). According to the United Nations (2021), such conflicts continue to pose a challenge to the minority and vulnerable persons in society, causing social instabilities and forced displacements. In the case of Kampung Sayong Kuala Kangsar, the conflict on the issue of land tenure has heightened the social conflict between the locals and the developers. It requires reconsidering the land policy to protect the rights of the local people (Fauzi & Osman, 2022).

1.2.3 Economic Disparities and Cultural Preservation

Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar case reveals that economic disparities tend to increase due to urbanization. The change from the planned economy has negatively affected many Malays who

cannot secure a good job within the new economic system (World Bank, 2020; Shamsuddin, 2022). This is in line with global trends where, as economies in cities grow, it does not necessarily mean that everyone gets a fair share (Fischer, 2023). In addition, the urbanization process has continued to bring about the loss of cultural practices and traditions, resulting in the desired concern about cultural degradation. According to UNESCO (2021), conserving cultural property to enhance social inclusion within cities is crucial. They point out that the erasure of physical settings of kampung and heritage landmarks of Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar poses crucial questions on the future of the Malay community in the face of unrelenting urbanizing change (Mohd Noor 2024; Ismail 2023).

1.2.4 Housing Affordability and Environmental Challenges

The lack of affordable housing is a significant challenge in most parts of the world, especially in areas experiencing rapid urbanization. Doxiadis (1968, 1972, 1974, 20025). As property costs have skyrocketed, low-income Malays have faced immense struggles in Malaysia's Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar, which mirrors the situation in numerous cities globally (UN-Habitat, 2023; Rahman, 2022). The UN-Habitat (2023) established that approximately 1.6 billion people are housing-stressed or homeless, indicating the need to address these issues through adequate housing solutions such as affordable housing (Hassan & Kadir, 2022). Besides, as a consequence of urbanization, there are effects on environmental degradation and fragmentation of the social fabric. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2022), there is a need for sustainable urban development practices that will reduce the effects of climate change. According to Yusof (2023) and Lim (2021), pollution and the lack of green space resulting from urbanization are issues encountered in the study area: Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar. The urbanization of Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar, from 1900 to 2024, exposes the general tendencies in worldwide

urbanization, possession of the territory, existing differentiation in economic status, the problem of cultural identity and housing affordability, and the issue of environmental responsibility. The problems shown by the Malay community in this sense are typical of the growth of urban areas all over the globe (McGee, 1994; Dahlan, 1997; Hadi, 2001, 2010). Solving these interrelated challenges involves a complex analysis and a set of approaches that involve sustainable urbanism and meaningful participation of affected vulnerable groups. This shows that when local authorities, community organizations and residents come together, sustainable urban area development can be achieved so that all the residents of the area will benefit from the development and transformation of Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar.

2. Methodology

This study utilises both case studies and a longitudinal approach to address the research issue regarding the process of urbanization in Malay settlements. Thus, the researcher chose a culturally diverse Malay village, the village of Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar, in

Malaysia, to investigate how urbanization affected the culture of the community. These were administered and gathered during fieldwork in 2022 using a random sampling method, which included administering questionnaires, direct observation, visual analysis, and interviews. The researcher administered 50 questionnaires and used random interviews, group discussions, and assistance from the local people. The 50 questionnaires were designed to gather data on the socio-economic impacts of urbanization and the community's perception of cultural changes. This data is crucial for understanding the broader implication of urbanization on Kampung Sayong. IBM SPSS V26 was used to compute descriptive statistics and scan the findings through interviews, literature reviews, observations, and visual analysis. Thus, the researcher used Google Maps, Google Earth Pro, DJI Mavic Mini 1 drones, and AutoCAD 2018, supplemented by Ekistic theory and interviews with the Malay community (Figure 2).

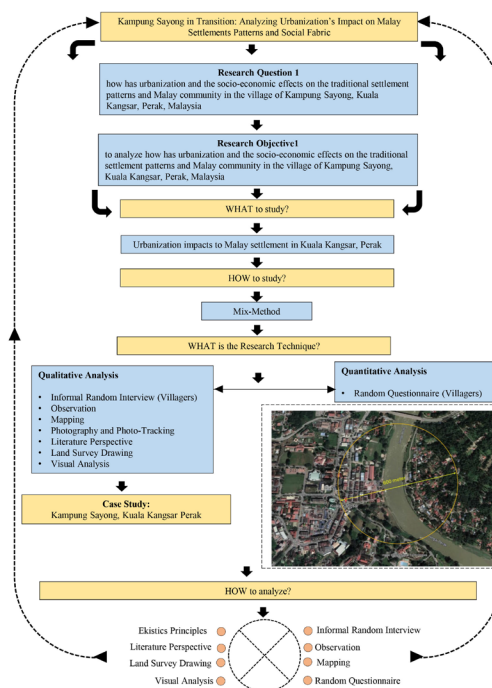


Figure 2 Research framework diagram

3. Analysis

3.1 Historical Context and Transformation

Colonial Legacy: The early 20th century saw the colonial policies that formed and shaped Kampung Sayong's socio-economic structure. This new shift in land use affected the place as cash crops and tin mining replaced the previous land use system, affecting the settlement pattern. This type of change is typical for Malaysia at the historical level and discloses the interdependence of local and colonial economies and resulting diversification.

Post-War Dynamics: This led to an increase in population and infrastructural development that demonstrated the efficiency of the community in the post-war period. Moving from subsistence agriculture to a more complex economy helps the village get an integrated economic system in advance, which helps address future circumstances and opportunities.

3.2 Cultural and Social Structures

Community Cohesion: This has ensured a strong family bond and social relations as much as outside forces have influenced them. Even though people have experienced modernization, carrying out cultural practices and ceremonies provides important support

to maintaining tradition, which supports the fact that the village cares about traditions.

Demographic Changes: The movement of the youths into the urban areas has led to demographic changes and affected the social relations in Kampung Sayong. These people constitute a newly developing community and therefore represent a different face of the society which embraces the traditional African culture and embracing change and development.

3.3 *Economic Evolution*

Diversification of Livelihoods: The change from an agricultural-based economy to a diverse one, which includes, among others, tourism, shows a positive, proactive style of economic development. This diversification not only supports local people but also protects communities from economic changes, making the economy stable in the future.

Sustainability Trends: The community trend for the past few years has featured environmental sustainability and its impact on the community. This trend proved that the community agrees with a trend observed in other parts of the world where there is a fight against the depletion of natural resources as the world seeks economic growth.

3.4 *Urbanization and Infrastructure Development*

Infrastructural Improvements: Gaining access to services and connections positively affects the pattern of settlements, thereby enlarging the attractiveness of Kampung Sayong to new occupants. A transition from rural to suburban society reveals that urbanization has affected the local society at the deepest level by influencing demography and economy.

Balancing Tradition and Modernity: One of the strategic issues for the further development of Kampung Sayong is how to embrace the process of modernization without losing the focus on the traditional culture and values. Contemporary touches on architectural designs that respect the traditions of people and the housing needs of traditional families offer a compelling living experience that meets the needs of contemporary users and existing families.

3.5 *Implications for Future Development*

Community Engagement: Ongoing community engagement in development processes is crucial to achieving people's goals. Some structures that enhance participation in decision-making can enhance the bond between the people and the projects being implemented.

Cultural Preservation: Preserving Kampung Sayong's cultural heritage through festivals and education can lead to tourism and, at the same time, bolster Indigenous identity. The above-discussed dual development approach improves the prospects of generating income and preserves cultural assets for future generations.

Sustainable Practices: The centrality of sustainable development is important when it comes to the management of environmental effects as well as economic growth. This entails sustainable

farming techniques or methods that can help preserve natural resources and sustainable tourism that does not destroy the place's natural or cultural values.

The societal changes that have occurred in the context of the Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar's settlement structures have been in response to historical, cultural, economic and environmental processes. Nevertheless, this developing village also has to face and embrace a range of issues and opportunities. In this way, it may be possible to discuss further development for Kampung Sayong while maintaining its history and focusing on community sustainability.

The research done on the historical and current settlement patterns of the region and interviews with residents of Kampung Sayong, Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar identified many historical, cultural, economic, and environmental factors that have influenced the development of this community and can be seen in its physical layout. Early twentieth-century maps demonstrate that due to British colonization, there were major changes in land usage, with some areas reserved for cash crops and mining. In contrast, early 20th-century maps show major changes in the land usage systems due to British colonization and plantations. Encik Ahmad, a 68-year-old retired farmer, remarked, "Our grandparents farmed rice and vegetables, but with the arrival of the British, things changed. They took our land for plantations, and many families had to adapt." Post-war photographs show increased housing developments and basic infrastructure improvements, illustrating the community's growth and adaptation. Puan Fatimah, a 55-year-old community leader and school teacher, said, "After the war, we had to rebuild. Schools and clinics were vital for our growth, and we shifted from just farming to finding new ways to support our families."

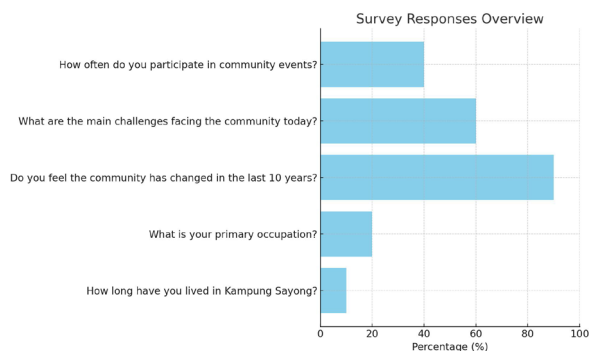
Images from local festivals and gatherings depict strong community participation, emphasizing robust social networks and kinship ties. Siti Aishah, a 32-year-old event coordinator, shares, "These festivals are our way of keeping traditions alive. It brings us together and reminds us of our roots." A visual analysis of housing styles over decades shows a mix of traditional Malay homes and modern constructions. This reflects demographic shifts as younger generations migrate to urban centers, which Rafiq, a 28-year-old software engineer, noted when he said, "I moved back to Kampung Sayong because I want to raise my kids in a place that has both tradition and modernity. It feels like home." Visual documentation of local markets shows a transition from agricultural products to a wider range of goods, including artisanal crafts and tourism-related services. Zainab, a 40-year-old local entrepreneur, emphasized, "Tourism has opened doors for us. We now showcase our culture and sell local products, which helps everyone." Furthermore, photographs of eco-friendly initiatives illustrate the community's growing emphasis on environmental sustainability, as indicated by Ismail, a 47-year-old community activist, who noted, "We realized that protecting our environment is crucial for our future. Organic farming and recycling are now part of our lives." Aerial images reveal significant infrastructural development over the years, enhancing connectivity and service access. Aminah, a 35-year-old small business owner, commented, "With better roads and facilities, it

is easier for us to get to the city. It's changing how we live." Visual contrasts between traditional architectural styles and contemporary housing developments illustrate the community's struggle to balance modernization with cultural preservation, a concern expressed by Pak Hassan, a 72-year-old local elder, who stated, "I fear we may lose our identity with all these new houses. We must remember where we came from."

Ongoing community engagement is indicated through visual documentation of community meetings. Ainul, a 30-year-old community organizer, remarked, "Getting everyone involved in planning ensures our voices are heard. We know what's best for our village." Images of local heritage festivals suggest active efforts to strengthen community identity through cultural preservation. Farah, a 25-year-old university student and festival participant, said, "These events not only attract tourists but also remind us of our history. It's a win-win." Additionally, visual evidence of sustainable practices reflects a commitment to responsible development within the community. Sulaiman, a 50-year-old local farmer, shared, "Sustainable practices not only help our land but also teach our children the importance of caring for our environment."

The analysis of 50 questionnaires distributed in the community provides further insights, showcasing a variety of perspectives. Table 1 below is a summary of the questionnaire analysis:

Table 1 Survey Responses Overview



The data collected from the 50 questionnaires reveals several key insights into the perspectives of Kampung Sayong's residents.

- i. **Community Longevity:** Only 10% of respondents indicated they had lived in Kampung Sayong for a significant duration (10+ years), which suggests a relatively transient population. This aligns with the trend of younger generations moving in, as mentioned by residents like Rafiq, highlighting the integration of newcomers with established community members.
- ii. **Occupational Diversity:** The response indicating that 20% of residents engage in various occupations reflects a diversification of livelihoods, moving beyond traditional agriculture. This complements the insights shared by local entrepreneurs like Zainab. The presence of multiple occupations likely contributes to the village's economic resilience and adaptability.
- iii. **Perception of Change:** A striking 90% of respondents feel that the community has changed over the last

decade. This sentiment echoes the concerns expressed by Pak Hassan regarding the potential loss of cultural identity amidst modernization, suggesting a shared awareness of the impacts of urbanization and economic development.

- iv. **Challenges Faced:** The identification of key challenges, with 60% of respondents mentioning significant issues, indicates a community actively reflecting on its current circumstances. These challenges may include economic pressures, infrastructural needs, or cultural preservation efforts, warranting further investigation and community dialogue.
- v. **Community Engagement:** The 40% participation rate in community events signifies a moderate level of engagement. This suggests that while some residents are actively involved, there may be opportunities to increase participation through initiatives that foster inclusivity and cultural connection.

To conclude, the developmental changes in the settlement pattern of Kampung Sayong, Kampung Sayong, and Kuala Kangsar demonstrate historical, cultural, economic and environmental forces derived from initial qualitative observation, visual analysis, interview, and survey data. In this aspect, one can see that the people are strong and pliant, assimilating modern civilization but retaining tradition. Thus, having engaged the community, focusing on cultural values, and adopting the principles of sustainable development, Kampung Sayong will be able to manage its future development with respect to its history and traditions.

Table 2 Urbanization in Kampung Sayong (1900 - 2022)

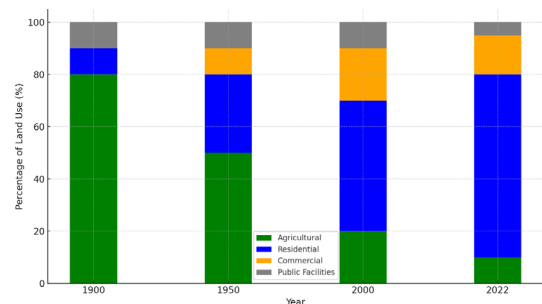


Table 2 shown a visual representation of the urbanization in Kampung Sayong from 1900 to 2022. The stacked bar chart illustrates the changes in land use over time:

- i. **Agricultural:** The percentage of agricultural land decreased significantly from 80% in 1900 to 10% in 2022, indicating a shift away from traditional farming practices.
- ii. **Residential:** The area designated for residential use increased dramatically from 10% in 1900 to 70% in 2022, reflecting the growing population and the demand for housing.
- iii. **Commercial:** Commercial land use grew from 0% in 1900 to 15% in 2022, indicating the development of businesses and services in the village.

- iv. Public Facilities: The proportion of land allocated for public facilities remained relatively stable but declined slightly from 10% in 1900 to 5% in 2022.

3.6 The Changes in Kampung Sayong

The change in Kampung Sayong is seen as a transition from an agricultural village to a relatively more urban-oriented society. This transition is characterized by a rise in the residential and commercial buildings, which are signs of the new transformation of the area. The chart alongside this analysis is perhaps the best way to illustrate this transition. Hence, it is clear-cut and shows an increasing trend over the years. The trends include growth in population density, transformation of land usage and development of new structures and infrastructures which form the Kampung Sayong. The historical background of Kampung Sayong revealed that most of the people there were farmers, and others found related jobs. This lifestyle was highly associated with the land and specifically with crop and animal farming as the main economic activities and sources of cultural pride among the people. The agricultural methods were a boon to sustaining the economy and the social fabric of the residents for many reasons. However, perhaps the greatest reason was that the community was rather homogenous, and their lifestyle reflected this. However, as the urbanization process started to emerge, such practices were enhanced by urbanization. The demand for housing and business premises noticeably enhanced the change in land use. Through the years, agricultural lands were converted to residential and commercial use and development as the population grew and more economic activities developed. This shift came with new opportunities, although it was a blow to the pre-existing cultures as much as it was an opportunity. The qualitative data collated from the residents show that they have a rather nuanced

perspective of this urbanization process. Most residents interviewed tend to reminisce about how Kampung Sayong was once much quieter and engaging with nature. The changes have elicited both positive and negative emotions. While some people embrace the benefits that accompany urbanization, others have regretted leaving their traditional past. Residents stressed that the community had been able to adapt to these changes. Some people can easily adjust to new positions within the urban setting, whereas others have difficulties adapting to changing conditions and environments. Such adaptability is evidence of society's capacity to adapt and look for new opportunities in the face of what is brought by urbanization. Furthermore, the social effects of urbanization on traditional cultures are most significant. The new lifestyle in the community has also been shaped by the provision of modern comfort facilities and structures in society. Traditional ways of living, like farming and marketing, have reduced since the community embraces modernity and commercialized methods. Such a shift also poses questions about culture and the problem of how to maintain cultural values while advancing in a certain direction. Combining qualitative data with visual proof makes the research even more expressive and informative when describing the changes in the Kampung Sayong. The chart provides the statistical data for the overall view of the community and its change and boasts of the consistencies of the residents' stories.

In conclusion, the change in Kampung Sayong reflects the processes of other similar settlements in terms of urbanization and transformation. Although shifting from an agricultural society to an urban setting is a step forward with more opportunities and amenities, it threatens the established and defined social structures. These lessons come from using the residents' views to explain this evolution. However, they are a clear indication of the adaptability and tenacity of the community in the wake of these changes.

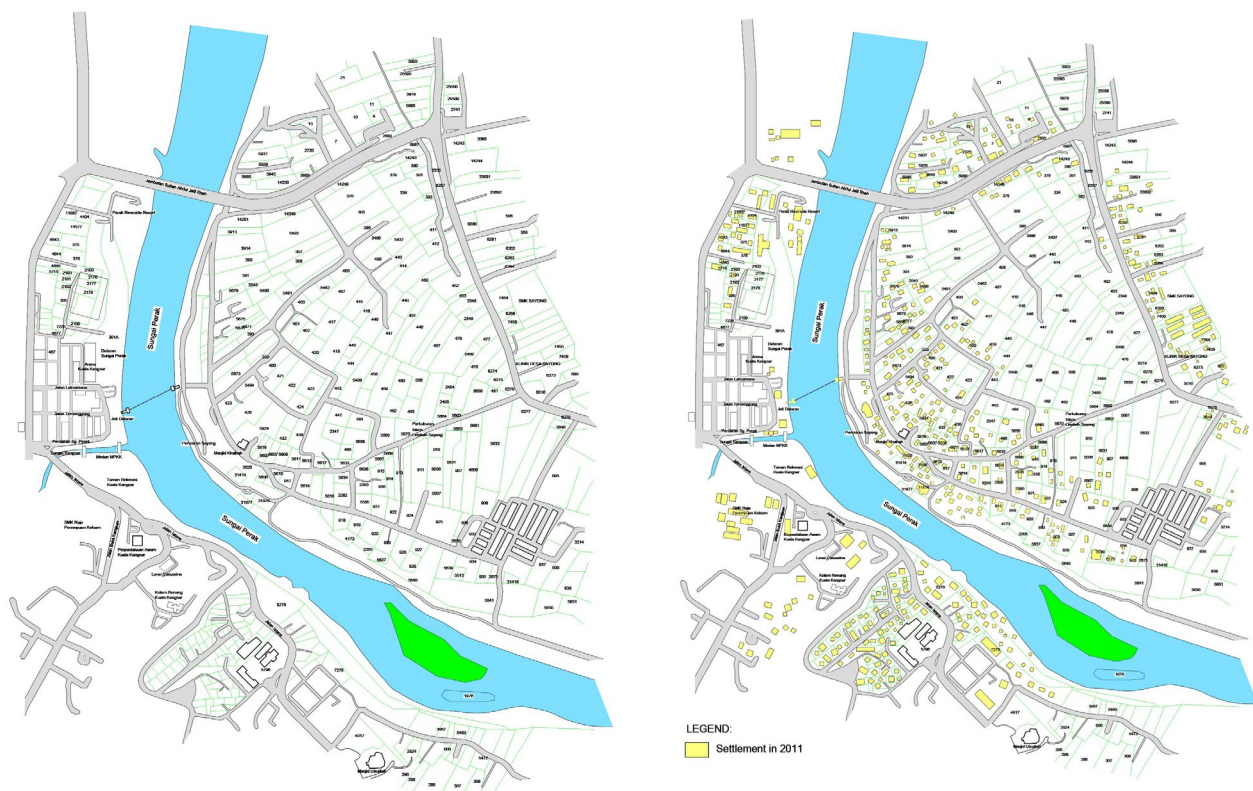


Figure 3 The land use and pattern of settlement from 2011 in Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar.



Figure 4 The land use and pattern of settlement from 2015 and 2019 in Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar.

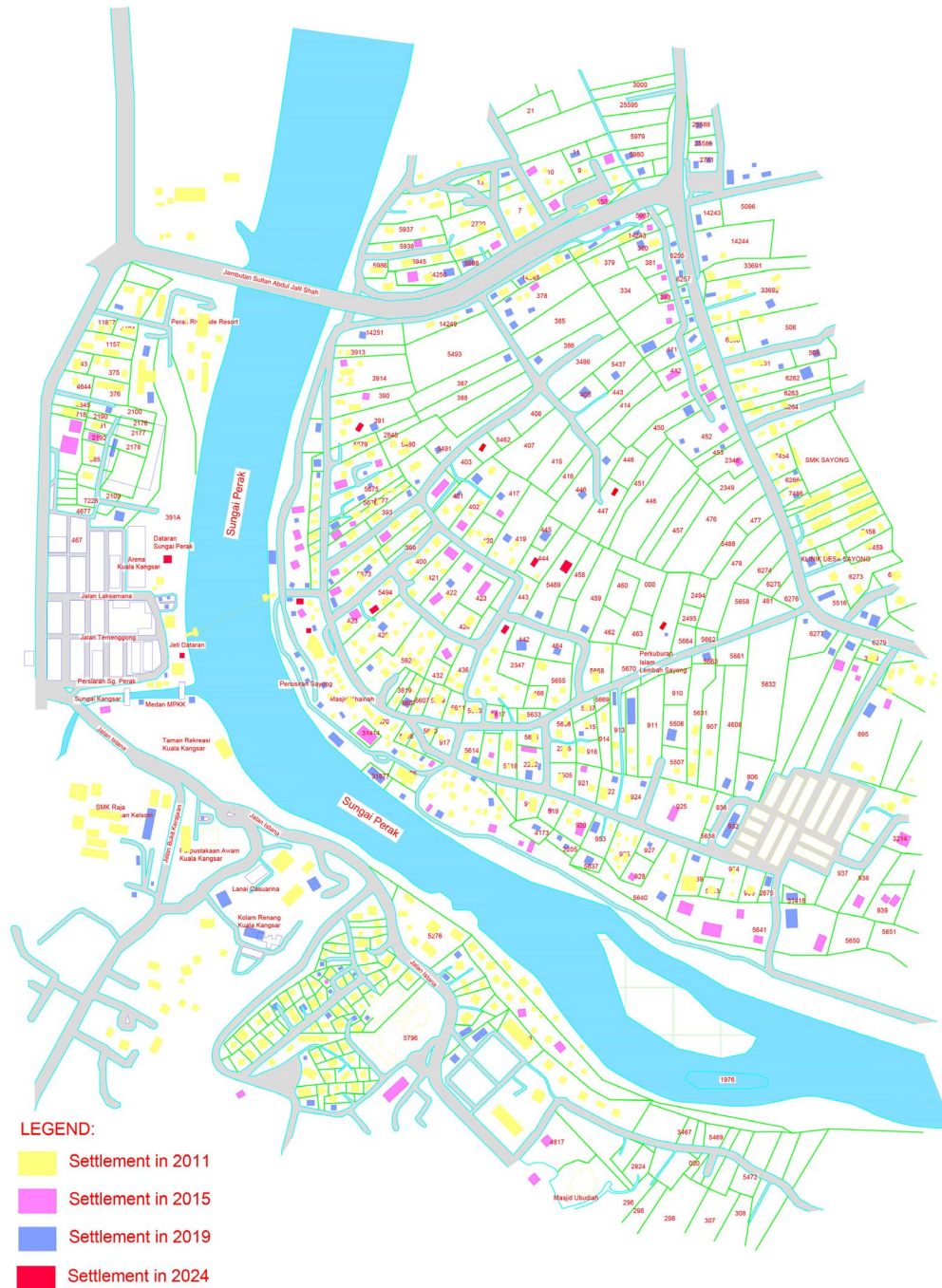


Figure 5 The evolution pattern of settlement from 2011 to 2024 in Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar.

The Figure 3, Figure 4 and Figure 5 clearly represents the different forms of settlement patterns in Kampung Sayong; the changes that occurred between 2011, 2015, 2019 and 2024 can be clearly seen. This paper has demonstrated the importance of visual analysis in providing insights into the process of urbanisation, the changes to the land use and the socio-economic changes that have affected this traditional Malay community. The data in the figure describes the spatial expansion of the community and presents some major concerns about cultural identity and environmental conservation. At the initial glance, the figure shows a more significant growth in the residential areas year after year, and the color differentiation helps to

distinguish the settlement's development in 2011, 2015, 2019 and 2024. The yellow markers correspond to the settlements that started in 2011, whereas the pink markers correspond to the settlements in 2015, while the blue dots denote the settlements of 2019. The increased size of the residential area shows the changes in the population density of Kampung Sayong and the need to provide dwelling places for them. This trend is similar to the general trends of urbanization in Malaysia, as many rural areas are being developed to become urbanized zones to support the large influx of migrants migrating to the cities to seek better job opportunities and living conditions. The figure also reveals major changes in land use within the area of

Kampung Sayong. Significantly, a large part of the territory was initially used for cultivation and other agricultural purposes, which were critically important for the people living within the region. Nevertheless, the change observed in the figure is characterized by a decrease in such land, given the new residential and commercial activities that have dominated the layout of this region. This change ushers in important questions of food security and the viability of smallholder farming activities that are slowly being squeezed out of the agricultural land that has been central to the Malay way of life for generations. Changing the land use patterns indicates a shift where economic factors force communities to conform to activities that support cities (McGee, 1994; Dahlan, 1997; Hadi, 2001, 2010)

In addition, commercial land use development on primary roads and the river is an important aspect of the figure. These commercial areas could probably be developed to serve the needs of the growing population in terms of easy access to products and services. In the development history of Kampung Sayong, commercial buildings indicate a new phase of economic change from an agricultural economy to a more diverse one. Establishing these commercial areas may improve the local economy, as well as provide employment opportunities. However, this also has the potential of eradicating conventional markets and collective selling practices that have time honored culture of uniting the community through shared business among related groups. The Figure 1 also confirms the significance of infrastructure and the public facilities within the urbanisation process. There are greenspace elements present, such as; “Sungai Perak”, which shows a planned effort towards providing parks and recreational spaces. It is for the residents' beautification and quality of life, as well as to provide recreational, social, and environmental access points. In addition, the map provided a systematically organized road network that ensures easy network and accessibility within the community. Investments in the infrastructure are crucial since they help the residents achieve their livelihood needs and economic activities, hence the need to enhance infrastructure. However, the dilemma that urban planners have to solve is the conflict between infrastructure construction and the need to preserve and develop green space to support the community's physical health. In addition to the physical changes represented in the figure, the rapid urbanization of Kampung Sayong raises significant questions regarding preserving cultural identity. With the growth of the community, they may gradually lose their agricultural activities and their related culture, which is a concern for the Malay community. Special arrangements of human settlements can have a significant impact on social interactions; dense human clusters encourage considerable social cohesion, while isolated and dispersed ones cause social isolation. Therefore, it is necessary to comprehend such dynamics in order to evaluate the effects of urbanization on community cohesiveness as well as cultural retention. In prospect, the figure underlines the current and potential necessity of environmental conservation as well as cultural sustainability in the process of urban development. The decision-makers, especially at the governmental and city level, must consult with the people to meet the objectives of the

public when designing future projects. Preserving the remaining agricultural area and encouraging proper and sustainable use of the land will be the key to sustaining Kampung Sayong's cultural heritage as development continues. In conclusion, the figure captures the change process in Kampung Sayong over the specified years. It provides insight into the processes of urbanization and related land use and development issues, as well as identity issues connected to the process. From the analysis of these patterns, key players in the community's development will be able to understand the key issues affecting the area and direct change processes towards achieving the vision for Kampung Sayong. This approach will help to create a sustainable and resilient community that will embrace its history and learn to live in the present and future urban environment.

4. Discussions

The transition of Kampung Sayong is discussed in this chapter, focusing on the major change from an agricultural-dominated area to a relatively more urbanized area. This change mirrors other trends in urbanization noticed in numerous traditional societies in Malaysia and all over the world. This discussion section draws on analytical parts from the visuals presented and follows qualitative data about the neighbourhood residents to address the change in traditional lifestyles, community adaptability and socio-economical status of Kampung Sayong, especially in relation to Malay settlement concerns.

4.1 Historical Context of Kampung Sayong

Traditionally, the main activity that defined the area of Kampung Sayong was agriculture. The community's main economic activity was farming, especially growing rice, fishing as well as animal farming (Mohamed et al., 2019; Jomo et al., 2020). From a cultural point of view, the land was a source of income and a representation of the cultural values of a nation and the unity of people. With the advancement in urbanization processes touched by national policies that sought to modernize and advance the economy, Kampung Sayong underwent a major transformation. Malaysian rural transformation is evidenced by improved investments in infrastructural development, which helped the expansion of residential and commercial areas (Yusuf & Jamal, 2021; Azmi & Mohamad, 2019; Lee et al., 2020). In the case of Malay settlements, some contemporary topics include tenure and rights of land. Historically, most Malay societies practiced customary land tenure systems, which are mostly unregistered in the current land management databases (Ali & Nadarajah, 2020). With the growth of urban centres, these forms of land-holding systems come under pressure, and there is always a possibility of conflict of rights as to the use of this land.

4.2 Visual Evidence of Transition

Figure 6 portrayal of Kampung Sayong's development provides an important overview of the magnitude of these changes. Accessibility, namely, population increase, changes in the land use status, and the emergence of commercial facilities, substantiate the transformation. The findings show an

association between migration to urban areas and the increased need for housing. This indicates the general phenomenon observed across emergent urbanizing areas (Ali & Nadarajah, 2020; Khan et al., 2021; Mohd et al., 2021). Each of them offers a visual proof of the story of transformation and highlights various problems that the community went through during this process, especially related to the question of Malay settlements. Studies show that rural people move to urban areas in search of job opportunities, thus altering the demographics of urban areas

and land use (Ng et al., 2020; Awang et al., 2021). This transformation can lead to the elimination of conventional usage since new economic activities develop to meet the needs of cities (Tan et al., 2022). Displacement in the case of Malay communities can worsen existing precarious situations, mainly due to tenure rights and resource access, which are key to the preservation of culture and identity (Khalid & Noor, 2022).



Figure 6 The settlement typologies in Kampung Sayong, Kuala Kangsar.

4.3 Community Adaptability

The qualitative data obtained from the residents reveals the community's adaptability in addressing the issue of urbanization. The interviews indicated that residents are in fact, a mixed bowl of emotion. Some may long for the days of the past and, at the same time, embrace the changes that they have gone through. Some welcome the changes that come with urbanization, such as enhanced availability of services and general commodities. On the other hand, some people criticize the progressive change that has eradicated the old-fashioned farming methods and the collective living in Kampung Sayong (Rahman & Ismail, 2022; Lee & Khairuddin, 2020). One of the major themes that are useful in analysing the problems of Malay settlement is the factor of adaptability. With increasing urbanization, people have tried to look for a niche in the growing urban environment that is increasingly eating up rural land. It can also result in what might be referred to as cultural hybridization, where a conventional

cultural practice is re-envisioned within an urban context (Sulaiman & Daud, 2021; Ahmad & Mustafa, 2020; Maimunah & Lim, 2021). However, it also implies certain tensions between conserving the morality cherished by the nation and embracing new economic opportunities. In addition, previous literature reveals that community resilience is important in dealing with the effects of urbanization on Malay dwellings. Cultural adaptation, continuity, and socio-economic transformations are vital for creating a sense of socio-cultural belonging among the residents of a community (Hassan et al., 2021; Noor et al., 2020). Such flexibility is crucial in the face of land conversion and economic transformation issues that undermine conventional life patterns.

4.4 Impact on Traditional Lifestyles

As a social process, urbanization poses many questions concerning the changes in traditional life patterns. Urbanization

has encroached on the agriculture sector, depriving it of traditional practices that have been of the essence in the community. There is reduced participation in communal farming activities due to changes initiated by the residents embracing more modern and market styles of farming (Yusof et al., 2020; Hashim, 2021; Syed & Rahman, 2022). New players like supermarkets and other commercial outlets have gained importance and changed the shopping pattern by minimizing the traditional and localized markets. This change has raised important questions about cultural conservation as well as viable standards of living. More alarming for Malay communities is the loss of cultural practices and social relations seen as defining features of their identity and tradition (Burgess, 2018; Evers & Taha, 2019; Shamsuddin et al., 2020). The tradition of communal farming and the lack of traditional food preparations contribute to food insecurity and learning transmission between the generations (Mansor & Muthalib, 2021). However, literature has revealed that urbanization increases social exclusion since poor people cannot easily cope with new economic environments (Chong et al., 2021; Ali & Rahim, 2020). Indeed, when the size of urban centres increases, the conflict between the urban and the rural areas increases, and people living in those areas start to feel alienated. To the Malay community, these disparities are thus socio-economically and culturally destabilizing and require interventionist interventions to foster culture maintenance as the community becomes urbanized (Zainal et al., 2020).

4.5 The Role of Government and Policy

Government policies have a central role in the process of urbanization in Kampung Sayong. Investment promotion, infrastructure enhancement, and housing enhancement have boosted the area's transformation. Nonetheless, applying these policies to cater to new residents and maintain the cultural resources of existing people is a subject of debate. Although the Malaysian government has adopted several policies to address the issue of rapid growth, there is always a gap between the policies formulated and the experiences of the people on the ground. Residents often complain that such issues are not being addressed to their satisfaction. They call for less elitist and 'technical' methods of planning that would take into account the ethnography and anthropometry of the populace of cities (Ismail & Zainal, 2021; Noor & Hussain, 2020; Shamsul et al., 2021). This gap underlines the need to adopt the community's standpoint on development to avoid compromising their traditional values and culture. Moreover, the common use of the top-down planning approach has been evidenced to lack sufficient community involvement, which is essential for the development of resident participation and ownership (Duncan & Ahmad, 2021; Kamaruddin et al., 2022). Thus, including local knowledge and people's insight into the development process of urban planning will help consider the needs and visions of such communities as Kampung Sayong. Policies that the government implements must consider factors pertinent to Malay settlements, such as issues related to tenure and the need to preserve their culture. These problem areas are fundamental to reaching the condition whereby the gains from the process of urbanisation are not skewed in such a way that it undermines the

culture of the Malay community (Hashim et al., 2021; Noor & Jaya, 2022).

5. Conclusion

Kampung Sayong, from being a village involved in agricultural practices, has greatly evolved to being one that has been urbanized and hence best describes the relationship between urbanization and community. On the one hand, transition holds numerous potentials for economic growth and better living standards. On the other hand, it has certain drawbacks concerning the questions of cultural identity and sustainability of indigenous peoples' way of life. Recommendations based on interviews with the residents and with the help of visual data yield a clear picture of this transformation. Thus, catering to the people's various and constantly changing needs, especially as urbanization reforms the landscape of Kampung Sayong, becomes an important task. Appreciation of the culture and heritage of the Kampung Sayong will be paramount in developing development policies, which will enhance the development of the society without erasing its past. This reality calls for further discourse between the people, government, and urban designers to manage these changes and build a city that is responsive to the contemporary world but reflects its history. This research has critically analysed the development of Kampung Sayong. The author highlighted the community's development process from being purely agricultural based to a relatively more urban society. This transformation is typical of the processes of urbanization that have affected numerous traditional settlements in Malaysia for quite a long time, which can be viewed as positive and negative. The results suggest that, although urbanization is a driver of economic growth and improvement of service delivery, it poses a serious danger to cultural and indigenous practices and the sustainability of traditional culture. The study identified that the origins of Kampung Sayong are strongly connected with agricultural activities that influenced community development and social organization. These changes in the community resulted from increased urbanization fostered by national development policies and investments in infrastructural development. Architectural imagery and qualitative findings from the residents also supported this assertion by showing this was a community still reminiscing about its agricultural past while struggling with challenges posed by the contemporary life of a new-generation city. Most importantly, this study was able to first understand the dynamic way in which the community is facing the future of urbanization. People showed themselves ready for new economic experiences at the same time, indicating certain dissatisfaction with trends that undermined traditional practices and the sense of people's togetherness. This flexibility is important in order to preserve the cultural identity in the face of modernization processes. The insights also made it clear that government policies played an important role in the process of urbanization in the studied area, which is called Kampung Sayong. Whereas national strategies have aided economic development, little consideration has been given to the cultural and social context of locational contexts. The mismatch between the outcomes desired by policymakers and the needs of the community requires better urban planning practices. This

includes community and heritage conservation, especially among the Malay settlements, which currently face problems with land holding and ethnicity.

Thus, the following factors will determine the future development of the Malay community, particularly in the study area, Kampung Sayong and other rural areas. First of all, the problem of land tenure is still relevant. The threats posed by urbanization in taking away the Malay's traditional land means that it is important for Malay residents to have secure rights to their ancestries' land to preserve their identity and economic value. Policymakers cannot afford to ignore customary systems of land tenure whilst seeking to incorporate sustainable systems into contemporary land management. Second, socio-economic imbalances should now be targeted for the future benefits of the Malay community. When urban centers develop, there is a tendency for the urban area to become even more developed than the rural area; hence, marginalization is experienced in the geographical region. In future policy formulation, emphasis should be placed on the fair distribution of resources, skill development, and access to economic opportunities necessary for the improvement of the Malay community, which will help it cope with the effects of urbanization. Furthermore, cultural preservation must be a focal point of future development processes. Communal attempts at recording and preserving cultural practices, languages, and structures will go a long way toward preserving the community's cultural heritage. Young people have to be involved in cultural activities and embrace cultural education to embrace the cultural practices in the modern world. Finally, engaging the community in planning processes is another area that should be developed in order to create a sustainable environment. Engaging the residents in the decision-making process of urban planning and development will also ensure ownership of the same and that policies developed meet the cultural sensitivity of the Malay community. In conclusion, the development process of Kampung Sayong can be seen as a reflection of the general trends of urbanization in Malaysia. As the community progresses in its evolution, the process by which authorities and people work together to implement the objectives of ameliorative development must recognize and honor the unique cultural heritage of Kampung Sayong and Malay community conservation. Future studies should address the possibilities of developing sustainable urban environments in which the local culture can be incorporated, and communities can build resilience in their future environments.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper

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