The contributions of rubber plantation to the socio-economic development:  
a case study on Kanibongan Project - rubber smallholders community in 
Pitas, Sabah  

Abstract  

Sabah is recognized as the poorest state in Malaysia, whilst having numerous rural 
communities categorized as a hardcore poor especially in the rural district, Pitas. The 
Kanibongan project involving rubber smallholders in the Pitas district has been 
developed by the State Government for the purpose of socio-economic development. 
The main objectives of this study were to determine the effectiveness of the project 
implementation in addressing the poverty level in the area involved; and to determine 
the factors driving the smallholders to participate in the project and the problems 
faced by these smallholders. This study involved five villages, namely, Kampung 
Masin, Kampung Kutoyon, Kampung Sulakulong, Kampung Simpang Empat and 
Kampung Simpang. Data was collected with 100% sampling comprising of 195 
respondents by using questionnaires and interviews. Based on the results of this 
study, the average monthly income of the smallholders showed significant improvement 
up to 30% since its implementation. The main driven factors for smallholder 
participation in this project were self motivation (94.3%), subsidy incentives 
programme by LIGS (93.3%), poverty level (92.9%), good rubber prices (90.3%), 
and family encouragement (88.2%). Whereas the main problems faced by the 
smallholders were the unstable price of rubber (84.6%) and theft of latex (74.4%).  
The Kanibongan rubber planting project is considered successful in reducing 
poverty among the smallholders involved.