



URBAN DEVELOPMENT OF NORTHERN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF NGURU IN YOBE STATE

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Abstract: *Urban Development of Northern Nigeria is a big challenge due to serious security situation and lack of government will to implement the development plans. The present study is based on the appraisal of the only master plan of Nguru (1976) prepared by Maxlock group. There is no new master plan since last four decades. Nguru town is headquarter of Nguru Local Government Area (LGA) in Yobe state, northern Nigeria. It is located near river Hadejia at $12^{\circ} 52^{\prime} 45^{11} N$ to $10^{\circ} 27^{\prime} 09^{11} E$. It has population of 150,632 (Census, 2006) and an area of 916 sq. km. The town is comparatively younger developed on a rapid grid-iron pattern during 1930s. The topography of Nguru is mainly flat with a variety of landscapes as; Hadejia-Nguru wetlands of Nguru Lake and the Sand dunes around machine road. Nguru has hot and dry climate throughout the year. The economy of the town is based on trade and commerce of gum Arabic, groundnut, meat, hides and skins. The present paper is an appraisal study of Nguru master plan. The most significant problem of the study area is lack of effective implementation of the master plan. Extensive field work has been carried out amidst volatile security of the area. Among the major findings, the issues of land use are predominant along with poor plan implementation and lack of people's participation in the planning process. Some of the major recommendations based on the research findings include; strong financial support from government, strong administrative set up with trained professional from multiple disciplines and people's active participation in planning.*

Key words: *urban development, sustainable development, living environment, master plan, urban planning, Public Private Partnership, peace and security, Local Government Area.*

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INTRODUCTION

Developing countries are undergoing rapid growth in population leading to unsustainable living environment. The basic facilities and amenities are falling short to fulfill requirements of the people for safe and clean water, good housing, electricity, health, education and employment opportunities. Thus a tremendous pressure of population on limited facilities manifests in emergence of squatter settlements, over-crowded habitations, inadequate water and power supply, poor environmental sanitation and break down of waste disposal systems (Mabogunje, 1977). The population growth rate of Nigeria (2.41%) is among the highest in world. It shows the emerging issues of high population in cities of Nigeria as; Demand of houses, water, electricity, transport network, employment etc. Urbanization is a process whereby an increasing proportions of the worlds, a nation's or a region's population lives in urban areas (David, 1995). Urbanization is one of the most remarkable transformations of the twentieth century and a major challenge to policy makers, city managers and regional development planners. The consequences of urbanization have manifested themselves in different forms, the most visible being the emergence of mega cities such as Cairo, Lagos, Ibadan, Johannesburg and Algiers. There is no continent where the effects of urbanization is marked and visibly expressed as in Africa (Ayeni, 2002). Urbanization in Nigeria is slow in comparison to the population growth. The growing security challenges of the country are forcing people to migrate from rural to urban areas. Lagos in Nigeria (population: 17.5 million) (UN, 2010) is the only megapolitan city in Africa. But, the urbanization in other cities of Nigeria is not like that. The emergence of new state and local government capitals has also encouraged population movement from older state and local government to newly created ones. By 2025, more than half of the African population will be urban. In respect to the history of urbanization in African perspective Udo, (1982) noted the presence of pre-colonial urban centers in West African sub region. Mabogunje, (1968) also noted that Hausa, Fulani and Kanuri system evolved over 1000 years before the colonial period. Edward (1984) noted Nigeria among the nation tending toward rapid urban expansion. Similarly Okupe (2002) noted that whereas only seven percent of Nigerians lived in cities in the 1930 and 10 percent in 1950, by 1970, 1980 and 1990, 20 percent, 27.1 percent, and 35.2 percent lived in the cities respectively. He further asserted that at the end of the first quarter of this century that is 2025; about 65 percent of Nigerians



would live in cities. Harris (1992) confirmed that Nigeria is among the countries with the highest rate of urban growth leading to an unplanned national system of cities.

For the planned development and growth of a city or town we need to have proper layout of plans to be executed and implemented. Master plan is one such process or layout which assists in future planning of a city in systematic manner. Master plan is long term plan, hence, is process rather than conclusive statement which provide guidelines for the urban growth. The Nigerian town and country planning ordinance of 1946 constitutes the legislative basis for all laws and regulations governing urban and regional planning up to the present. The act was designed to promote order in urban development by establishing planning authorities which could control urban growth and was model on the British town and country planning act of 1932 (Taylor, 2000). This is an appraisal study of Nguru master plan. The study area is witnessing rapid growth of population. The research examines the pattern of Nguru urban development, the level of conformity of Nguru urban growth with development plan, the problems militating against implementation of sustainable urban development and proper way for achieving sustainable urban growth of the town. Generally, in Nigeria, and many other low-income countries, manufacturers' high costs of operation prevent innovation and the adoption of new technology, and make it difficult for them to compete in international markets (UNCHS, 1996). Urban development and planning regulations have failed to recognize the existing strong socio- economic driving forces in the urban development (Arimah, 1997).

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The planning process suffers largely at the stage of implementation. It leads to unsustainable changes of layout plans, conversion of reserved lands to other uses than the one proposed on master plan and failure to follow urban planning regulations. The effect of these problems is the emergence of blighted urban centre with very unhygienic living condition. Incessant changes and uncontrolled urban growth in the case of diversion from original plan proposal and conversion of land to uses other than one proposed on the development plan portrays a developmental problem that requires studies and recommendation for timely handling. This study provides an insight into the nature of urban development of Nguru with the view to assess its conformity to Nguru master plan.



AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study is to appraise the implementation of Nguru master plan with a view of archiving sustainable urban growth of the town. The specific objectives are following:

1. To assess the level of conformity of Nguru urban growth with development plan.
2. To examine the pattern of Nguru urban development.
3. To identify the problems which act as obstacles in the urban development of town
4. To find out solutions for achieving sustainable urban development of the town.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. To what extent does the existing urban development conform to the Nguru Urban Development plan?
2. What is the pattern of urban development in Nguru Town?
3. What are the problems militating against the sustainable urban development in Nguru?
4. What are the proper ways for achieving sustainable urban growth of Nguru town?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

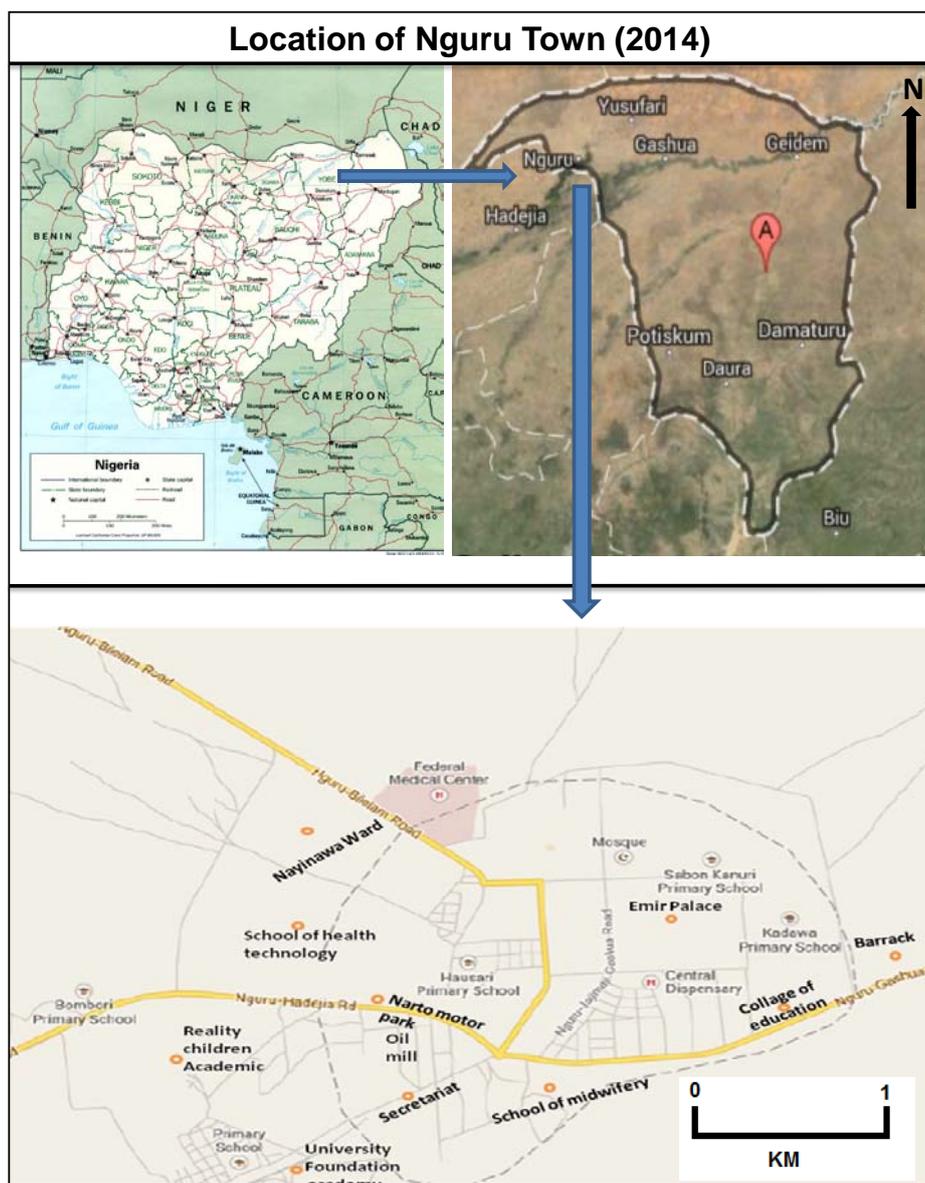
In order to ensure a healthy living environment, proper management and utilization of land of the city is required in view of rapid urbanization. This research is significant in providing insight into the pattern of urban development in Nguru and confirms the conformity or otherwise of urban development to the provision of Nguru development plan. Besides, the proposals have been given for the future development of the city

STUDY AREA

Nguru is a local government in Yobe state, Nigeria located near the Hadejia River at $12^{\circ} 52^{\prime} 45^{\prime\prime}$ N to $10^{\circ} 27^{\prime} 09^{\prime\prime}$ E with an area of 916 sq. KM. The town is comparatively young being set out on a rapid grid-iron pattern in the 1930s. Nguru is pluralistic in ethnic composition with 60% Hausa-Fulani, 30% Kanuri and 10% other ethnic groups as Yoruba, Igbo and bade. The population of Nguru is 150,632 (Census, 2006) with 54% males and 46% females. Most of the people are peasant farmers, livestock rearing, small trade and fishing. The topography of Nguru is mainly flat with variety of landscapes as; Hadejia-Nguru wetlands of Nguru Lake and the Sand dunes around machine road. Nguru has hot and dry climate throughout the year. The hottest months are March, April and May with temperature ranging from 39° -



42°C. The period of rainy season starts in the month of June and lasts for about 120 days. Annual rainfall ranges from 500mm-1000mm and the rainy season is normally from June to September in the town. The vegetation cover of Nguru is Sahel savannah; the plants species that are common there include Umbrella tree, Neem, dates, mango, Malina, guava etc. Since the arrival of the railroad in 1929, Nguru became one of Nigeria's major collecting points for gum Arabic, and it also started trade in peanuts (groundnut), cotton, meat, hides, and skins by rail to Lagos. The town started serving as the chief trade centre of millet, cotton, peanut, for the nearby predominant Kanuris, badde, and manga people.



Source: Google CNES/SPOT Image, Land Sat, Digital Globe, Map Data 2014



DATA BASE AND METHODOLOGY

The data required for the study include Nguru master plan given by MaxLock, layout maps and Nguru urban development plan. Information on respondent's personal data and infrastructural facilities were collected by both primary and secondary sources. The primary method was basically observations and personal interviews to appraise the pattern of Nguru urban growth and its resulting problems. The Secondary sources were obtained from various agencies including Nguru Master Plan, books, published govt. documents and conference proceedings.

SAMPLE FRAME AND SAMPLE SIZE

Since national population commission has not rendered figures at ward level, the population data covering the wards or layouts couldn't be sourced. The entire town is divided into 6 zones by land resource department, out of which 3 zones were selected using purposive sampling. In each zone, 1 layout or ward was selected for in depth examination. Systematic sampling was employed by selected respondent at the interval of 10. The survey was conducted for 200 households with the help of questionnaires to acquire general and specific information on the socio-economic characteristics and method of land acquisition of the people living at Nguru town. The number of households selected for sample survey in each sample ward was 78 in Hausari, 62 in Bulaburin, and 60 in Tsohon Nguru. In analyzing the responds to the questionnaire, statistical tables showing frequency and percentage were used and the tables were followed with the description analysis of the findings. Descriptive analysis was made through the observation of data.

APPRAISAL OF NGURU MASTER PLAN

The master plan is a policy guideline that provides a framework for the future development of a town. As a blueprint, it seeks to coordinate all land use proposals including infrastructure facilities and social services and spells out each action area development policies and standard for order, functionality and aesthetics. The idea of using master plan as a development and implementation guide is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria. Physical planning according to Arowolo (1997) is defined as the art and science of ordering the use of land and sitting of buildings and communication routes so as to secure the maximum practicable degree of economy, convenience and beauty. The Lagos master plan was one of the master plans produced for cities in the former British colonies in the wake of the 1947



Town planning Act. The Lagos metropolitan master plan, Kano master plan and Kaduna master plan were also some of the later ones produced in the country. Also in 1976, the Oyo state government produced master plans for some towns in the state though many of them were not implemented. Other master plans are those of Abuja, Ajoda New Town, Calabar and Owerri in 1977. Nguru Master Plan was prepared by Maxlock group after extensive survey of 1973-76 covering an area of 70.9 Sq.km, which may be discussed as following:

Table1. : Land use pattern of Nguru (1976)

Land use	Area(Sq. km)	Percentage (%)
Residential	40.8	58
Commercial	1.8	2.5
Administrative	2.5	3.5
Recreational	0.7	1
Transportation	8.5	12.1
Others	16.1	22.9
Total	70.4	100

Source: Master Plan of Nguru, Maxlock 1976

The residential land use carried the highest percentage of 58% followed by fallow lands and public open spaces which carried 22.9% of the total area, followed by transportation which include both road and rail lines with 12.1%, then administrative with 3.5%, followed by commercial like market with 2.5% and recreational which has the lowest percentage of 1.

1. Residential: The residential land use was divided into three sub categories:

I. High Density Residential (100 persons per Sq KM): This land use forms the core of the town. Now it is more a mixed residential with majority of commercial activities going together with the people. The expansion of high density is more towards south owing to better transport network developing there. However, the area to the south of the town is liable to flood and is therefore undevelopable from an urban point of view. Sections of this area could be reclaimed but these flood plains are of high agricultural quality.

II. Medium Density Residential (75 Persons per Sq KM): This land use can be found in North and South West. Its future expansion is likely to move towards East and North East owing to presence of rail network and good agricultural land.



III. **Low Density Residential (50 Persons per Sq KM):** These areas surrounding medium density residential have now become medium density themselves, moving further north. These are also found in the west surrounded by forest reserve.

2. **Commercial:** The main commercial market of Nguru is centrally located, to the north of the present lorry park, a large and rather ill defined area of 8.8 hectares in South western part of the town. It includes big shops and provision stores selling different types of commodities like bags of rice, sugar, soaps and milks among others. It has evolved as mixed land use with the residential areas. The main commercial expansion spreads in south west on Kano-Nguru road to Nguru-Gashua-Damasak Road.

3. **Industrial:** In the proposed land use, the industrial areas are located along Kano road which includes the oil mill company, Tin Fish Company and milk company. Oil mill is there due to present of Groundnut, cotton among others. In the present land use, the industrial area has been transformed to settlement area because the companies are no more functioning, only the forte oil mill remains.

4. **Public and Semi Public:** The various deprivations in terms of livelihood, safe drinking water, sanitation, health, housing, etc., cause serious problem to the living environment of the city (Tiwary, A.N., 2013). In Nguru town this problem of deprivation is evident as following:

I. **Education:** Educational facilities were proposed to develop within the town and also along Nguru-Hadejia Road. The present location of schools such as sabon Kanuri primary school, Kadawa primary school and Hausari primary school corresponds to the proposed plan. Few schools are also present in outer part of the town. As per the present land use Nguru town has three (3) tertiary institutions which include federal school of midwifery, college of education, school of health technology in the south, north west, and south east respectively. There are 15 primary and 5 secondary schools and 25 Qur'an schools the south west, south and inner core of the town respectively.

II. **Health:** The only federal medical centre has been relocated from south to machine road (Nguru-Bilelam Road) ever since the original master plan. Many health centres and subcentres are required in North, North east and core of the city.

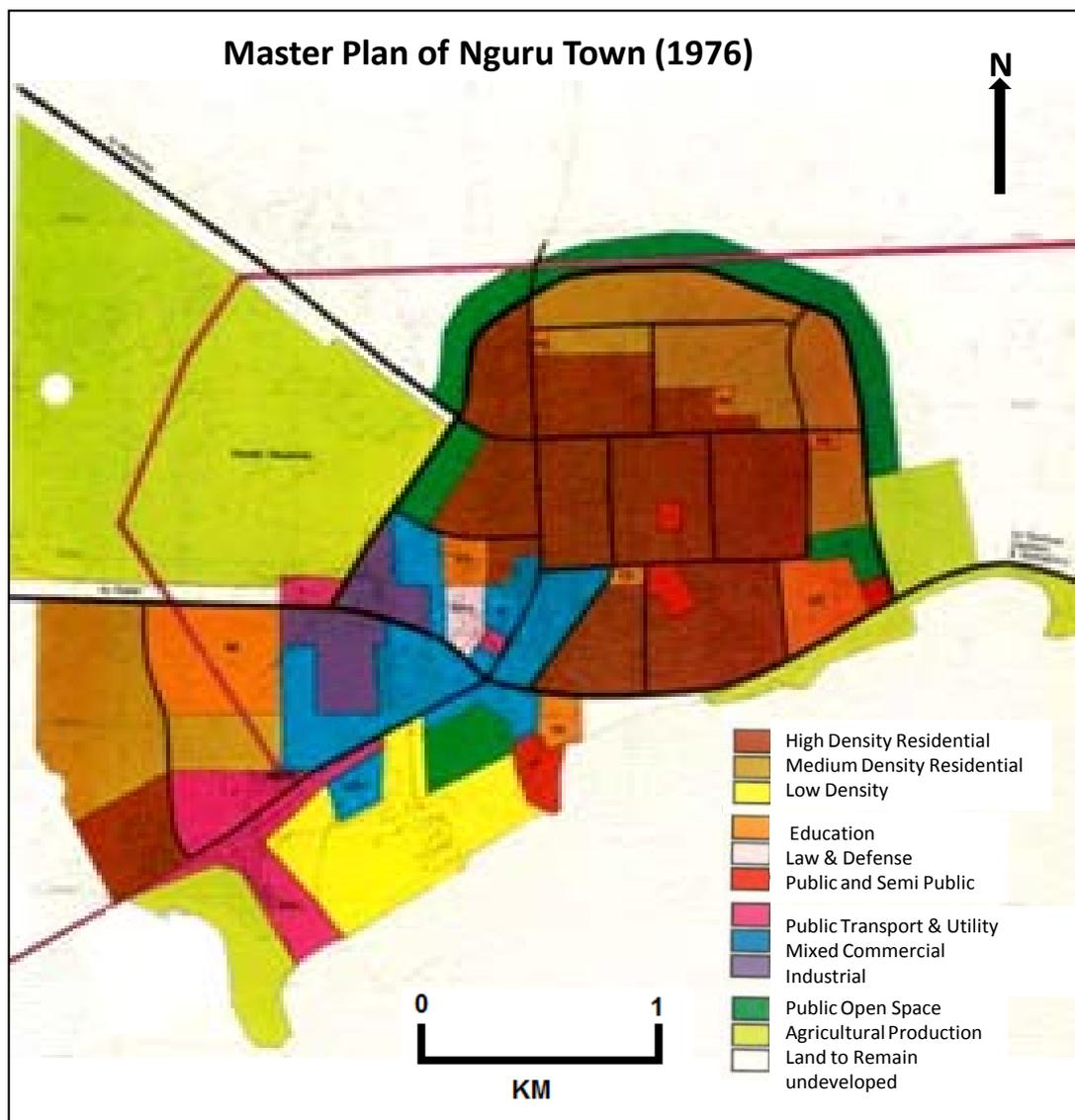
III. **Administrative:** The local government secretariat has re located from south to the south west but the emir palace remains in the core of the town.



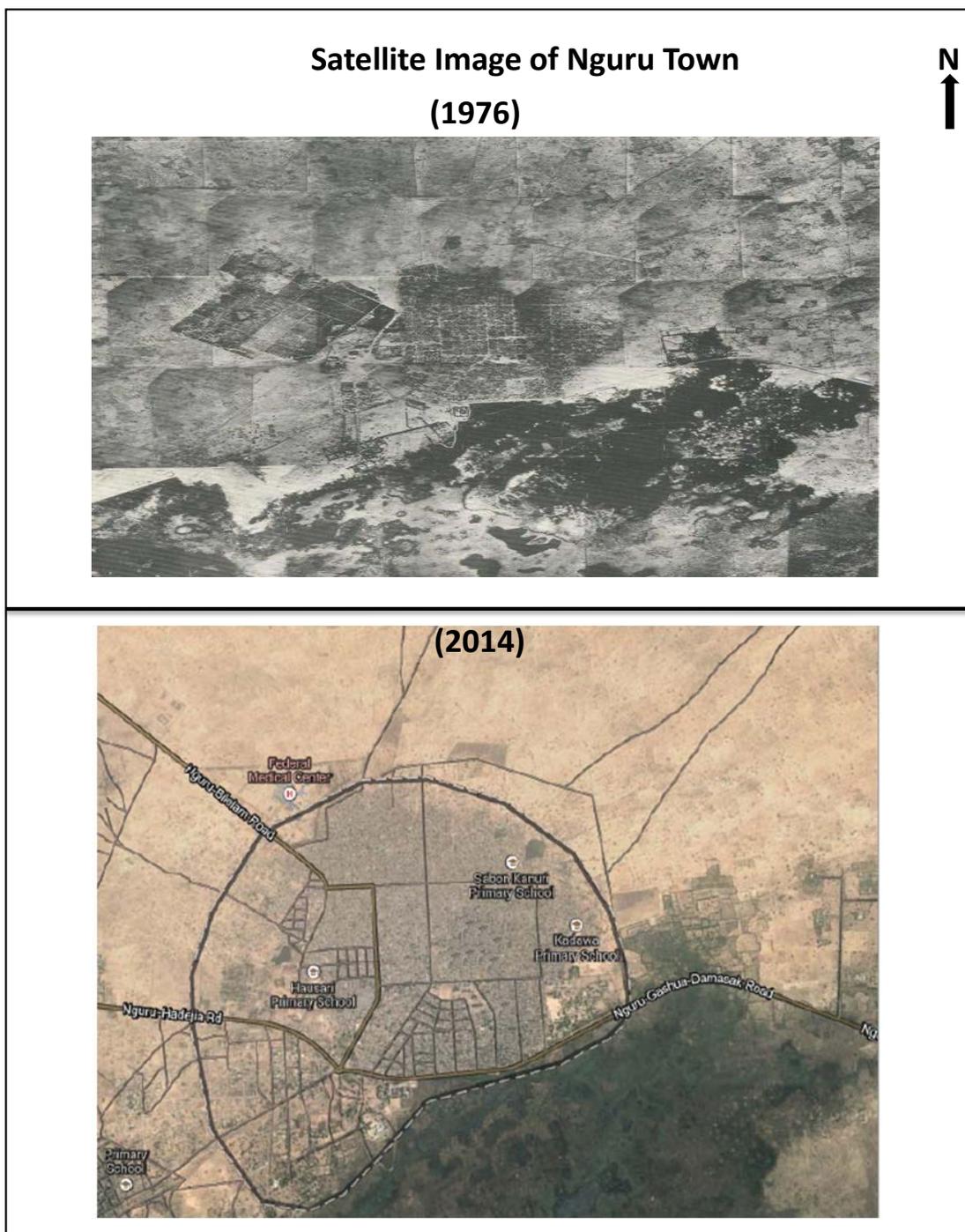
IV. Public and Semi Public Amenities and Facilities: The network line of electricity has covered almost 85% of the Nguru town. In terms of water supply, Nguru has a number of over 27 existing boreholes with 20 fully functioning. These boreholes are located at different places in the town. There is hardly any park, garden or playground where people could go for recreation.

5. Transport and Communication: The town offers a rare opportunity to plan the improvement of the urban network at the same as forming links with the regional road system. Regional links are proposed to both Kano and Ghasua. And also a ring road is proposed around the western parts of the town, linking the Kano, Machina and Gashua roads, in both present and future. These include construction of new road and provision of public transport and bus stops. There are two motor parks; one located around market area while other along the Kano road. The Nigeria railway corporation is located at the southern part of the town which helps in transporting goods like groundnut, millet, cattle among others to Lagos. While the present land use plan shows there is another Motor park along the Kano road known Narto and one known as Mass transit which is located at the inner core of the town.

6. Cultivable/Agricultural Land or Open Space: The extreme flatness of the topography around Nguru provides an opportunity for creating open spaces as part of the plan for storm-water drainage. There is large plantation area to the west than to the east. Agricultural production are carried out at North western (forest reserve) and eastern part of the town in the propose land use while in the present land use, the forest reserve that is located at north western part is now transformed into settlement known as Nayinawa due to the increase in population. The agricultural land to the east is also transformed to settlement particularly the barrack area.



Source: Nguru Master Plan (1976) prepared by Max lock Group



Source: Maxlock (1976) and Google Earth (2014)

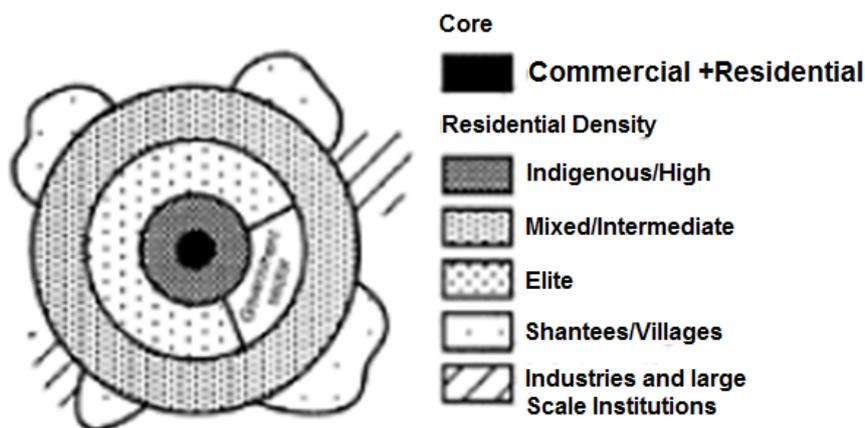
A GENERAL URBAN MODEL

Planners are increasingly using models in their investigations (Robert, 1974). By doing so, models can assist in understanding by revealing patterns of interaction among different aspects of the subject, which can contribute to the predictive and evaluative components of



the planning process. A number of theories and models have been given in urban Geography by Haggett (1965), Burgess (1927), Smailes (1971), Hoyt (1939), Harris & Ullman (1945), David (1995), etc. Burgess (1927) model look the city as a series of concentric rings while the Hoyt (1939) model is pie-wedged. Harris and Ullman (1945) argued that it was an over simplification to assume that cities are based on the single centre. The model also considered cities to be multi-nucleic systems, with some centers containing a wide range of functions, others been more specialized. It is usually possible to argue that a mixture of the various theories would be nearer the truth. They are applicable in some way or another to the different spatial perspectives. United Nations (1973) has proposed a general model of the African city based on the existence of an indigenous core, and the distribution of different ethnic groups according to density gradients which assigned low-density land use to the administrative and residential requirements of the colonial elites and high density to indigenous populations. The Nguru Town also resembles this model of indigenous town.

A Model of Indigenous African Town Proposed by UN, 1973



MAJOR FINDINGS:

In order to seek people's views and interests in urban development, the field survey result shows the following trends:

1. Land Use: The survey findings under this can be discussed under following sub headings:

A. Land acquisition: The survey shows that 23% of the respondents bought their lands from vendors, 8% of the respondents acquire their land through government allocation, 19% of the respondents acquire their land through inheritance, 50% of the respondents go for others. Since the percentage of others is the highest, there is problem in land



acquisition. People need to seek for building permission before embarking on any development it may be residential such as housing or commercial such as shops because it help in having good and sustainable town planning, as well as promoting housing standard.

B. Building Permission

Out of total, only 35% of the respondents were seeking for building permission before embarking on development in order to promote private investments in new and existing development and also to promote housing standards. 50% of the respondents were not seeking building permission before they embark on development which will lead to rapid unplanned physical growth resulting to urban sprawl, poor drainage due to absence of a comprehensive network of drainage system, and unplanned mixed land uses polices. 15% of the respondents were indecisive, may be because they are renting or they stay free.

C. Plot survey and beaconed

Out of total, only 29% of the respondent's plots or lands were surveyed and beaconed which help in improving housing standards through the technical and financial resources of the town. Majority of the respondents (71%) respondent's plot were not surveyed and beaconed which shows the deterioration of physical environment with slum condition in the core area of the town or city.

2. Basic Civic Amenities and Facilities

For a town to develop there must be basic amenities and facilities in order to fulfill human needs, such as hospital, electricity, water supply, play ground, good roads, Schools among others. Out of 200 households surveyed, 52% has access to piped water.10% of the respondent have access to school and play ground. 4% of the respondents have access to police station and drainage system. 20% of the respondents have access to all while 14% goes for others.

3. Occupational Structure

The occupational structure as found by field survey shows that 29% of the respondents were civil servant, 5% of the respondents were professionals such as lecturers and teachers, 2% of the respondents had technical skills as hardware and small machines, 22% of the respondents were in small sales and services as mobile shop, mobile vendor, vegetable and fruit shops, etc., 27% of the respondents were farmers and fishermen, 14% of the



respondents were students and 1% of the respondent were practicing elemental occupation like blacksmith.

4. People's Awareness and Participation in Planning

It is interesting that 72% of the respondents accepted that there is existence of Nguru master plan. While 24% Of the respondents were not aware of the existence of the Master plan. Since the percentage of the respondents that were aware of the existence of Nguru Master Plan is the highest, the question arrives on the unsustainable urban growth of the town.

5. Plan Implementation process

The planning process was seen to be a continuous time oriented process without termination in a final plan. It therefore implies that plan implementation requires continuity of actions and effective coordination since it involves a multiple of agencies. The lack of will to force implementation is the most serious issue.

6. Economic and financial problems

Financial resource is grossly inadequate in Nguru town. The ministry lacks adequate generation, control and management of its own finances. For example surveying and beaconing of plots which is supposed to be done free of cost. It was found in the survey that people pay bribe to the officers to get things done in time.

7. Inadequate number of professional planners and lack of systematic administrative set up.

8. Illegal Occupancy of land

There are illegal structure but have not been served with stop work notice or order and also the percentage of the land users that there plots are not surveyed and beaconed is high in the town which will lead to many problems like plot owners developing plots not belonging to them. And also improper survey and delay in beaconing has stopped-interested developers from developing their holdings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of the paper is to come up with effective solution to the major problems of plan implementation that are highlighted in the previous chapter. This study reveals a lot of issues to be tackled in order to achieve a sustainable urban development in Nguru town.



1. Problem of finance can be solved through the mobilization of urban finance or resources. The poor economic base of the state and poor revenue generation of the ministry of land and survey, calls for explored resources and method of financing capital projects. This will depend on the mobilization of financial resources. Yobe state government should generate fund to them.
2. There is need to prepare detailed schemes of proposals made in a master plan for effective implementation. The plans should also contain defined method of implementations like the adequate phasing, programming, budgeting of the projects with actual actions of execution or implementation and review of project to assess its failures or success to continue with the process all over again.
3. There is also need for formulating administrative frameworks for planning and plan implementation to face the tasks of implementation realistically; unlike the existing ministerial frameworks that have not adequately responded to the demands of the dynamic growth and complexities of urban of urban environment in Nigeria.
4. Government should provide professional planners and employment to the youth of the state especially Nguru town.
5. Government should promote continuous public enlightenment stressing the importance of urban planning.
6. New Residential land use can be planned along Nguru-Malari-Fajiganari Road in north. The residential expansion can also be allowed in the North East upto the flood palins of River Hadeija.
7. Commercial Activities can be encouraged along the transport network as well as mixed with residential expansion in and around the town
8. The new industries are to be encouraged. They can be located along Kano-Nguru Road
9. The public open space should be put to more recreational usage as; parks, gardens, ponds, lakes, etc. It would make the landscape of the town more beautiful and livable. The southern part of the city can be developed for a green landscape of amusement park. All the major traffic intersections can be beautifully decorated with sculptors and fountains.



10. The distribution of health and educational institutions should be located in and around the town in order to have equal access to it by individuals.
11. More educational institutions should be planned to follow the residential expansion in north and north east and also on Nguru-Jajiamji-Gashua Road passing middle through the town.
12. In the Plan formulation, the involvement of the experts from major fields of arts, sciences and social sciences is required, viz; history, geography, psychology, economics, statistics, archeology, arts and aesthetics, management, architecture, engineering etc.
13. Strict control must be done on any encroachment of public spaces, open land, forests and agricultural lands
14. The use of modern tools and techniques of Remote Sensing (RS), Geographical Information System (GIS), Global Positioning System, etc. are required. The use of computer, survey analysis softwares (as; SPSS, NUD*ST) and Mapping Softwares (ARC GIS, Map Info, ERDAS, GEOMEDICA etc.) are the need of the hour (Tiwary, A.N., 2011a, p.128).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The geography of cities is the outcome of a host of public and private economic, social, cultural and political forces operating at a variety of spatial scales from the global to the local. Consequently, a full understanding of the urban world and of the problems and prospects for different peoples and places must be grounded in knowledge of the structural forces and processes that operate on and in combination with contextual factors to condition the urban geographies of the contemporary world (Pacione, 2010). Planning regulations and urban development in many developing countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America seem to have failed in providing orderly and sustainable urban development. Providing houses to all the citizens is a big challenge here. Housing is the man's basic need after food. By its nature it affects the entire spectrum of human activities and well-being, human style, his wealth, and productivity (Edres, 2000). Housing encompasses more than just a house. It is a basic need, a productive asset with important macro-economic linkages, a stake in the urban system; it is shelter in the basic sense as protection from the elements; an asset from which income can be derived through varied uses such as creation of rental



space or productive space in the dwelling; it is security collateral for access to credit; and an investment for future accumulation of value to be realized in an eventually resale or through inter generation transfer (Department of Housing, 1997). Ajanlekoko (2002) believed that housing is the ultimate reward and out-come of a successful life accomplishment. Nigeria is a rapidly developing country with enormous need for the provision of shelter for the teeming populace (Mustapha, 2002). The African urban areas have a bright future in achieving sustainable development using participatory approaches (Ndung'u, 2002). Participatory planning for sustainable African cities is indeed possible. Poor housing delivery is attributed to inadequate mechanisms and system for land allocation (Oladapo, 2002).

The planning of urban areas has been inadequate and ineffective in Nguru; most are surrounded by squatter settlement. The nature of land development in Nguru core is void of modern planning technique. The place of resident in some wards especially ward 3 are in the state of obsolescence and slum condition. Majority of illegal developers have not been served with stop work notice or order at the early state and also after they finish the development because of weak political support from the Government or lack of good planners. Awareness of the existence of Nguru Master plan is high but the land users do not follow its proposals. Nguru development process is very slow and deviating from the proposed master plan. The ineffectiveness of the town planning control body and weak political will is revealed by the field survey. The town is well connected by good transport network in the form of Nguru-Bilelam Road in North West, Kano-Nguru road in South West and Nguru-Gashua-Damasak Road in South East. The flood plain of R. Hadeija in south limits its southern expansion. However the residential expansion can be planned in north and in north east. The most significant role in the public administration is the active role of the people. There is need to have public participation at different levels of development plan, right from formulation to its implementation and also its review (Tiway, A.N. 2011 b, pp.91-92)

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