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A REFLECTION ON THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF BLOCK-MAKING ENTERPRISES IN THE KATSINA METROPOLIS

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Introduction

Katsina like other old cities in Hausaland has a number of traditional architecture which include thatched buildings, mud buildings and laterite stone buildings. These traditional architectures undergo various transformations due to geographical and other factors which consequently led to the introduction of modern forms of architecture using cement blocks. The new architecture dominates all forms of buildings to the extent that over ninety percent (90%) of the people in Katsina metropolis had abandoned the traditional architecture to switch to the modern form of building made of cement blocks because of durability.³⁷ This paper will, therefore, examine the historical origin and development of block-making enterprises in the Katsina metropolis as well as the role of government and Non-Governmental Organizations in the development of the enterprises.

The Origin of Block-Making Enterprises in Katsina Metropolis

The origin of cement block making in Katsina could be linked to the colonial conquest and administration in Nigeria in the first decade of the 20th century. The colonial administration in Katsina constructed various buildings in the metropolis with stones and cement because of their durability. These buildings include the Resident's house at the Government Reservation Area (G.R.A), Native Authority offices in 1921, the Native Police office which is presently the Katsina Central Police Station (CPS) and the Emir's palace's tower in 1929, and the General Post Office in 1948 among others.³⁸ These buildings were regarded as more durable, faster to construct and could withstand many challenges that constituted a threat to

³⁷Oral Interview, Alh. Ma'aruf Gafai, 86yrs, Sarkin Maginan Katsina, Murtala Muhammad Way, Katsina, 18/12/2016

³⁸A. M. Aliyu, *Origin and Development of Post Office in Katsina, 1948-2002*, Unpublished B.A. Project, Umaru Musa Yaradua University, Katsina, 2014, p.2.

traditional buildings in the metropolis. The emergence of these forms of buildings influenced the transformation of architecture in Katsina from traditional to modern or European one. People in the metropolis particularly the ruling and merchant classes gradually began to erect buildings using modern architectural patterns and materials imported from European countries.

However, one of the major factors that ignited the emergence of block industries in the Katsina metropolis is the boom in Nigeria's oil revenue that began in the 1970s. From 1973 to the early 1980s, Nigeria witnessed tremendous changes in its economy with the coming of unprecedented revenue from oil, the period termed as "Oil Boom Era". This was a result of the war fought between Israel and the Arab countries of Egypt and Syria which began in 1973. The war was fought by Arab nations to regain territories that Israel had occupied since 1967. During the war, the oil-producing countries maintained an embargo on oil exports to Western nations friendly to Israel. The decision caused oil shortages and inflated its prices in the global market. The price of oil per barrel jumped from 4.29 to 8.31 dollars in 1973 and 14.69 dollars in 1974. The price continued to rise during the embargo period. As a result, Nigeria was turned to as an alternative source of oil to the Western nations. This development also massively increased the revenue generated by Nigeria from oil. The total revenue of Nigeria from petroleum had gone up from ₦1.016 billion in 1973 to ₦3.726 billion in 1974.³⁹ As revealed by Akujobi, the revenue rose to ₦7,080 billion in 1977.⁴⁰

Equally, with the outbreak of the Iranian Revolution in 1979 headed by Ayatollah Khomeini that toppled the government of Shah Reza Pahlavi, an embargo was imposed on the revolutionist government. This development also worsened the situation of shortage of oil in the world market, but on the other hand, it increased the oil revenue to Nigeria. During this period, the Nigerian oil revenue fantastically increased to ₦13.1 billion dollars in 1980.⁴¹ In fact, the revenue accrued since 1973 in the country enabled the government to embark on the construction of various infrastructures such as houses, schools and hospitals. For instance, educational programmes were vigorously pursued to secure the required manpower in the private and public sectors.

³⁹ J. Shehu, *A Social and Political History of Katsina Metropolis C. 1960-2007*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Usman Danfodio University, Sokoto, 2012, p.149

⁴⁰ A. Akujobi, "Sharing the Tax Burden", in Uma Eleazu's (Ed.), *Nigeria: The First 25 Years*, Lagos: Infodata Press Limited, 1988, P.180.

⁴¹ G. F. Mbanefoh, "The Economy", in Garba Ashiwaju and Olusegun Areola (Eds.), *Nigeria: The First 25 Years*, Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1995, p.38

An important landmark that influenced the use of cement blocks in the Katsina metropolis was the construction of the Army Barracks in Katsina. It should be recalled that, after Nigeria's civil war in the 1970s, army troops were scattered on various war fronts in the country. The available barracks in the country were not enough to contain the officers and men due to the increase of their numerical strength during the civil war. This is what brought about the idea of massive construction of barracks in different parts of the country. The then Chief of Army Staff, General Hassan Usman Katsina, ordered the establishment of the 82 Battalion of the Nigerian Army in Katsina at Natsinta along Jibia Road in 1973.⁴² The sections which consisted of offices, Sergeants and Officers' messes, officers and men's quarters, recreational hall and other welfare facilities, virtually needed cement blocks for construction purposes, and no doubt it increased the demand by contractors for the blocks in Katsina.⁴³

Similarly, cement blocks were greatly required in the construction of primary schools consequent upon the introduction of the Universal Primary Education programme by the Federal Government in 1976. The programme was introduced to boost school enrolment and increasing access to education, especially at the primary school level. The UPE programme led to the massive building of primary schools all over the country. In the Katsina metropolis, the number of primary schools increased from fifteen (15) in 1970 to twenty-eight (28) in 1977.⁴⁴

As part of the effort to expand the educational industry in the country, the Federal Government established the Federal College of Education Katsina in 1976 to produce teachers for science, technical, vocational and humanities education. In addition, Government Day Secondary School Kofar Yandaka and Government Day Secondary School Kofar Sauri were constructed by the Kaduna State Government in 1977 and 1980 respectively.⁴⁵ The construction of the institutions which required cement blocks increased the tempo of the establishment of block industries in the metropolis.

Equally, in 1976 Katsina Local Government was created with Katsina metropolis as headquarters. Consequent upon this development, the government infrastructures and houses particularly for civil servants were constructed in Katsina. This includes

⁴² H. Jibrin, *Demobilization Policies and Challenges Faced by the Nigerian Army, 1970-1983*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Usman Danfodio University, Sokoto, 2016, pp.197-199.

⁴³ Oral Interview, Dr. Jibrin Hussaini, 39, Civil Servant, Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina, 10th January, 2018.

⁴⁴ J. Shehu..., Op.cit, p.111

⁴⁵ Ibid.

Katsina Local Government Secretariat along Nagogo Road, the establishment of the Kofar Kaura Lay-out and Kofar Marusa Low-cost Houses in 1977. Hamada Carpet which was one of the major modern industries in Katsina metropolis was also constructed in 1978. The industry which is situated along Hassan Usman Katsina road in Katsina, was jointly established by the late Shehu Musa Yar'adua (brother of late Umaru Musa Yar'adua, former President of Nigeria) and late Alhaji M.T. Usman former Managing Director of Julius Berger Construction Company.⁴⁶

In fact, before the end of the decade of the 1970s, due to the number of construction projects by the government and wealthy individuals as mentioned above, the demand for cement blocks was intensified, and by implication necessitated the establishment of more block industries. Among them include the ones established by contractors like Alhaji Barau Yaro, Alhaji Abdulkarim Bature and Alhaji Iro Isansi towards the end of the decade purposely to produce blocks for their construction works. However, businessmen (non-contractors) in the Katsina metropolis began to establish commercial block industries. For instance, Alhaji Ibrahim Master established the Albaba Block Industry in 1979.⁴⁷ Up to 1987, despite the projects carried out by the Federal, State and Local governments, block industries in the Katsina metropolis were very minimal perhaps since contracts in Katsina were monopolized by very few individuals such as Alhaji Barau Yaro and co. who had their block industries. Also, the built-up area in Katsina metropolis was mainly within the walled city, and there existed open spaces and even some agricultural land.

Development of Block-Making Industries

A very important event occurred which speedily influenced the development of block industries in the Katsina metropolis. This was the creation of Katsina State in 1987 with the metropolis as the capital of the new State. Consequently, the State capital came to experience rapid physical expansion due to population growth. As provided by National Population Commission, the 1991 census put the population of Katsina metropolis to 223,644; while the 2006 census figured the population of the area to 318,132. It was projected by the commission that the population figure of the metropolis by the end of 2022 had reached 568,600.⁴⁸ As a result, residential, industrial, and commercial centres as well as new infrastructures were constructed

⁴⁶ J. Shehu..., Op.cit., Pp. 122-127

⁴⁷ Oral Interview, Alh. Ibrahim Master, 82yrs, Managing Director, Albaba Blocks Industry, IBB Way Katsina, 18/2/2016.

⁴⁸ National Population Commission of Nigeria, Katsina (State, Nigeria) – Population Statistics, Charts, Map and Location, (www.citypopulation.de). Accessed on 10th September, 2023.

in the metropolis. Within two decades of the state creation (1987-2007), the Katsina state government demarcated various layouts for industrial, commercial and residential purposes. These include the residential layout along WTC road which harbours Ibrahim Ida's estate down to Turai Yar'adua Maternity Hospital; Kofar 'Yandaka to Kofar Guga residential and commercial layouts which covered Federal Medical Center Katsina and the surrounding houses; Modoji new layout that included GRA Police Station; Sabuwar Unguwar Kofar Kaura resettlement layout opposite KEDCO building along IBB Way; Malam Kalu Habibu private high-density residential layout along Daura Road, among others.⁴⁹ The state government also constructed residential houses for different categories of civil servants. These include 168 Ahmadu Coomassie Housing Estate (Dutsin Safe Low Cost) in 1989; 48 houses along Jibia Road in 2002; and 272 houses at GRA, popularly known as Goruba Housing Estates in 2005.⁵⁰

The construction of the aforementioned projects led to immense demand for blocks which consequently resulted in the establishment of quite a number of block industries in the metropolis. These include A.K.H. Block Industry at Yammawa quarters in 1989, Unity Block Industry at IBB Way in 1992, ABUG Block Industry at Yahaya Madaki Way in 1995, Subi Block Industry at Sabon Gida Jibia Road in 1997, Kofar Sauri Block Industry at Makera quarters, Kofar Sauri, in 1998, Asmayu Block Industry at Lawrence Onoja road, Kofar Kaura lay out in 2000, Radi Block Industry at Yahaya Madaki Way. Others are Mani Block Industry at Yahaya Madaki Way in 2001, Ultimate Block Industry at Shehu Musa Yar'adua Way in 2003, Albatech Block Industry at Modoji quarters near Danfodio Mosque in 2008, Alheri Block Industry at GRA, Daura Road in 2011, and 'Yansiliyu Block Industry at New Ring road, close to Natsinta Army Barrack Roundabout in 2017.⁵¹

The Role of Government in the Development of Block Industries

The government plays a very important role in the development of block industries in the Katsina metropolis and the state entirely. The Katsina State government made several efforts to ensure that it improves and modernizes scale industries in the state such as block making. To this end, it introduces various policies and programs that enhance their development, such as the following.

⁴⁹ J. Shehu..., Op.cit, Pp. 189-192.

⁵⁰ Ibid., Pp. 193-194.

⁵¹ A. Lawal, *Architectural Designs, Cement Block Industries and Socio-Economic Development in Katsina Metropolis from Precolonial Time to 2015*, Unpublished M. A. Dissertation (History), Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina, 2018, pp. 136-140.

Construction of Roads

One of the important roles played by the government in the emergence and development of block industries in the Katsina metropolis is the construction of roads. It is obvious that road construction is one of the significant ingredients for the socio-economic development of any society. Construction of roads not only boosts economic activities in an area but also helps in its physical expansion and urbanization through the establishment and buildings of public and private industries, residential houses, schools, health centres and markets among others. Since the creation of Katsina State in 1987, the government has embarked on the construction of various roads in the metropolis. Some of these roads are dual lane while others are single such as the old Government House Round About – Katsina State Water Board Round About – Kofar Sauri – Katsina General Hospital Road, Kofar Guga Roundabout – Kofar ‘Yandaka Roundabout – Kofar Kwaya Roundabout – Kofar Kaura Roundabout – Kofar Marusa (Kiddies) Roundabout – old Central Bank junction Road, Dandagoro Gate – Steel Rolling (Luna Hotel) Round about – Kofar Kaura Round about road, Lawrence Onoja Road,⁵² New Katsina metropolis Ring Road constructed by Governor Shema’s administration (2007-2015) among others.

The construction of the above-listed roads played an important role for many government and private buildings to be constructed with cement blocks. For instance, the commissioning of Yahaya Madaki Way from Kofar Kwaya roundabout – Kofar Kaura roundabout – Kiddies roundabout - Hassan Usman junction in the early 1990s, has encouraged private land developers to construct quite a number of structures that including: Madugu House, Gidan Ibrahim, Alliance Bread, Mani House, Alasco Photos, First Bank, M. D. and Mangal plazas among others. The construction of these buildings necessitated the demand for blocks, hence the establishment of more industries in the metropolis as examined above.

Construction of Housing Estates

Shelter is one of the most important basic needs of human beings. The government had since 1977 constructed quite a number of housing estates in the metropolis. As earlier stated, Kofar Marusa Low-cost houses numbering about fifty (50) were the first housing units built by the government. Also in 1982 additional 152 No. houses

⁵² J. Shehu..., Op.cit, pp. 204-205

were constructed at Kofar Marusa Layout and 248 houses at Batagarawa Low-cost houses which were mostly occupied by civil servants.⁵³

After the creation of Katsina State in 1987, there were various housing estates established by the state government to ease the problem of accommodation faced by civil servants who were transferred from Kaduna State to Katsina. These include 168 houses at Dutsin Safe known as Ahmadu Commassie Housing Estate constructed in 1989, 22 houses at Goriba quarters in 1992, and 48 houses along Jibia Road near Dutsin Safe housing units in 2002. Also in 2005 Governor Umaru Musa's administration (1999-2007), added 272 houses along Goriba Road.⁵⁴

Similarly, on assumption to office in 2007, Governor Ibrahim Shehu Shema (2007-2015) followed the shoes of his predecessor and constructed quite a number of houses including 500 housing units at Barhim along Mani Road known as Sarki Muhammadu Dikko Housing Estate in 2009, 252 houses at Daura road known as Sarki Abdulrahman Housing Estate, 250 houses at Kabukawa popularly known as Fatima Shema Estate in 2013 and 515 houses at Dutsinma road known as Ahmadu Bello Sardauna Housing Estate in 2014.⁵⁵

The construction of the above-mentioned housing estates not only provides shelter to the increasing population of the metropolis as well as expansion of the area but also contributes to the establishment and development of block industries in the metropolis. This is because all the estates were constructed with cement blocks. Also since the beginning of the construction, many block industries were established to meet up with the demand for blocks.⁵⁶

Provision of Credit Loans and Technical Advice

The establishment of the Small and Medium Enterprises Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) by the Federal Government is another role of the government for the development of small and medium enterprises including block-making in Nigeria generally. The Agency was established in 2003 during the administration of Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2007). Its mandated functions include the following:

- * Stimulating, monitoring and coordinating the development of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector;

⁵³ J. Shehu..., Op. cit., Pp. 123-124

⁵⁴ Ibid., Pp. 194-195

⁵⁵ Katsina State Housing Authority, Katsina, 22/01/2018

⁵⁶ See Development of Block Making Industries section above for more details of the block industries that were established in Katsina metropolis.

- * Initiating and articulating policy ideas for the growth and development of small and medium enterprises;
- * Promoting and facilitating development programmes, instruments and support services to accelerate the development and modernization of MSMEs operations;
- * Linking MSMEs to internal and external sources of finance, appropriate technology, and technical skills as well as to large enterprises;
- * Intermediating between MSMEs and government;
- * Working in contact with other institutions in both public and private sectors to create a good enabling environment for businesses in general and MSME activities in particular.⁵⁷

Since the establishment of this Agency in the state, it has discharged its mandate and responsibilities. Among its achievements particularly to the block industry of Katsina metropolis was the provision of expert advice and training to block industry operators in preparing feasibility studies, business plans, bookkeeping, capacity building and business management.⁵⁸ As stated by Masari, the Enterprises Officer II of the Agency, every year, it organizes an Entrepreneurship Training Programme for Small and Medium Enterprises of Katsina including block makers. The training mostly takes place in the last quarter of the year. Many enterprises are selected by the agency to give training on various aspects of business development particularly those listed above. At the end of the training, the Agency gives each participant a certificate of attendance.⁵⁹ He further reveals that the agency in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce Industry and Tourism Katsina State, organizes capacity-building training to enterprises of the state. The training is called the General Enterprises Development Programme (GEDP). Like the previous programme, it is organised once a year. Also, a certificate is issued to each participant.⁶⁰

Also, another effort made by the government to enhance the development of SMEs in the state is that the Katsina State government created the Department of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in 2007 under the Ministry of Commerce,

⁵⁷*SMEDAN at a Glance*, a Pamphlet Provided by Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN).

⁵⁸ Oral Interview, Abdullahi Yusuf, 43yrs, Principal Enterprises Officer, SMEDAN, Katsina Office, Katsina, 10/03/2017.

⁵⁹ Oral Interview, Aminu Sufiyanu Masari, 37yrs., Enterprises Officer II, SMEDAN, Katsina Office, Katsina, 18/01/2018.

⁶⁰ Ibid.,

Industry and Tourism. Since its creation, the department has formed a committee in 2008 to make a census for the existing SMEs in the state including the Katsina metropolis and provide ways on how the government could empower them. In this course, many enterprises were shortlisted, including block makers, welding and fabrication, dyers, carpentry, plumbers, pomade and perfume makers among others.⁶¹ In view of this, in 2009, the Katsina State government through the SME department disbursed a loan of about ₦160 million naira to the enterprises in the state including block makers of the Katsina metropolis.⁶² As Shehu observes, about 265 enterprises in the metropolis benefitted from such loans. The enterprises include block making, carpentry, welding, plumbing, dyeing, building and masonry among others.⁶³ However, Kabir revealed that each benefitted block industry received One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Naira (₦150,000) as interest-free loan from the government.⁶⁴

The formation of the Bank of Industry (BOI) is also another giant effort made by the government for the development of industries including block factories in Nigeria and Katsina metropolis in particular. The BOI was formerly known as the Nigerian Industrial Development Bank (NIDB) Limited. It is a public bank operated under the Federal Ministry of Trade and Investment. It was formed to provide financial assistance for the establishment and expansion of large, medium and small enterprises as well as diversification and modernization of existing enterprises and rehabilitation of the ailing ones.⁶⁵

There are two types of loans which the BOI provides. The Micro Credit Loan with maximum amount of ten million naira (N10,000,000.00), and the SME Credit Loan with minimum amount of ten million naira. The interest rate of the loans is ten percent (10%) while the period of repayment to a Micro Credit Loan is three years and five years is offered as the repayment period for an SME Credit Loan. The BOI Katsina branch manager states that many block industries in the Katsina metropolis have applied for the loan, but most of them do not fulfil the requirements and in the end only very few benefitted.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Katsina State Ministry of Commerce Industry and Tourism, Katsina, 24/01/2018.

⁶² Department of Small and Medium Enterprises, Katsina State Economic Empowerment Directorate(KASEED), Katsina 24/01/2018

⁶³ J. Shehu ..., Op.cit., Pp. 217-218.

⁶⁴ Kabir Gide, Member SMEs Census Committee, Katsina State Ministry of Commerce Industry and Tourism, Katsina, 24/01/2018

⁶⁵ Bank of Industry, (<http://www.abuja-ng.com/bankofindustry.html>), 2017, Retrieved on 14/03/2017.

⁶⁶ Oral Interview, Sadiq Ibrahim, 36yrs., Branch Manager, Bank of Industry, Katsina, Hassan Usman Road, Katsina, 23/01/2018

A lot of training institutions were established in the Katsina metropolis by either the federal or state government to train people on various crafts and industrial works. Among such institutions are Business Apprenticeship Training Center (B.A.T.C) established in 1974 at Kofar 'Yandaka near Katsina Polo Ground and Katsina Youth Craft Village founded in the year 2009 along Mani Road. These schools train many industrial works including block industry. At B.A.T.C. there is a department which gives training on bricklaying and concreting.⁶⁷ Many people were taught various skills such as testing the quality of raw materials, measuring and mixing the material for production, using machines and other tools in the industry, various types of blocks, watering and stacking among others.⁶⁸ According to the Managing Director of Radi Block Industry who is also a graduate of BATC, the knowledge acquired from the institution helped him, particularly in the process of block production sector.⁶⁹ Also, another graduate of the institution reveals that he learnt a lot from the institution, particularly on the quantitative ratio of raw materials needed in the mixing activity.⁷⁰ The activities of these training institutions no doubt contributed to the development of block industries in the Katsina metropolis, by encouraging graduates to establish and produce qualitative blocks

Role of Some Selected Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for the Development of Block Industry in Katsina Metropolis

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are independent of the State funded through donations and run primarily by volunteers. NGOs are highly diverse groups engaged in a wide range of activities and take different forms in different parts of the world. Some may have charitable status, while others may be registered for tax exemption based on recognition of social purpose. Others are formed for political, religious, business or other interests.

In this section, business-related NGOs are selected and examined in order to identify their roles in the development of the block industry in the Katsina metropolis. The selected NGOs are the Katsina Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (KACCIMA); Nigerian Association of Small Scale Industries (NASSI); Katsina State Block Molders Association; and Tipper Drivers Association Katsina. All the aforementioned associations, no doubt, have many

⁶⁷ Oral Interview, Ashiru Aliyu Ingawa, 51yrs, Head of Department, Bricklaying and Concreting Department, Business Apprenticeship Training Center (B.A.T.C), Katsina, 17/03/2017.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Alhaji Ibrahim Salisu..., Op.cit.

⁷⁰ Oral Interview, Malam Aliyu Saminu, 42yrs., Bricklayer, Modoji, Katsina, 12/01/2018.

roles to play in the development of the block industry in the Katsina metropolis in particular and to the state at large.

Katsina Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (KACCIMA)

KACCIMA is a state branch of the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA). It is the umbrella organization for all the primary or local chambers of commerce and its related bodies within the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The primary objective of the association is to provide a conducive atmosphere for the pursuit of commerce, industry and all other forms of economic activities of the private sector.⁷¹

The block industry in Katsina metropolis benefitted and still benefits from the activities of the association by linking them with financial institutions like the Bank of Industry to acquire loans. The association helps connect block industrialists to foreign manufacturing companies and facilitates acquiring visas to travel abroad and meet with foreign companies. According to the President of KACCIMA, at the time of the interview, the association is processing visas for the owner of a block industry in the Katsina metropolis to China to buy moulding machines that can mould ten blocks at a time.⁷²

Katsina State Block Moulders Association

The Katsina State Block Molders Association is purely formed by the block moulders in Katsina State established in 1996.⁷³ It has members from all over the local government areas of the state including Katsina metropolis. The association undertakes various activities for the development of its members and the block industries in general including representing block moulders to government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These organizations usually, pass information to block moulders through the Block Molders Association. As a means of catering for the welfare of its members, the association intervenes whenever conflict(s) erupts between a block moulder and any individual, customer or organization.⁷⁴

⁷¹ T. Ilugbuihi, The Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce Industry Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA), in Uma Eleazu's (Ed.) *Nigeria. The First 25 Years*, Lagos: Infodata Press Limited, 1988, Pp. 267-269.

⁷² Oral Interview, Alh. Abdulrashid Salisu Danbedi, 49yrs, President, Katsina Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (KACCIMA), Yahaya Madaki Way, Katsina, 10/03/2017.

⁷³ Alhaji Najume Nagogo..., Op.cit.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

Furthermore, the Association helps its members to secure raw materials on credit. The chairman of the block makers states that they used to negotiate with major dealers of cement to supply an agreed quantity on credit until they were paid by contractors. For instance, during the construction of Barhim, Sardauna and Fatima Shema housing estates by Governor Ibrahim Shehu Shema's administration (2007-2015), one of the leading cement dealers in Katsina, Shagumba Cement located along Yahaya Madaki way near Kiddies roundabout negotiated with the association to provide cement for its members. It also collaborates with government ministries or agencies in organizing capacity-building programmes for its members such as the ones discussed earlier in this paper which were organized between the association and SMEDAN or with the Ministry of Commerce.⁷⁵ The association is currently representing its members in negotiating with the Katsina State government for the provision of land to block moulders in order to establish a cluster that would help them reduce land problems. It also represents its members on the issue of tax harmonization and reduction.⁷⁶ The association also meets with cement and sand sellers on behalf of its members, especially on the issues of cooperation and how they would cooperate to benefit each other. In this course, every year, Dangote Cement Company sends some production equipment and tools to the association. These include wheelbarrows, shovels and rain boots. The tools are distributed to the members especially contributing ones.⁷⁷

Nigerian Association of Small-Scale Industries (NASSI)

The Nigerian Association of Small-Scale Industries (NASSI) is an association formed by small scale industrialists in the Federation. The association has state branches in all the thirty-six states of Nigeria and the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja). It is a voluntary organization formed to gather all small-scale industries under one umbrella and see how they would assist each other in the development of their activities, and also to use their cooperation as an avenue on whatever they want from government organizations or NGOs to be easily achieved. The block industry as one of the important segments of NASSI benefits from the activities of the association.

One of the roles played by NASSI to block industries in the Katsina metropolis is its effort toward accessing loans to block moulders of Katsina state including those

⁷⁵Oral Interview, Alhaji Husamatu Adamu, 66 yrs., Chairman, Katsina State Block Moulders Association, Lawrence Onoja road, Katsina, 19/01/2018.

⁷⁶Alhaji Najume Nagogo..., Op.cit.

⁷⁷ Alhaji Husamatu... Op.cit.

in the metropolis from financial institutions. As stated by Sadiq, the Bank of Industry Katsina Branch Manager, through NASSI, many proprietors of block industries applied for loans to help boost the production capacity of their industries.⁷⁸

The Association on some occasions collaborates with other stakeholders to organize programs that would benefit members. For instance, Sokoto Cement in Collaboration with ITF organized an advanced training programme for block moulders in 2009 and 2013 which was held in Katsina Metropolis.⁷⁹

Furthermore, the association helps in co-ordinating advocacy missions regarding problems threatening the speedy development of the industry like the issue of tax and land acquisition. For instance, the NASSI is among the supporting organizations in the struggle for land acquisition from the state government to block moulders.⁸⁰

Tipper Drivers Association, Katsina

This is an association formed in Katsina by tipper drivers in order to cooperate in the supply of sand and other related products to prospective customers, particularly block makers. It is obvious that most of the tipper drivers are not the real owners of the vehicle, but the proprietors of block industries who entrust them to drivers in order to have an uninterrupted and cheaper supply of sand as well as an additional source of income.⁸¹

The association started as a club around 1984⁸² and got its name (Tipper Drivers Association) in 1997.⁸³ Since that period, it has been led by Malam Ashafa Rimi, Dahiru Mai Dangeme, Balan Inda and Malam Yahaya Usman Dantane.⁸⁴ The association got a boost in its activities in 2013 when Governor Shema allocated it land at Kabukawa Ring Road in Katsina Metropolis. As such, members abandoned their former settlement adjacent to Katsina Central Market to the Kabukawa. However considering the urban expansion of the metropolis, satellite branches were

⁷⁸ Sadiq Ibrahim ..., Op.cit.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Alhaji Musa Ado..., Op.cit.

⁸¹ Alhaji Lurwan Mai Tipper..., Op.cit.

⁸² For detail of the historical origin and development of Tipper Drivers Association, see A. Lawal, *Architectural Designs, Cement Block Industries and Socio-Economic Development in Katsina Metropolis from Precolonial Time to 2015*, Unpublished M. A. Dissertation (History), Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina, 2018, pp. 70-72

⁸³ Oral Interview, Alhaji Danmaikunu, 75yrs., Ex-Tipper Driver, Kofar Kwaya, Katsina, 09/02/2018

⁸⁴ Oral Interview, Alhaji Musa Armaya'u, 38yrs. Secretary General, Tipper Drivers Association, Katsina State, Katsina, 10/02/2018.

also established at Kofar Guga, Kofar ‘Yandaka, Kofar Sauri, Kofar Marusa, Kofar Durbi and Dandagoro.⁸⁵

As stated earlier, this association plays a very significant role in the development of block industries in the Katsina metropolis. They visited far and near passing rivers to supply sand and stones to the industries. Members of this association know the different types of sand required for block making. Sometimes the tipper drivers supply sand to the block makers on credit and is paid back as soon as the proprietor sources the money. The Exco also intervenes to settle any dispute that may arise between their members and block makers.⁸⁶

Conclusion

Block-making business in Katsina metropolis began in the late 1970s as a result of many factors including the 1973 oil boom which generated massive revenue from oil to Nigeria. The revenue accrued led to the financing of various gigantic projects in the country and Katsina metropolis in particular such as the construction of Army Barracks, the establishment of primary schools due to the introduction of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme, the construction of Katsina Local Government Secretariat and other infrastructures due to the Local Government Reform of 1976 which led to the creation of Katsina Local Government among others. These developments brought population pressure in the city that required the establishment of settlements outside the city wall like the Kofar Kaura Layout and Kofar Marusa Low-cost. The construction of these projects increased demand for cement blocks in the metropolis which resulted in the establishment of various block-making industries in the metropolis. The paper also highlights the important roles played by government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the development of the block industry in the Katsina metropolis.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Alhaji Lurwan Mai Tipper..., Op.cit.

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