

The Migrant Factor in the Economic Growth of Suleja Town, 1979-2015

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Abstract

The siting of the FCDA Field Base in Suleja in 1979 presented an excellent opportunity for the economic migrants, who established new commercial activities hitherto unknown in Suleja. These commercial activities did not only enable the economic migrants to advance their economic status, it also contributed to the economic growth of Suleja. Therefore, the paper argues that the siting of the FCDA Field Base was the single most important factor for the influx of additional migrant groups and the economic growth of Suleja. The various commercial activities established by the migrant groups provided job opportunities for the youth and increased the revenue base of Suleja. Thus, Suleja became the economic nerve centre of the area and one of the towns generating the highest IGR in Niger state. The paper shows the economic changes that occur in Suleja by identifying the economic activities conducted in the pre and post 1976 creation of the Federal Capital Territory. The paper identifies the major migrant groups and discusses the various commercial activities they established in Suleja. The paper concludes that the migrant groups were the vanguard of change in Suleja as their economic activities overshadowed those of the indigenous groups.

Introduction

The town known as Suleja today was until 1979 called Abuja. The name was relinquished by the then Abuja Emirate Council to the Supreme Military Council of Nigeria to name the newly established Federal Capital Territory (FCT) in 1979. The town was renamed Suleja after the then Emir, Alhaji Sulemanu Barau and that of the founder, Suleja is the combination of the first four letters of the then Emir, Sule and the last two letters of the

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founder, Ja, which connotes red or light in complexion, as the then Emir himself was light in complexion. Historically, the town was founded in 1828 by the pre-Jihad rulers of Zazzau Kingdom. It is predominantly peopled by the Zage-zagi¹, Gbayi, Koro, Rubawa, Afawa and the Yeskwa groups. It remained undefeated throughout the 19th century despite several attacks by the new rulers of Zaria Emirate, of which the last attack was in 1893.² However, it lost its sovereignty to British forces in 1902 and by 1904, the British established full administration there. During the colonial period, the town hosted other migrant groups, such as the Nupe, Yoruba, Igbo and the Edo. It remained a Division in the then Niger Province of the defunct Northern Regional Government. Following the creation of 12 states in 1967, Abuja was placed under the Northwest State with capital at Sokoto. With the creation of additional states in 1976, when Niger State was carved out from the defunct Northwest state, Abuja became the headquarters of Abuja Local Government Area. Shouldered with the responsibility of developing the town, the new state, through its various ministries and agencies, provided some infrastructures in the town, such as roads, electricity, water, hospital and dispensaries and schools. The provision of these infrastructures attracted influx of more people to the town so much that by 1976, the population rose to 10, 608.³ The siting of the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) Development Base otherwise known as Field Base in the town in 1979 was the driving force for the influx of additional migrant groups to the town from various parts of Nigeria and beyond. These migrants engaged in various commercial activities for the economic growth of the town.

This paper examines the contributions of migrant groups to the economic growth of Suleja from 1979 to 2015. The major migrant groups are the none Zage-Zagi Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Ebira and the Edo. The cosmopolitan nature of the town also attracted some foreigners such as the Chinese who established a modern eatery. The dearth of documented works on the role of the migrant groups in Suleja provides the stimulating impulse for writing this paper.

The Contributions of Migrant Groups to the Economic Growth of Suleja, 1979-2015

The siting of the FCDA Field Base in Suleja in 1979 to facilitate the development of the capital city of the country led to unprecedented influx of fresh migrants into the town. Thus, the population of the town which by 1976 was 10, 608 significantly increased to 13, 795 in 1979.⁴ Consequently, Suleja town became the centre of attraction to diverse groups

from many states of the federation and beyond. These diverse groups included some civil servants who came from Lagos, the former capital, contractors, skilled and unskilled workers including economic migrants. It is worthy to note that the none-Zage-Zagi Hausa, the Yoruba, Igbo, Epira and Edo migrants had settled in the town, at least dating back to the early 20th century. The siting of the FCDA Field Base only triggered fresh migration of members of these groups. A Yoruba migrant of the early 1980s in Suleja town noted that:

The news of the establishment of the FCT in 1976 and more importantly the siting of the FCDA Field Base in Suleja in 1979 sent news of joy to some entrepreneurs in the southwest who quickly migrated to the town to join their kin in early 1980.⁵

It thus appears that the earlier migrants in Suleja facilitated the migration of their family members and friends to the town, who also came to advance their economic fortunes. The influx enabled the economic migrants to engage in a wide range of commercial activities. An Igbo migrant of the early 1980s had this to say:

Most of the Igbo entrepreneurs and traders migrated from their homeland in the east and other places they hitherto inhabited to Suleja after the siting of the FCDA Field Base there in 1979 specifically because of prospects of businesses.⁶

It is instructive to note that the commercial activities conducted by the earlier Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Edo and Epira migrants before the siting of the FCDA Field Base such as sale of foodstuff by the Hausa and Gbagyi, sewing materials and fabric by the Yoruba, building materials, households utensils and vehicle spare parts and repairs by the Yoruba and Igbo, electronics and electronic repairs, mechanical and electrical works by the Yoruba and Igbo, significantly increased due to increased demands as a result of population increased after the siting of the FCDA Field Base there. (See Table 1 for the estimate number of some shops in Suleja between 1975 and 2015).

Table 1: Estimate number of some shops in Suleja between 1975 and 2015

Shops	1975	1979	1989	1999	2009	2015
Sewing materials/fabrics	2	2	2	6	12	15
Building materials	3	6	8	11	15	20
Households utensils	2	2	5	8	11	18
Vehicle spare parts	2	2	7	11	14	17
Electronics	2	4	10	21	27	35
Electronic repairs	2	2	7	12	19	28

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From the above table, it is glaring that following the siting of the FCDA Field Base, most of the existing businesses in the town continued to expand, as can be seen in the increase in the number of shops. In terms of revenue generation, from the available records, in 2013, the various shops identified, contributed the sum of N1, 022, 400 which represented 10.4 % of the N98, 000, 000 IGR. In 2014, the various shops contributed the same amount generated in the previous year, which represented 0.8 % of the N121, 400, 000 IGR. By 2015, the generating capacity of the various shops increased to N1, 604, 000, which represented 29.3% of the N140, 850, 000 IGR.⁷ Similarly, the various commercial activities also generated employment in the town. For example, in 1981, out of the estimated workforce of 405, the various shops provided 51 youths with jobs which stood at 12%. By 2015, following increase in commercial activities, out of the estimated workforce of 4646, the various shops employed 287 youths, which stood at 6.1%.

The new economic migrants established new commercial activities, such as restaurants/food canteens and eateries, brothels/beer parlours, bakeries, guest houses/hotels, departmental stores, block industries, private hospitals/clinics, pharmacies, patent medicine stores, petrol stations and some small scale industries and manufacturing companies. Apart from providing services to the inhabitants, making profits and providing jobs to the youths, these new businesses generated revenue to the Suleja Local Government as will be shown subsequently.

Brothels/Beer Parlours

In Suleja, brothels and beer parlours were established by the Igbo and Edo migrants after the FCDA Field Base was sited there. They were located

at UnguwarGwandara and Dawaki areas.⁸The brothels provided rooms for prostitutes who engaged in commercial sex work and beer parlours for the sale of alcohol and other intoxicants.⁹ The brothels/beer parlours were patronized by some immigrants and some of the indigenous population. Each brothel employed between 4 and 6 youths who worked as managers, waiters and cooks, depending on its size. For example, in 1982, out of the estimated workforce of 404, the brothels employed 96 youths which represented 23%. In 2002, out of the estimated workforce of 2612, the brothels employed 100 youths, which represented 3.8%. In addition, they generated revenue to the Suleja Local Government. Shortly before they were closed down in 2003, the brothels paid between N5,000 and N7,000 as annual tax to the Local Government.¹⁰(See Table 2 for the brothel/beer parlours in Suleja, (1979-2003).

Table 2: Brothels/Beer Parlours in Suleja between 1979 and 2003

S/No.	Brothel/Beer Parlour	Location	Year of Establishment	Current status
1.	Indo-city Hotel	BakinKasuwa	1979	Converted to residential
2.	National Hotel	Morocco road	1979	Converted to shops
3.	International Hotel	Morocco road	1980	Converted to shops
4.	City Hotel	Morocco road	1981	Converted to residential
5.	Morocco Hotel	Morocco road	1982	Converted to residential
6.	River valley	Morocco road	1982	Converted to shops
7.	Alheri Hotel	Morocco road	1983	Converted to shops
8.	Igala Hotel	Morocco road	1983	Converted to shops
9.	Starlight Hotel	Morocco road	1983	Converted to residential
10.	Rainbow Hotel	Morocco road	1982	Converted to residential
11.	Standard Hotel	Morocco road	1983	Converted to shops
12.	Columbia Hotel	Morocco road	1983	Computer business centre
13.	Anambra Hotel	Morocco road	1984	Converted to shops
14.	Victory Hotel	Morocco road	1984	Converted to residential
15.	Columbia Hotel	Dawaki road	1982	Converted to residential
16.	Sunny Hotel	Dawaki road	1982	Converted to residential

Source: Field work, 2016.

The brothels ceased to exist as the state government introduced the Shari'a legal system in 2003, were closed down. Some of the brothels were converted to either shops or business centres others were converted to residential accommodation.

Restaurants/Food Canteens

Prior to the siting of the FCDA Field Base in Suleja, the town had no single restaurant or food canteen, except numerous local food spots at the

BakinKasuwa and Unguwar Bare-bari areas. Faced with the rising demand for food, following influx of people, some Edo, Yoruba, and Igbo women migrants established restaurants and food canteens in virtually all the major streets in the town. However, only few of those restaurants and food canteens made their businesses known in the town by providing signboards showing the direction of their shops or on the business premises. The pioneer restaurant in the town was known as Madam Bendel established in 1981 by a woman from the defunct Bendel state at UnguwarZaina at the center of the town.¹¹ The restaurant gained popularity in the town and the capital city between 1981 to 1990. Following the creation of Delta state out of the defunct Bendel state in 1991, Madam Bendel renamed her restaurant Madam Delta in the same year.¹² Following the death of Madam Delta in 1995, the restaurant collapsed in 1997. In 2011, a Hausa migrant from Bauchi, Alhaji Muhammad Zakiru established Zakiru restaurant at Unguwar Kabula, along Market road.¹³ Zakiru restaurant became a household name especially among the local population who frequently patronized it. The restaurant collapsed in 2014 after Alhaji Zakiru relocated to Mararaba/Nyaya in the FCT.

The increasing cosmopolitan nature of Suleja and the absence of an organized modern eatery provided opportunity for some people to establish modern eateries in the town. For example, in 2002, a Yoruba migrant established Mr. Biggs beside First Bank, along Usman Faruk road. In 2005, a Hausa migrant established Daula Restaurant opposite the Tribunal, off Sulemanu Barau road. In 2007, an Igbo migrant established Chicken “N” Side adjacent to Mr. Biggs. In the same year, Chinese traders with their base in Abuja joined the competitive business and established Oceanic Bakery near the General hospital, along Usman Faruk road. In 2012, an Ebira from Kogi state established Fine Day Restaurant and Pasteries near Rahama Schools, along Sulemanu Barau road. In the same year, an Igbo woman established Mummy’s Kitchen along Hassan Dallatu road. These modern eateries sold varieties of foods such as white rice and stew, jollof rice, salad and salad cream, pounded yam, semovita, potato chips, chicken, beef, fresh fish pepper soup and varieties of soft drinks including ice cream, in addition to the provision for take-away. It is worthy to note that these eateries were not only patronized by the migrants but also the local population, even though they did not abandon their local food menus. (See Table 3 for Modern Eateries in Suleja, 2000-2015).

Table 3: Modern Eateries in Suleja, 2000-2015

S/N	Name	Location	Year of Establishment	Variety of Food
1.	MR. BIGGS	Along Usman Faruk road, beside First Bank, Suleja	2002	White rice, jollof rice, salad and salad cream, pounded yam, semovita, etc. chicken, beef, snacks and soft drinks, etc
2.	Daula Restaurant	Along Sulemanu Barau road	2005	White rice, jollof rice, salad and salad cream, pounded yam, semovita, etc. chicken, beef, snacks and soft drinks, etc
3.	Oceanic Bakery	Near the Suleja General Hospital, along Usman Faruk road	2007	White rice, jollof rice, salad and salad cream, pounded yam, semovita, etc. chicken, beef, snacks and soft drinks, etc
4.	Chicken "N" Side	Usman Faruk road	2007	White rice, jollof rice, salad and salad cream, pounded yam, semovita, etc. chicken, beef, snacks and soft drinks, etc
5.	Fine Day Restaurant and Pasteries	Along Sulemanu Barau road	2012	White rice, jollof rice, salad and salad cream, pounded yam, semovita, etc. chicken, beef, snacks and soft drinks
5.	Mummy's Kitchen	Hassan Dallatu road	2012	White rice, jollof rice, salad and salad cream, pounded yam, semovita, etc. chicken, beef, snacks and soft drinks, etc

Source: Alhaji Dauda, Head, Suleja Tenement Rate office, along Usman Faruk road, List of Eateries in Suleja, 2002-2012.

The various eateries provided employment in the town. Each eatery employed between 4 and 8 persons who work as cooks, waiters, cashiers, cleaners and security guards, depending on its size and customer base. For example, in 2015, out of the estimated workforce of 4499 in Suleja, these eateries employed 78 persons which represented 1.7 %. In terms of revenue generation, the various eateries also contributed revenue to the Suleja local government. For example, in 2015, out of the N130, 610, 000 annual IGR the eateries contributed N119,000, which represented 0.091%.¹⁴

Bakeries

The business of bread is very lucrative in Suleja as its demand has always been on the increase. Various households use bread especially for breakfast. Prior to the siting of the FCDA Field Base, there were only two bakeries in the town, the Farin-ruwa bakery, a subsidiary of the FarinRuwa Trading and Investment Company established in 1968 at UnguwarWaje and Amana bakery established in 1974 by a Hausa migrant at Unguwar

Gwari.¹⁵ These earlier bakeries enjoyed the patronage of not only the inhabitants of the town but also the surrounding villages. The increasing demand for bread after the siting of the FCDA Field Base in the town motivated some Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo and Yoruba entrepreneurs to establish more bakeries in various parts of the town, bringing their number to 18 in 2013.¹⁶

Table 4: Some Bakeries in Suleja, 1980-2012

S/N	Bakery	Location	Year of Establishment	Current status
1.	Nakowa	UnguwarMagajin Mallam, Suleja	1980	Closed down in 1998 due to shortage of funds to remain in the business
2.	Hassan	UnguwarZariyawa	1983	Operational
3.	King best	BakinKasuwa	1983	Operational
4.	Basira	Along Morocco road, Suleja	1985	Operational
5.	Nasara	UnguwarAho	1986	Operational
6.	Alheri	UnguwarDaudugyara	1990	Operational
7.	S.T.K Bread	Victory road, Suleja	1990	Closed down in 1999 due to shortage of funds
8.	Al-Bushar	UnguwarMagajin Mallam, Suleja	1992	Operational
9.	Yido Bread	Unguwar Mallam Ashehu, Suleja	1994	Operational
10.	Capital Bread	Kwamba	2010	Operational
11.	Zumunta Bakery	UnguwarGwandara, Suleja	1996	Operational
12.	Lamama Bread	UnguwarGwandara, Suleja	1997	Closed down in 2001 after the death of its owner
13.	Bayas Bakery	Morocco road, Suleja	1998	Operational
14.	Express Bread	Eminence	2000	Operational
15.	Fatima Bakery	Dawaki, Suleja	2003	Operational
16.	Oceanic Bakery	Near the General Hospital, along Usman Faruk road, Suleja	2007	Operational
17.	Imperial Bakery and Confectionery	Hassan Dallatu road, Suleja	2009	Operational
18.	Goodluck Bakery	Morocco road, Suleja	2012	Operational

Source: Alhaji Dauda, Head, Suleja Tenement Rate office, along Usman Faruk road, List of some bakeries in Suleja, 1980-2012.

From the above table it is glaring that by 2012, out of the 18 bakeries operating in the town since 1980, only 15 are still engaged in the production of bread, 3 had lost out due to lack of adequate funds to remain in the competitive business. They could not produce high quality bread as produced by some of their business associates.

In addition to meeting the demands of customers, the various bakeries employed 10-20 persons who worked as managers, drivers and those who engaged in the production process. By 2015, out of the estimated workforce of 4499 in Suleja, the various bakeries employed 78 person, which represented 1.7%. Similarly, the bakeries generated revenue to the Suleja Local Government. By 2015, out of the N130,610,000 annual IGR, the bakeries generated N100,000 which represented 0.076%.

Guest Houses/Hotels

Guest houses or hotels are normally houses or establishments offering accommodation to visitors or guests who pay certain amount of money to lodge. Prior to 1979, there were only two guest houses in Suleja. These were the Catering Rest House/Niger Motel (Government owned) established in 1978, opposite the Awwal Ibrahim Township Stadium and Sa'ida Guest-Inn owned by Alhaji Sa'ida (an indigene of Suleja). With the siting of the FCDA Field Base in 1979, other hoteliers joined the business and established more guest houses and hotels in the town. For example, in 1981, Alhaji Kuspa, established Kuspa Guest-Inn at UnguwarJuma and. In 1982, Alhaji Abubakar Sadiq, another Sadiq Guest-Inn at UnguwarMagajin Mallam both were indigenes have listed also within the ancient settlement. The profitability of the business made Alhaji Sa'ida to establish an Annex in 1984, near the State low cost, off Sulemanu Barau road, Suleja. These earliest guest houses mostly serviced the indigenous contractors who came in search of contracts in the new capital territory. Since there were no guest houses or hotels in the capital territory, these contractors lodged in the various guest houses in Suleja. By the early 1980s, these indigenous hoteliers were joined in the business by the migrant hoteliers, most of who are of Igbo, Yoruba and Edo extractions. For example, in 1981, an Igbo migrant popularly called Morocco, established Morocco Guest-Inn at UnguwarGwandara, along Morocco road. In 1983, another Igbo migrant established Sunny Guest-Inn opposite the former Bank of the North at Dawaki. In 1996, a Yoruba migrant, Alhaji AbdulKarim established Cosco Guest House at the hill-top, near the Government lodge. The entrance of these migrant hoteliers into the business increased the number of guest houses/hotels in Suleja from 4 in 1982 to 60 in 2015.¹⁷ Apart from providing

accommodation to visitors, the guest houses/hotels also served as venues for public functions, such as meetings, socialgatherings, recreation and catering services. The guest houses/hotels also provided jobs in the town. Each guest house and hotel employed between 6 and 10 youths who work as managers, receptionists, cooks, cleaners and security guards. For example, by 2015, out of the estimated workforce of 4499, the guest houses/hotels employed 580 youths, which represented 13.1%. With regards to revenue generation, in 2015, out of the N130,610,000annual IGR, the guest houses and hotels generated N726,000, which represented 0.55%.¹⁸(See Table 5 for the Guest Houses/Hotels in Suleja, from 1980-2015 and their status)

Table 5: Guest houses/Hotels in Suleja, 1980-2015

S/N	Guest Inn/Hotel	Location	Year of Establishment	Current Status
1.	Indo Hotel	At Biba road, later relocated to UnguwarGwandara as Indo Guest Inn	1980	Converted to a private school in 2003 and residential in 2010
2.	Kuspa Guest Inn	UnguwarJuma	1981	Converted to residential accommodation in 1999
3.	Tommy Hill Hotel	Church road	1981	Operational
4.	Morocco Hotel	UnguwarGwandara	1981	Converted to residential in 2003
5.	Eddy Vic Hotel	Opposite Unity Bank (Formerly Bank of the North)	1981	Converted to residential in 2003
6.	Silver Port Hotel (Formerly Agudu Guest Inn)	Kwamba	1982	Operational
7.	Abdullahi Hotspot	Opposite Unity Bank	1982	Converted to residential in 2003
8.	Badaru Guest Inn	Near Kantoma bridge	1983	Operational
9.	Sunny Guest Inn	Opposite the former Bank of the North (now Unity Bank) Dawaki	1983	Converted to residential in 2003
10.	Sadiq Guest Inn	UnguwarMagajin Mallam, along Hassan Dallatu road	1984	Operational
11.	Sa'ida Guest Inn (Annex)	State Low cost, Off Sulemanu Barau road	1984	Operational

12.	Jumet Hotel	Kwamba	1984	Converted to residential in 2003
13.	Best Way Hotel	Near Sunny Guest Inn, Dawaki	1986	Converted to residential in 2003
14.	Eminence Hotel	Off Morocco road	1986	Operational
15.	Suleja Club	Hill top	1990	Converted to residential in 2009
16.	Nadama Guest Inn	Sulemanu Barau road	1990	Converted to residential in 1999
18.	Serenity Guest Inn	Along Kaduna road	1990	Operational
19.	Alheri Guest Inn	UnguwarGwandara, Morocco road	1990	Converted to residential in 2003
20.	Top line Hotel	Madalla	1990	Converted to residential in 2003
21.	De-limit	Sulemanu Barau road	1990	Converted to residential in 2003
22.	Osato Holiday Inn	Kwamba	1991	Converted to residential accommodation in 2003
23.	Jubilee Hotel	Kurmin Sarki, off Minna road	1991	Operational
24.	Ochukwu Guest House	Kwamba	1991	Converted to residential in 2003
25.	Blessed Guest Inn	Along Kaduna road	1991	Operational
26.	Lura Guest Inn	Along Kaduna road	1991	Operational
27.	National Guest House	Morocco road	1991	Converted to residential in 2003
28.	Hill Side Motel	Along Bakinlku	1991	Converted to residential in 2003
29.	Seacord Guest House	Kwamba	1992	Converted to residential in 2003
30.	KudauFrnil Hotel	Gwazunu, off Abuja-Kaduna express way	1992	Converted to residential in 2003
31.	Round House Hotel	Along Bakinlku road	1992	Operational

32.	Jim Inn Guest House	SaniAlhassan Drive, along Bakinlku/Kaduna road	1992	Operational
33.	Pioneers Guest Inn	Along Bakinlku road	1992	Operational
34.	Polygon Guest Inn	RafinSanyi, along Madalla road	1992	Converted to residential in 2003
35.	Sarafina Guest House	Along Sulemanu Barau road	1992	Operational
36.	Topline Guest House	Morocco road	1993	Converted to residential in 2003
37.	Red Bricks	Along Bakinlku road	1993	Operational
38.	Mahuta Guest Inn	UnguwarGwandara, Morocco road	1993	Converted to residential in 2003
39.	Fawcett Guest Flouse	UnguwarGwandara, Morocco road	1993	Converted to residential in 1999
40.	Beauty Hotel	Church road	1994	Converted to residential in 1999
41.	Easy way Guest House	Bwari junction, near Zuma Barracks	1994	Converted to residential in 2003
42.	Cocoa Hotel	Kasuwan Dole, Pangamu	1994	Converted to residential in 2000
43.	Abuja Motel	Along Abuja-Kaduna Express way	1994	Operational
44.	Capy Hotel	Behind former SDP Office, Kurmin Sarki, off Minna road	1995	Converted to residential in 1999
45.	De Royal Guest House	Kwamba	1995	Converted to residential in 1999
46.	J. B. Y. Guest Inn	Behind Awwal Ibrahim Stadium, Kurmin Sarki	1995	Converted to residential in 2003
47.	COSCO Guest House	Hill top	1996	Operational
48.	Abdullahi Bisalla Guest Inn (Local Government owned)	Opposite the former FCDA Field Base	1997	Converted to the office of Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps
49.	NNPC Club House (Formerly NNPC Guest House)	SaniAlhassan Drive	1997	Operational

50.	Double Tee Guest House	SaniAlhassan Drive	1998	Operational
51.	West end Apartment	Sulemanu Barau road	1999	Operational
52.	Oyus Guest Inn	Off SaniAlhassan Drive	2000	Converted to residential in 2003
53.	De-Ploo Hotel	Madalla	2001	Operational
54.	Gold Torch	Off SaniAlhassan Drive	2001	Operational
55.	City Link Guest House	RafinSanyi	2001	Operational
56.	Kristos Guest	RafinSanyi, along Madalla road	2002	Operational
57.	Sandaco Guest Inn	Along Madalla road	2005	Operational
58.	City Link	Off SaniAlhassan Drive	2005	Operational
59.	Cecco Guest Inn	Opposite Sulemanu Barau Technical College, Kwamba	2006	Operational
60.	Masfala Guest House	Kwamba, Off Minna road	2008	Operational
61.	Agenda Suites and Restaurant	Kwankwashe, along Madalla road	2008	Operational
62.	Yankees Hotel	Sulemanu Barau road	2009	Operational
63.	Madalla Resort	Madalla	2009	Operational
64.	Premier Guest House	Sulemanu Barau road	2009	Operational
65.	Primeview Guest House	Along Sulemanu Barau road	2009	Operational
66.	Lawson Guest House	Kwamba	2010	Operational
	Dato Hotel	Madalla	2010	Operational
67.	Hylina Guest Inn	Madalla	2010	Operational
68.	Gresa Guest Inn	Madalla	2010	Operational
69.	Primeview Guest House (Annex)	Along Kaduna road	2011	Operational
70.	Fidmac Hotel	Morocco road	2012	Operational
71.	Mac Anthony	Kwamba, Minna road	2015	Operational

Source: Alhaji Dauda, Head, Suleja Tenement Rate office, along Usman Faruk road, List of Guest Houses/Hotels in Suleja, 1981-2015.

The table above shows the proliferation of guest houses and hotels in Suleja since 1981. By 2015, the number of guest houses and hotels had dropped to 39 after 31 of them had been closed down and converted to other purposes. Most of the hotels that were converted to private residence and schools was as a result of the fact that their owners could not remain in the competitive market, especially as new hotels sprung up providing efficient services. Another reason explaining the high rate of conversion of hotels to private purposes was because of the death of their owners when the buildings became inherited property for the families of the deceased who sold them to private individuals.

Departmental stores

What operates as Super markets in Suleja are not super markets in the real sense of the word. This is because the buildings are small in size compared to super markets in the major cities in Nigeria and some parts of the world. At best they could be regarded as departmental stores even though those who established them called them super markets. These departmental stores offered some products ranging from canned or packaged foods-meats, fish, dairy products and non-food items such as kitchen utensils, cloth wears, and gift items. Unlike the traditional shops, the departmental stores have fixed prices. Prior to the siting of the FCDA Field Base in 1979, the only outlet the elite in Suleja used for shopping was the Farin-Ruwa Trading and Investment Company established in 1969 along Usman Faruk road. Within the township, some local shops were established which the local population patronized. The metamorphosis of Suleja into cosmopolitan led to the establishment of departmental stores. These departmental stores were exclusively established and controlled by the Igbo migrants who employed one or two members of their families or relations as sales boys/girls. Most of these departmental stores were named after their owners. For example, in 1980, Mr. Egwuagu established the first departmental store in the town, which he named Egwuagu super market, along Morocco road. In 1981, Mr. Sunny established the second departmental store which he named Sunny stores, along Hassan Dallatu road. Subsequently more of such departmental store were established. (See Table 6 for the departmental stores in Suleja, 1980 and 2014)

Table 6: Departmental stores in Suleja, 1980-2014

S/N	Departmental Store	Location	Year of Establishment	Current Status
1.	Egwuagu Super Market	Morocco road, Suleja	1980	Closed down in 2002
2.	Sunny Stores	Hassan Dallatu road, Suleja	1981	Operational
3.	Cyril Super Market	Morocco road, Suleja	1982	Closed down in 2000
4.	God's Link Super Stores	Sulemanu Barau road, Suleja	1987	Operational
5.	Unique Super Stores	Sulemanu Barau road, Suleja	2009	Operational
6.	Silva Stores	Sulemanu Barau road, Suleja	2014	Operational

Source: Alhaji Dauda, Head, Suleja Tenement Rate office, along Usman Faruk road, 2016.

The table above reveals that by 2014, only four of those departmental stores established in the town were operational. As the table shows, two of the earliest departmental stores have closed down due lack of funds to remain in the business. These were Egwuagu 2000 and Cyril in 2002. These departmental stores generated revenue to Suleja Local Government. To the tune of , N270,000 in 2015.¹⁹

Petrol (Filling) Stations

Sale of petroleum products such as petrol, kerosene and gas has been one of the lucrative businesses in Nigeria since the oil boom period. In Suleja, the first filling station was as Shell, was established in 1967 at BakinKasuwa.²⁰ By 1978, Alhaji Mustapha acquired the Shell petrol station and renamed it National filling station.²¹ The establishment of Kaduna refinery in 1980 and the NNPC depot at Maje, Suleja, in 1994 gave additional impetus to the oil marketers to establish petrol stations in Suleja. The petrol stations in Suleja enjoy the monopoly of the Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, Ebira and Edo migrants. For example, in 1981, an Igbo migrant, Jibeco established the Agip petrol station near G.S.S. Suleja.²² In 1991, a Hausa migrant, DahiruGarba established a filling station Kwamba, along Minna road. In 2004, an Ebira migrant established Ohinoyi Oil and Gas filling station, at Kwankwashe, along Madallaroad. In 2010, a Hausa migrant, Alhaji MajeSalisuSullubawa, established a filling station that bears his name at Kwamba, along Minna road. (See table 7 for petrol stations in Suleja, 1981

to 2015). Apart from serving the inhabitants with fuel, Liquid paraffin and Gas/Diesel, the petrol stations employed between 6 and 15 youths, depending on their sizes and services offered. For example, in 2015, out of the estimated workforce of 4499 in Suleja, the petrol stations employed 554 youths, which represented 12.31%. Other services offered in most of the petrol stations include sale of lubricants, vehicles wheel balancing and alignment and servicing of vehicles. The petrol stations also generated revenue to the Suleja Local Government. For example, in 2015, out of the N130,610,000 IGR, the petrol stations contributed 1,015,000, which represented 0.077%.²³

Table 7: Petrol (Filling) Stations in Suleja, 1981-2015

S/N	Petrol Station	Location	Year of Establishment	Current status
1.	Agip	Near GSS, along Madalla road	1981	Closed down in 2000 and relocated to Gwagwalada
2.	Mobil	Madalla, by Express way	1987	Operational
3.	DahiruGarba	Kwamba, along Minna road	1991	Operational
4.	Shemako	Kwamba, along Minna road	1991	Operational
5.	Aiton	Adjacent First bank, along Usman Faruk road	1994	Operational
6.	Conoil	Kwankwashe, along Madalla road	1998	Operational
7.	ASCON	Madalla	2001	Operational
8.	Kotorima Merchant Nig. Ltd	Kwamba, opposite the former NRC office	2002	Operational
9.	Total	Maje	2002	Operational
10.	Mobil	Berger Paint, Chaza junction	2004	Operational
11.	Isra	Berger Paint, Chaza junction	2004	Operational
12.	Total	Near GSS, along Madalla road	2005	Operational
13.	Baura Global Co. Ltd	Maje	2005	Operational
14.	Salkab Petroleum investment	Madalla	2006	Operational
15.	NNPC	Madalla	2006	Operational
16.	Ohinoyi Oil & Gas	RafinSanyi	2006	Operational

17.	Amton Global	Kwankwashe, Madalla road	2006	Operational
18.	MRS (formerly Texaco)	Kwamba	2006	Operational
19.	Mobil	Bakin-Iku	2006	Operational
20.	Mohafiya	Kwankwashe, Madalla road	2008	Operational
21.	Peace Oil & Gas	Near Abbatoir, Madalla road	2007	Operational
22.	HaliduGegu	Hill top, near the former FCDA Field Base	2007	Operational
23.	Alhali (HaliduGegu)	Kwamba	2007	Operational
24.	Global	Bakin-Iku	2007	Operational
25.	HaliduGegu	Kwamba, Opposite Sulemanu Barau Technical College	2007	Operational
26.	Felande Petroleum Ltd	Maje	2008	Operational
27.	EDEWA & Sons	Kwamba, along Minna road	2008	Operational
28.				
29.	AP	Kwamba, along Minna road	2009	Operational
30.	Awwaleem Petrol & Gas Company Ltd	Kwamba, along Minna road	2010	Operational
31.	ZAMSON Global Resources	Kwamba	2010	Operational
32.	Alh. MajeSalisuSulubawa Nig. Ltd	Kwamba	2010	Operational
33.	Alh. AbdulKadir & Sons Ltd	Opposite Zuma FM, Maje	2010	Operational
34.	Fort (formerly AP)	RafinSanyi, along Madalla road	2011	Operational
35.	NNPC	Adjacent the Local Government Secretariat	2013	Operational
36.	Ifiene filling station	Kwamba, along Minna road	2014	Operational
37.	Alhaji Mustafa	Maje	2014	Operational
38.	Poosab	Kwamba, along Minna road	2014	Operational
39.	Krona Resources	Gwazunu	2015	Operational

Source: Field Survey, 2016.

It is glaring from the above table that the petrol stations in Suleja were geographically spread. Apart from the National filling station established within the township, all the other petrol stations were established at the outskirts of the town on the northern, eastern and southern axis, except the western axis which lacked any entry or exit point due to the difficult terrain characterized by hills and rocks.

Sachet water

Prior to the establishment of the sachet water business otherwise called pure water in the year 2000, some local water vendors packaged water locally on ordinary white polythene bags and sold to members of the public. The business thrived during the hot season. Even though the process of packaging the water was not hygienic members of the public at public places such as markets and motor parks patronized the local water products. The emergence of the sachet water business in 2000 undermined the activities of the local water vendors, who gradually lost out. In order to remain in the business, most of the local water vendors patronized the various sachet water companies for sale to members of the public. The sachet water companies used machine and chemicals to treat or purify the water before packaging it into 50 CL polythene bags. Most of these sachet water companies used vehicles to supply their customers. The various sachet water companies generated employment in the town. In 2015, out of the estimated workforce of 4499, the sachet water companies employed 132 persons which represented 2.93%. Similarly, the sachet water companies also generated revenue to the Suleja Local Government Council. In 2015, out of the N130,610,000 annual IGR, the sachet water generated N110,000, which represented 0.084%. (See Table 8 for some sachet water companies in Suleja, 2000-2015).

Table 8: Some Sachet (Pure) Water Companies in Suleja, 2000-2015

S/N	Sachet water	Location	Year of Establishment	Current Status
1.	De-Great table water	Eminence Hotel, Morocco road	2000	Operational
2.	Nice water (sachet and table water)	Behind Goben chemist, Off Morocco road	2003	Operational
3.	Supreme pure water	Morocco road	2003	Operational
4.	Demand pure water	Victory road	2004	Operational
5.	F. C. Blessed table water	Kurmin Sarki	2004	Operational
6.	Samsoko table water	Church road	2005	Operational
7.	Amaneem pure water	Kwamba	2005	Operational
8.	Supa pure water	Hassan Dallatu road	2008	Operational
9.	Edyrowl table water	Victory road	2009	Operational
10.	Al-Makus pure water	Hassan Dallatu road	2010	Operational
11.	Kudo table water	Kwamba	2010	Operational
12.	NUSEAM table water	Kurmin Sarki	2011	Operational
13.	De-Prime pure water	Behind Abuja Hotel, Abuja-Kaduna express way	2011	Operational
14.	S. K. S. Table water	Sulemanu Barau road	2012	Operational
15.	De-Grace pure water	Kilometer 10, Abuja-Kaduna express way	2012	Operational
16.	Biljim pure water	B Division, Gwazunu road	2013	Operational
17.	De-Scan table water	Off SaniAlhassan Drive, near Oyus Guest Inn	2014	Operational
18.	Inspiration table water	Off Sulemanu Barau road	2014	Operational
19.	De-Provider pure water	Off Sulemanu Barau road	2014	Operational
20.	Blessed water	Morocco road	2015	Operational
21.	Talent pure water	Behind Berger paint, Chaza road	2014	Operational
22.	Sowelab pure water	Paulosa, along Madalla road	2015	Operational

Source: Alhaji Dauda, Head, Suleja Tenement Rate office, along Usman Faruk road, List of Super markets in Suleja, 1980-2014.

From the above table, it is clear that by 2015, all the 22 sachet water companies remained in operation.

Other commercial activities, 1979-2015

Other commercial activities established in Suleja between 1979 and 2015 included photographic studios firstly established in 1960 and became widespread as from 1979, Tyre stores in 1979, printing presses, furniture works and boutiques all in 1980, electronics and electronic spare parts in 1980, vehicle spare parts in 1981, fashion/saloon/laundry/hairdressing and barbing in 1985, security services in 1989, motorcycle dealers and car wash in 1990, Computer business centres in 1990 and GSM shops in 2004. Thus, Suleja emerged as a hub for commercial activities. These services were not only patronized by the inhabitants of the town and its neighbouring communities but also by the inhabitants of the Federal Capital Territory, including Jere and other communities in Kaduna State. Therefore, it would not be an exaggeration to say that every street in the town became a market side because of the presence of shops for various commercial activities.

Suleja Mechanic village

The Suleja mechanic village was established in 1983 behind the First Bank, off Usman Faruk road. it became known as the First Bank Unit. Prior to the establishment of the Suleja mechanic village, mechanics were found along the major entry and exit points of the town. The mechanic village brought together mechanics different after and that specialized in vehicles. They also cut across different ethnic groups with igbo and yaruba being majority. Some mechanics in Suleja did not however relocate to the mechanic village. Many mechanics have their workshops at various sections of the town. In addition to repairing and refurbishing of all types of vehicles, the Suleja mechanic village also offered other services such as mechanical panel beating, auto-electrical welding, alignment and wheel balancing, fabricating upholstery and interior and motor spare parts for all vehicles new or fairly used. By 2015, there were a total number of 72 persons engaged in various works in the mechanic village.²⁴ This figure represented 1.71% of the estimated workforce of 4499 in Suleja. The mechanic village is also an important source of revenue to the Suleja Local Government Council. For instant In 2015, the Suleja mechanic village generated the sum of N115,000 to the Local Government, which represented 0.088%.²⁵

In 2002, the Suleja Local Government Council established a permanent site for the mechanic village at Dumez, Gauraka, along Abuja-Kaduna dual carriage way. Subsequently, many mechanics relocated from the mechanic village in the town to the permanent site, while others remained at the First Bank unit.²⁶ Like the first bank unit, the Igbo dominated the Dumez unit.

According to the Chairman of the unit, by 2015, the number of persons working in the Dumex unit was 145.²⁷ and generated N409,000 as annual revenue to the Suleja Local Government Council, which represented 0.31%.²⁸

Suleja Aluminium Village

In 1994, the Suleja aluminium village was established at Gauraka, along Abuja-Kaduna dual carriage way. The market was owned by some Igbo and Hausa migrants, who in 1980 acquired the land from the Suleja Local Government.²⁹ Prior to the establishment of the aluminium market, the site was a building material market with about 10 shops owned by the Igbo. In 1993, three aluminium dealers, Build-well, Law-mark and Masters established aluminium business there.³⁰ By early 1994, seeing the prospects of the aluminium business there, other aluminium dealers joined the earlier dealers. By late 1994, the aluminium business dominated the building material business which forced the building material business to relocate to Dei-Dei, which is the largest building material market in the FCT. The leading aluminium dealers constructed their respective plazas and side shops for rent by the other dealers. Thus, by 2015, there were six plazas in the aluminium village. These are Habitat, Build-well, Law-mark, Masters, Ojukwu and Oraka plazas respectively. Big dealers imported the aluminium products from China while others got their supplies from some aluminium manufacturing companies in Nigeria, which included Onyishialuminium manufacturing company in Imo state and Nagalisaluminium manufacturing company in Lagos state. The total number of shops at the Suleja aluminium village was put at 420 including the side shops.³¹ Similarly, the aluminium market provided jobs to 1080 persons.³² This figure represented 24% of the estimated workforce of 4499 in Suleja. About 70 per cent of the aluminium dealers are Igbo, while the Yoruba and Hausa constitute 15 per cent and others 5 per cent.³³

Tax force office, Suleja Aluminum village, Number of Shops at the Market, 2018 By 2010, the aluminium business had become a lucrative industry employing a large number of persons and generating income to the owners and revenue to the Suleja Local Government Council. Each dealer employs between 6 and 7 persons who worked as sales girls and errand boys. The workers are paid between N15, 000 and N25, 000 monthly. In addition, the dealers employed the services of the technicians who specialized in fixing the aluminium products into different shapes and sizes.

The big shops at the plazas paid N150,000 as annual rent to the owners of the plazas while the side shops which are smaller in size paid N120, 000

annually. Since 2010, the aluminium dealers have been lamenting the exorbitant annual rent demanded by the owners of the shops they occupied. In 2012, the union leaders appealed to the Suleja Local Government Council to come to their aid and provide them with a government land where they could pay less. Up to 2015, the Suleja Local Government has not provided the aluminium dealers with the land. The aluminium dealers still paid exorbitantly for the rented shops. As at 2015, the annual revenue generated at the aluminium village amounted to N2,520,000, which represented 1.92% of the IGR³⁴

Establishment of Banks and Financial Institutions

Banks and other financial institutions aid the social and economic growth of any society. Socially, the establishment of banks leads to the coming of people of diverse socio-cultural backgrounds who work in the banks, thereby mingling with the inhabitants of the society. Economically, to a greater extent, the presence of banks in the society boosts economic and commercial activities. In their attempt to grab advantage of the sprawling commercial activities some banks established their branches in the town. In early 1979, the First Bank and Bank of the North established their branches at Usman Faruk and Dawaki roads respectively.³⁵ In late 1979, the International Bank for West Africa (IBWA) also established its branch at Hilltop near the Government Lodge.³⁶ The number of banks rose from 2 in 1979 to 22 in 2015.³⁷ It is worthy to note that these banks enjoyed high patronage because of the various commercial activities in Suleja. (See Table 9 for banks in Suleja, 1980-2011).

Table 9: Banks in Suleja, 1980-2011

S/N	Bank	Location	Year of Establishment	Current Status
1.	AfriBank (Formerly IBWA)	Relocated to Unguwar Gwandara, opposite the old BakinKasuwa primary school	1980	Closed down in 2006
2.	United Bank for Africa (UBA)	Unguwar Kabula	1981	Operational
3.	African Continental Bank	Dawaki	1982	Closed down in 2006
4.	Pan African Bank	Sulemanu Barau road	1982	Closed down in 2006
5.	Commerce and Credit Bank	Dawaki	1983	Closed down in 2000
6.	Union Bank	Hill top, near the former FCDA Field Base	1983	Operational
7.	Inter City Bank	Usman Faruk road, opposite First Bank	1984	Closed down in 2006
8.	African Continental Bank	Dawaki	1984	Closed down in 2006
9.	Keystone (formerly Habib Bank and Bank	Along Morocco road	1988	Operational
10.	Access Bank	Sulemanu Barau road	1991	Operational
11.	BankPHB (formerly Habib Bank	Morocco road	1998	Operational
12.	Zenith Bank	Usman Faruk road	2005	Operational
13.	Unity Bank (Formerly Bank of the North)	Usman Faruk road and Dawaki	2006	Operational
14.	Diamond Bank	Market road	2006	Operational
15.	Oceanic Bank (now EcoBank)	Usman Faruk road	2008	Operational
16.	First City Monument Bank (FCMB)	Sulemanu Barau road	2008	Operational
17.	Fidelity Bank	Sulemanu Barau road	2010	Operational
18.	Stanbic IBTC Bank	Usman Faruk road	2010	Operational
19.	Mainstreet Bank (formerly AfriBank)	Market road	2011	Operational

Source: Niger state Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, A Publication of Commercial Department, 2014.

The above table glaringly shows that by 2015, the number of banks in Suleja reduced to 13. The reduction is because six out of the 19 banks

operating in the town closed down due to the fact that they could not meet the target twenty five Billion (25,000,000,00) naira capital found set by the central bank of Nigeria The result effort of this was majour of banks ³⁸. Immediately after the merger, new banks established their branches in Suleja just as they did across the country. For example, in 2005, Zenith bank established its branch in Suleja.³⁸ In 2006, three banks established their branches in the town. These were Unity Bank, after the merger of eight (8) different banks, including the former Bank of the North and Inter City bank.³⁹ Unity bank retained the buildings of the former Bank of the North at Dawaki and Inter-City Bank at Usman Faruk road respectively. In 2006, Diamond Bank and Intercontinental bank established their branches in the town. In 2008, two additional banks opened their branches in Suleja. These were Oceanic bank which in 2009 changed its name to Eco Bank⁴⁰ and First City Monument Bank.⁴¹ In 2010, two more banks established their branches in the town. These were Fidelity bank⁴² and Stanbic IBTC.⁴³ In 2011, AfriBank earlier established in 1980 changed its name to Mainstreet bank⁴⁴ and retained its building along the market road.

In addition to these banks, some insurance companies established their branches in Suleja. These included the Liberty Assurance Company Limited 1980, the Gateway Assurance Company 1981, the Maximum Insurance Company Limited and the International Insurance Group 1984.⁴⁵ These insurance companies covered fire incidence, vehicle accidents, motor vehicles and general insurance policies. By the late 1990s, due to low patronage, these insurance companies had closed down.

The presence of these banks and insurance companies greatly contributed to the growth of commercial activities in Suleja. Most of the banks gave loan facilities to their teeming customers especially young traders and would-be entrepreneurs to either establish a new business or expand an existing one.

Revolution in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) provided the banks with an excellent opportunity to provide more effective and efficient services to their customers. Some of these new services include introduction of the Automated Teller Machine (ATM) for cash withdrawals, transfer of funds, payment of utility bills and online banking service using smartphones, laptops and desktops via the Internet for online transactions such as online shopping through numerous online shops, like Konga and Injoo.

Establishment of Private Companies and Manufacturing Industries in Suleja

In spite of the fact that Suleja is blessed with natural resources, such as granite rocks and wood of various types, prior to the siting of the FCDA Field Base, apart from some block industries, Suleja lacked any medium or large scale industries. This was due to the neglect the town suffered as a result of the politics that characterized the First Republic when both the Regional and later Northwest State Governments respectively were reluctant to locate any industry in the town. However, following the siting of the FCDA Field Base in Suleja, which attracted influx of people, the town was connected to the National grid. In its bid to attract investors in establishing industries in Suleja, in 1989, the State Government created an industrial layout at the outskirts of the town, along Minna road, which is yet to develop, almost three decades later.⁴⁶In addition, there is yet to be any serious commitment on the part of the government to promote industrialization of the state in general, Suleja inclusive. The government is yet to formulate and implement any policy towards the industrialization of the state as a whole. Therefore, only few medium scale industries were established along Kwamba/Maje, Bakin-Iku and Madalla roads respectively. For example, between 1978 and 1982, due to the availability of granite rocks in abundance, various quarries were established in Suleja to meet the demand for the stone products needed mostly by various construction firms engaged in developing the capital city. Thus, in 1978, Dumex construction company established a quarry at Bakin-Iku, along Abuja-Kaduna dual carriage way. In 1979, a Yoruba migrant known as Alhaji Abdullahi Gboyega established a quarry at Kwankwashe, off Madalla road. In 1980, the Nigerian Mining Corporation established a quarry opposite Zuma rock. In 1981, five different companies established their quarries. These were Paulosa, at Rafin-Sanyi, off Madalla road, Army road stone at Madalla, Strabag, Guffanti, ARC, all at Gauraka, along Kaduna-Abuja dual carriage way. In 1982, Stalin Company established a quarry opposite Zuma rock. Quarry activity relied on diesel powered machines to operate. Unlike the other medium scale industries, the quarries did not need electricity to operate. According to AbdurRahimi, quarry activity involves drilling, blasting and crushing of rocks to become chips of various sizes.⁴⁷ The various stone products were mainly used in the various construction sites during the early development of the capital city, including road construction. (See Table 10 for some quarries in Suleja, 1978-1982).

Table 10: Some Quarries in Suleja, 1978-1982

S/N	Quarry	Location	Year of Establishment	Current Status
1.	Dumex	Bakin-lku, along Abuja-Kaduna dual carriage way	1978	Operational
2.	Alhaji Gboyega	Kwankashe, off Madalla road	1979	Operational
3.	Mining Corporation (Government owned)	Opposite Zuma rock	1980	Closed down in 1988
4.	Armey road stone	Madalla	1981	Closed down in 1987
5.	Strabag Construction Company	Gauraka, along Abuja-Kaduna dual carriage way	1981	Closed down in 2000
6.	Guffanti construction company	Gauraka, along Abuja-Kaduna dual carriage way	1981	Closed down in 1995
7.	Paulosa	RafinSanyi, off Madalla road	1981	Closed down in 1999
8.	ARC	Gauraka, along Abuja-Kaduna dual carriage way	1981	Closed down in 1986
9.	Stalin	Opposite Zuma rock	1982	Closed down in 1996

Source: Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Minna, A Publication of Commercial Department, 2014

It is glaring from the above table that by 2015, only two out of the nine quarries in Suleja are still extant. These are Dumex and Alhaji Abdullahi Gboyega. Seven had left the business since most of them were established to supply the stone products when the capital city was being developed. After much success was achieved in developing the capital city, these quarries shut down their sites and gradually left. Thus, the market base for the two quarries still operating is limited to Suleja, Tafa, Gurara and some parts of the FCT.

Saw Mills

As a medium scale industry, saw mills processed timber into woods of various sizes. Although Alhaji Abdullahi Gboyega, established the first saw mill in Suleja in 1972, at the old Army Barracks, along Madalla road,⁴⁸ the timber business expanded after siting of the FCDA Field Base when the demand for wood increased for various constructions in Suleja and the capital city. In 1979, Alhaji Isyaka Mai-Katako joined the timber processing business and established his saw mill at Rafin-Sanyi, along Madalla road.⁴⁹

In 1981, Alhaji Ibrahim Mai-KwaryaBiyu also established his saw mill at Bakin-Iku, Abuja-Kaduna express way. The basic raw material, which is timber, was sourced in large quantity from some communities near Suleja, such as Kabo, Shaku and Dogon-Kurmi. Timber was also sourced from distant places such as Lapai, Agaie and Baro.⁵⁰ The market base for the various processed woods included Suleja town, Minna, Lapai, Agaie and the FCT. In the early 1980s, the various processed woods were used for some construction works in the new capital city, Abuja.⁵¹

The saw mill business began to decline in the late 1990s due to a number of factors, such as high cost of the equipment, power failure, cost of buying generators and diesel to run the equipment and indeed the entry of some Igbo into the business, who supplied cheap timber to the town from the south.⁵² Consequently, the Igbo timber dealers established a timber shed near the present Suleja modern market. By 2003 an entrepreneur, Alhaji Mohammed Muradadislodged the Igbo timber dealers when he acquired the site. Thus, the timber business was relocated near Eminence along the State low cost housing unit.⁵³ The new site belonged to Alhaji Sai'da who acquired it from the Suleja Local Government Council as far back 1980. A certain Igbo woman is said to have played an important role for acquiring the new site. She is said to have appealed to Alhaji Sa'ida to rent the site to her kinsmen in the timber business.⁵⁴ The Igbo who dominated the timber shade were, from 2010, joined by some other groups such as the Hausa, Yoruba and Epira-Kwoto, leading to the increase in the number of shades from 3 in 2004 to 100 in 2011.⁵⁵ By 2012, the number of the shades dropped to 50 after one Alhaji Hassan Mai-Bulawus, a Hausa migrant bought almost half of the timber shade from Alhaji Sai'da. Outside the town, the various processed woods were patronized by people from Madalla, Zuba in the FCT, and Izom, Lambata, Kwakuti, in Niger state and Jere in Kaduna state. The timber shade is also an important source of revenue to the Suleja Local Government. As at 2015, the annual rent paid to Alhaji Sa'idathe owner of the land was 2,000,000. On its part, by 2015 the Suleja Local Government generated N450,000 as annual revenue from the timber shade, which represented 0.34% of the IGR.⁵⁶

Manufacturing industries

From 1990, some migrant entrepreneurs began to establish some medium scale industries in Suleja. For example, in 1990, an Igbo migrant known as Mr. Tommy established an aluminium company which he named after himself, i.e. Tommy Aluminium, along Bakin-Iku road. The company produces aluminium products and accessories. In 1991, a Hausa/

Fulanimigrant known as Alhaji Hassan established Hassan Modern Turner near the Kwamba layout, along Minna road.⁵⁷ The company specialized in the design and manufacturing of machine parts, reconditioning of engine bloc, grinding of crank shaft, surfacing of top cylinder head, cutting of gear teeth into various sizes, among others. In 1991, in an attempt to boost Nigeria's refining, pumping and distribution of petroleum to various parts of Nigeria, the Nigerian National Petroleum Company established depots across the country. In Suleja, the depot was located at Maje, a sub-urb of Suleja, along the Maje-Diko road. In 2001, a renowned Yoruba migrant, known as Alhaji Abdullahi Gboyega, established a nail production company known as Shukra Global Resources at the old Army Barracks, along Madalla road. In 2002, vitafoam established a depot near the B Division police station and supplied various kinds of foams to its numerous wholesalers and individuals. In 2014, Mr. Tommy expanded his business in the town and established Tommy Poly along Bakin-Iku road. The company produced various agro-polythene bags and sheets. These medium scale industries depended on the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) to operate. But due to incessant power outage experienced across the country, most of these industries acquired independent power plants and generators to operate in order to remain in the competitive market. (See Table 11 for some small and medium scale industries and depots in Suleja, 1990-2014)

Table 11: Some Companies/Industries and Depots in Suleja, 1990-2014

S/N	Industry/Company/Depot	Location	Year of Establishment
1.	Tommy Aluminum	Near the former FCDA Field Base, along Bakin-Iku/Kaduna road	1990
2.	Hassan Modern Turner	Tagawenqara (Opposite AEDC office), Kwamba	1991
3.	Shukra Global Resources (Nail production company)	The former Alhaji Abdullahi Gboyega and Sons (Saw Mill)	2001
4.	Vitaform Depot	Along Madalla road	2002
5.	Tommy Poly	Along Bakin-Iku/Kaduna road	2014

Source: Field Survey, 2014/2015

The various medium scale industries like the small scale industries discussed above also provided employment and generated revenue to the Suleja Local Government Council. The annual revenue generated by these medium scale industries in 2015 was N1,590,000, which represented 1.22%.⁵⁸

Conclusion

It has been demonstrated in this paper that the siting of the FCDA Field Base in Suleja in 1979 to facilitate the development of the new capital city led to the influx of fresh migrants to the town from many states of the federation and beyond. The influx provided opportunity for the economic migrants to establish a wide range of new commercial activities. These new commercial activities did not only improve on the quality of life of the inhabitants but also provided jobs to the youths. The quantum of commercial activities in Suleja enabled it to become one of the largest economic hubs generating huge IGR in the state. We have equally observed that the various commercial activities discussed have been some of the important source of revenue, paying various taxes to the Suleja local government council.

Endnotes

1. The *Zage-zagi* were the pre Jihad citizens of Zaria who followed the fugitive King, Makau from Zaria when they were overthrown and banished from Zaria by the Jihadists in 1808
2. Hassan and Shuaibu, *A Chronicle of Abuja*, A.U.P., p. 52
3. 1976 Niger State Government Population Estimate
4. 1979 Niger State Government Population Estimate
5. Interview with Alhaji Musbahu Shittu, 72 years, at his residence, Victory road, Suleja, 22/10/2014
6. Interview with Mr. Sunny Stanley, 69 years, at his Supermarket, along Hassan Dallatu road, Suleja, 2/10/2014
7. Interview with Dangana Yahaya, 53 years, former Revenue Officer, Suleja Local Government Council, at his office, Suleja Local Government Secretariat, 3/12/2017
8. Interview with Muhammad Awwal Zakari, Business man, 48 years, at his shop, Dawaki, Suleja, 23/10/2015
9. Interview with Isiyaku Hussaini, business man, 48 years, at his residence, Unguwar Mallam Ashehu, Suleja, 24/11/2015
10. Interview with Mr. Yakubu Bala, 56 years, Former Revenue Officer, Suleja Local Government, at his residence, Bakin Kasuwa, Suleja, 28/10/2017
11. Mr. Emmanuel, Son of the late Madam Delta, interviewed at his business centre, Unguwar Zaina, 25/5/2016
12. Interview with Mr. Emmanuel

13. Interview with Alhaji Zakari Danjuma, a former customer to the restaurant, interviewed at his residence, Unguwar Iya, Suleja, 12/03/2018
14. Interview with Sani Hussaini
15. Interviews with Alhaji Ibrahim Jibrin and Alhaji Musa Hadi, staff of Farinruwa and Amana bakeries, interviewed at their bakeries, 23/10/2016
16. List of bakeries in Suleja from 1980-2013, Collected from Suleja Tenement Rate office, along Usman Faruk road, Suleja, 20/10/2015
17. List of Guest houses/hotels in Suleja, 1980-2015, Social Welfare Department, Suleja, 20/10/2015
18. Interview with Sani Hussaini
19. Interview with Sani Hussaini
20. Interview with Alhaji Mustapha, interviewed at his residence, Bakin Kasuwa, Suleja, 11/8/2012
21. Interview with Alhaji Mustapha, Sarkin Yarbawa and Majidadin Sarkin Zazzau, Suleja, at his resident, Bakin Kasuwa, Suleja, 11/8/2012
22. Interview with Alhaji Musbahu Aliyu, Manager, NNPC Filling Station, near G.S.S. Suleja, at his office, 22/4/2016
23. Interview with Sani Hussaini, Revenue Officer, Suleja Local Government, at his office, Local Government Secretariat, 3/12/2017
24. Interview with Mr. Moses Tochukwu, Chairman, Suleja Mechanic Village, First bank Unit, interviewed at his workshop, 10/04/2018
25. Interview with Alhaji Ahmed J. Bawa, a retired Revenue officer, Suleja Local Government, interviewed at his residence, Unguwar Kabula, Suleja, 10/04/2018
26. Interview with Mr. Mark Sunday, Suleja Mechanic Village, Dumez Unit, interviewed at his workshop, 10/04/2018
27. Interview with Mr. Obi Emmanuel, Chairman, Suleja Mechanic Village, Dumex Unit, at his workshop, 23/3/2018
28. Interview with Sani Hussaini, Revenue officer, Suleja Local Government Council, interviewed at his office, Local Government Secretariat, 3/12/2017
29. Interview with Alhaji Ahmed J. Bawa
30. Interview with Mr. Oluohia Godfrey, a dealer in aluminium and accessories, interviewed at his shop, Habitat Plaza, Suleja Aluminium Village, 12/04/2018
31. Tax force office, Suleja Aluminium village, Number of Shops at the Market, 2018
32. Tax force office, Suleja Aluminium village, Number of person working in the Market, 2018
34. Interview with Sani Hussaini, Revenue officer, Suleja Local Government Council, interviewed at his office, Local Government Secretariat, 3/12/2017
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39. Interview with Alhaji Sani Lokoja, a staff of Bank of the North, Suleja branch, interviewed at his residence, Bakin Kasuwa, Suleja, 4/4/2014
40. Interview with Alhaja Muyinat Abdul Karim, a staff of Eco bank, Suleja branch, interviewed at her office in the bank, Suleja, 4/4/2014
41. Interview with Miss Folake, a staff of FCMB, Suleja branch, interviewed at the bank, 4/4/2015
42. Interview with Mallam Umar Musa, a staff of Fidelity Bank, Suleja branch, interviewed at the bank, 4/4/2015
43. Interview with Mr. Emmanuel Kolawale, a staff of Stanbic IBTC, Suleja branch, interviewed at the bank, 4/4/2015
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47. Interview with Alhaji Abdurraheemi Abdullahi Gboyega
48. Interview with Alhaji Abdurraheemi Abdullahi Gboyega
49. Interview with Alhaji Muhammad Isiyaka
50. Interview with Alhaji Mohammed Inuwa, a former timber driver with the late Alhaji Isiyaka, interviewed at his residence, Unguwar Koko, Suleja, 12/4/2016
51. Interview with Alhaji Abdurrahimi Abdullahi Gboyega
52. Interview with Alhaji Mohammed Inuwa
53. Interview with Alhaji Tanko, Chairman, Suleja United Timber Dealers Association, interviewed at his shade, Timber Shade, near the State low cost, 16/3/2018
54. Interview with Mallam Ahmad Madaki, timber dealer, interviewed at his shade, Suleja Timber shade, 16/3/2018
55. Interview with Mallam Muhammad Sani Toto, timber dealer, interviewed at his shade, Suleja Timber shade, 16/3/2018
56. Interview with Alhaji Tanko
57. Interview with Mr. Suleman Abdulkarim, Manager at the company, interviewed at the company, 5/3/2016
58. Interview with Sani Hussaini