

Beyond Boundaries: The Spatial Connections of Local Markets in Nigeria, 1976-2001

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Abstract

This paper gives a brief outline of the connections of three selected local periodic markets, namely Tilden Fulani, Gumau and Nabordo, in Toro area of Bauchi State and other parts of Nigeria, between 1976 and 2001. It is argued that market participants, commodities of exchange, locations, services and Governments policies, projects and programmes served as the bridge between the markets in Toro and other parts of the country. Qualitative method is utilized, whereby information were elicited from majorly oral sources, through extensive field interviews and observations. These were supplemented with documented sources obtained in the libraries and on the internet. This approach demonstrates that the linkage of markets beyond their localities was not novel in history, but the one in the research period witnessed epochal changes in terms of structure and operations of local markets. It is concluded that local government reforms and transformation of Nigeria's economy were key in shaping the linkages of Toro markets beyond the boundaries of their towns.

Introduction

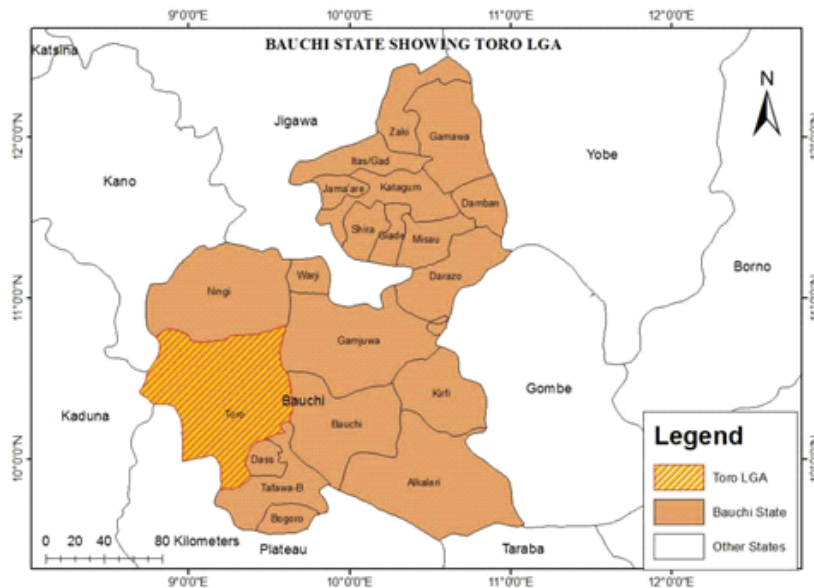
The activities of long distance traders played a role in the historical development of markets in Toro and served as link not just of the markets to the local areas but broader, and even international, economies. For instance, the case of tin mining activities fostered the connection of the areas where markets eventually sprang to other parts of Nigeria since the nineteenth century. Ririwain Dalma tin fields have drawn people from different parts of the Nigerian area since the nineteenth century, particularly people from Ririwain Kano as immigrants, traders and miners. In the twentieth century, when the area came under the British colonial domination more people frequented the Bauchi region from whence nearby areas were explored for tin deposit. It was from Tilden Fulani area that the Europeans understood that tin deposits were more as one ascend Plateau Highlands and thence they started exploring and opened up the mines in Jos Plateau.¹ Most of the studies on local markets by geographers, economists and historians focus on markets periodicity and operations neglecting the linkages of the markets with areas outside the markets' locations, particularly Toro markets to other parts of

Nigeria. Therefore, this paper is written to add little new light on this aspect. In order to achieve this aim, the paper, besides the introductory part has the following subheads: background of the study, the nature of the connection of markets in Toro and conclusion.

Background of the Study

The markets in Toro were linked to the various sectors of national economy, and other parts of the country through their participants, commodities, governments' policies, programmes and projects and their locations. Although the connection of markets to areas beyond their geopolitical borders was not a new phenomenon in history, the link in the period under review was remarkably distinct. Firstly, Toro Local Government Area (LGA) was created in August 1976. This brought close governmental supervision and investment in the local economy, and coupled with the Local Government Reforms of the same year, which furthered the alienation of local traditional institutions from their supervisory position of affairs within their domains. It can be recalled that this process began in 1967, when Federal Military Government abolished regional governments and replaced them with twelve states.² The 1976 reforms advanced the cause. For local government administrators were given more prominence, while the traditional rulers relegated and subordinated to them.

Map 1: Toro Local Government Area of Bauchi State



Map 1 shows Toro LGA with the local governments and states it borders with. The creation of LGA made it easier for the provisions of market infrastructures and social amenities as more stalls were built, roads extended to link markets with

sources of commodities, toilets provided in the markets, wells dug and motor parks integrated into markets as well as extension and relocation of some of the markets.³ It also bestowed the local authority with the power of collection of revenue in the form of poll and rents. Also the market periodicities were deep-seated after the creation of Toro as a LGA; Tilden Fulani meeting on Tuesdays, Gumau on Mondays and Nabordo on Saturdays. Secondly, the period witnessed the structural transformation of Nigeria's economy from reliance on agriculture to industry – dominated by the contributions of Crude Petroleum and Natural Gas –and services sectors. Related to this was that the period saw advances in science and technology in the sectors of the economy, particularly agriculture, industry, services, construction and trade. For example, the developments in agricultural practices have led to increase in the volume and regularity of produce in the markets, while improvements in transport and communication made it easy for marketers to take their goods in bulk to any market, any day, obtain market situation or price of their commodities etcetera. Lastly, in 2001, Toro witnessed the influx of displaced peoples from neighbouring Plateau State as a result of crisis that led to the destruction of lives and property.⁴ The immigrants brought new trends in markets and popularized other agricultural practices, whose products were traded in the selected markets. These developments were evidenced in market participation patterns, expansion of business and also government interventions.

The Nature of Toro Markets' Connection to other parts of the Country

The connection of markets in Toro with other parts of the country was both direct and indirect. Table 1 below illustrates the nature of the market participants, commodities exchanged and services as well as government policies, projects and programmes as the spatial bridge between local areas and other parts of the Federation.

**Table 1: Toro Markets Connection with other Parts of Nigeria, 1976-2001
Commodities Exchanged in the Selected Markets**

Commodities Exchanged in the Selected Markets	Sources	Destinations
Textiles, blouse, caps	Kano, Ibadan	Tilden Fulani, Gumau, Nabordo
Provisions, soap, perfumes, antimony, cosmetics and other exotic goods	Kaduna, Kano and Borno	Toro markets, Jos
Chemical Fertilizer, Pesticide and Weed killers. Animal feeds and drugs	Lagos and other South Western states	Toro, Tilden Fulani, Nabordo, Ririwain Dalma, Pingel, Laru, Tilden Fulani and Magama Gumau
Cotton	Generally from Jama'a and Lame Districts, especially in Gumau and Nabordo and neighbouring villages	Kaduna, Kano
Wheat	Zaranda, Sara (in Jigawa state)	Nabordo, Rimin Ziyam, Dass, Alkaleri, Mararraban Liman, Katagum, Jos
Locust beans	Toro LGA	Yobe, Gombe
Food grains and Cereals, millet, guinea corn, maize, beans, rice, <i>acca</i> , <i>ibero</i> , groundnut	Toro LGA, Gombe, Yobe, Jingir, Saminaka	Jingir, Jos
Vegetables and spices such as onions, pepper, sweet potatoes, cabbage, carrots, tomatoes	Toro LGA and the selected markets in particular	Lagos, Ibadan, Port Harcourt,
Sweet Potatoes	Toro LGA and the selected markets in particular	Maiduguri, Damaturu, Potiskum, Kano, Jos
Rubber and Plastic goods	Yoruba residents of Toro LGA and neighbouring Plateau State	Toro LGA

Source: S. L. Jibril's Fieldwork in 2019

Table 1 shows the linkages of Toro and other parts of Nigeria. It shows that the participants and goods exchanged in the markets were drawn from both within the Local Government Area, especially the markets and outside it.

Market Participants

Marketers in the three selected markets were drawn from different parts of the country on more regular basis vis-à-vis before the period of study. The local peoples in surrounding areas made visits to market places habitual. The local people were amongst the major suppliers of the commodities produced within the local government boundaries.

Toro markets drew participants from North western, north eastern, north central, south western, south southern states and south eastern states of Nigeria. For instance, The participants in Tilden Fulani market were principally drawn from Kano, Kaduna, Gombe, Kogi (Lokoja), Borno (Maiduguri), Yobe (Damaturu, Potiskum), Adamawa (Yola), Plateau and Ibadan, while Gumau from Kano, Kaduna, Borno, Plateau, Oyo (Ibadan) and Lagos, and Nabordo from Jigawa, Kano, Kaduna, and Sokoto, Gombe, Plateau, Lagos, Ibadan, and Rivers states.

Commodities Exchanged

The availability of certain commodities marketed are evidence of the linkage between the selected markets and the national economy. Although that was not new, but the nature, volume, and regularity of the commodities in these markets beg for acknowledgment in the history of the markets. It was unusual prior to the period under review to have flow of commodities from various sources unhindered. The sources of commodities brought into these markets were broadened. This is facilitated by widening participants in the markets, government policies (as would be seen below) and the locations of the markets on major roads. These factors led to the supplementation of some operations in the markets then predominantly shouldered by local areas surrounding the markets. Thus commodities, such as chemical fertilizer, pesticides, improved seedlings, repair parts of bicycles, building materials, rubber and plastic goods, cosmetics and other exotic items, hitherto unavailable or rare in Toro became abundant, while those produced by the locals were taken in huge quantities to faraway places. Some of the major locations of peoples and most commodities exchanged in the Toro markets would be examined in the following subheadings.

a- Tilden Fulani Market

- i. Sweet potatoes, cultivated in different parts of Toro local government area was predominantly bought by marketers from, or sent to, Maiduguri, Damaturu and Potiskum, Kano and other local government areas and Jos.⁵
- ii. Textiles, blouse, caps and cosmetics etcetera were bought and brought from Kano by both local and non-resident traders. There were some traders who travelled to Ibadan to buy clothes for resell in Tilden Fulani market.⁶
- iii. Firewood was brought from Anguware in Jos East local government area (Plateau state). This was amongst the early items of exchange in the Tilden Fulani markets. The persistence of firewood business in this market during and beyond period of study largely is due to the leverage on development in means of transportation such as the use of Lorries, pickup trucks, wheel barrows, etcetera, which conveyed heavy goods hitherto carried on the head and animals. Users of firewood attended the markets from towns not far from the markets such as Toro, Rinji Gaini, Magama-Gumau, Babale and Narabi.⁷
- iv. Food grains, millet, sorghum, maize, beans and rice were brought by marketers from other parts of Toro then sold to people from Jingir, Jos, (in Plateau state). Also marketers from Yobe and Gombe states brought beans and bought locust beans on their return journeys.⁸

b- Gumau Market

- i. Farm produce such as cotton, acha, iberu, groundnut, sorghum and millet amongst others were sourced from Jingir and Saminaka.⁹ These were in addition to surrounding villages. They were generally bought by peoples from outside the Toro local government area.
- ii. Provisions, soap, perfumes, antimony, cosmetics and some exotic goods were sourced from Kaduna, Kano and Borno states. The traders were often periodic, just as the market was, for they moved on to, or from, Jos with the remaining items for sell.¹⁰
- iii. Chemical fertilizer, pesticide and weed killers as well as animal drugs were brought from Lagos and other south western states. In the late 1960s, the usage of these was relatively embraced by farmers in the Toro area as was obtained in other parts of the country. The various agricultural plans, policies and projects by both federal and states governments, such as the BSADP, OFN, Bauchi state fourth and fifth development plans, from the 1980s to 1990s assisted in creating awareness of the benefit of using them on farms and animals. By the closing period of this study, there emerged mega distributors outside government, who could place orders directly from Lagos and offload in Gumau. They then broke the bulk and sold in smaller quantities to farmers in Gumau and neighbouring towns such as Ririwain Dalma, Pingel, Laru, Tilden Fulani and Magama-Gumau, etcetera.¹¹

c- Nabordo Market

- i. Cotton in this market was sold to buyers, though huge quantity was not brought to the marketplaces but to marketing boards in the early 1970s, from different parts of the country, more especially Kaduna and Kano. However, by 2000, cotton as a commodity of trade in Nabordo market became virtually absent.
- ii. Wheat was brought by Zaranda marketers who bought it from Sara market in Jigawa state and distributed it in Nabordo market, besides Rimin Zayam, Dass, Alkaleri, Mararraban Liman Katagum and even Jos in Plateau state.¹²
- iii. Cattle and their fat (*man shanu*) and other animals such as rams, sheep and goats were brought from Kano, Jigawa and Gadan Maiwa.¹³ They were also brought from and/or to marketers in neighbouring villages, local government areas and states as well as faraway states. Such places included Alkaleri (in Bauchi), Bukuru (Plateau state), Gombe, Ibadan, Lagos, Onitsha and Port Harcourt.¹⁴
- iv. Food grains and cereals, such as millet, guinea corn, rice, maize and groundnut were bought by marketers from Plateau state. These, in addition to local supplies, were sourced from Gombe state.¹⁵
- v. Textile, blouse and cosmetics were mainly brought from Kano and distributed amongst buyers from the market town and beyond.

- vi. Vegetables and Spices such as onions, pepper, sweet potatoes, cabbage, carrots, tomatoes etcetera were sourced from the local areas and brought to marketers for resell in other parts of the country, such as Lagos, Ibadan and Port Harcourt.
- vii. Rubber and plastic goods were primarily the preserve of Yoruba women traders who sourced them from the south western part of the country.

Services in the Markets

Services such as transport fostered the linkage of these markets with the national economy. Besides carrying peoples and goods from the markets to other parts of the country, is the repairing of the means of transportation which were mostly imports and brought up to the north. The repairing of bicycles, for example, repairers bought their items from mega dealers in nearby towns who bought from other parts of the country the things used for the repairs. Repairs as a service payable in the markets also linked the markets to other parts of the country and by implication the national economy, because the things they repair and tools used were brought from other parts of the country, such as repairing of wristwatches and radio sets.

Governments' Policies, Programmes and Projects

Roads, agriculture, health and telecommunications reforms and improvements by governments had forged and sustained the linkages between the markets in Toro and these sectors of the national economy with other parts of the country. The policy, plans, programme and projects of the various governments both federal and states government formulated and implemented were critical in fostering the linkages between different parts of the country and sectors of the economy with the markets in Toro. These policies, plans, etcetera elucidates further the connection between national economy and local economies. Those to be overviewed here include Bauchi State Agricultural Development Project (BSADP) western zone, Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), The Green Revolution, and Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP).

Bauchi State Agricultural Development Project (BSADP) Western Zone

The Bauchi State Agricultural Development Project (BSADP) Western Zone was established as the extension of the successful Gombe Agricultural Development Project, eastern zone, to cover the entire state. It was assisted by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD or World Bank) and Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN). The Gombe enclave was a success and proved beyond doubt that Agricultural Development Project of 1975 was capable of meeting the principal objective of increasing food production as average farmer yields rise by 20% between 1977 and 1980. The operation of the BSADP in the western zone with administrative headquarters at Nabordo comprised of Bauchi, Dass, Toro and Tafawa Balewa Local Government Areas.¹⁶

The BSADP was intended to increase the productivity, income and standard of living of about 280, 000 rural families, on about 33, 000 hectares of farm land in

the state, by providing a range of farm support services in association with infrastructural improvements and institutional modifications. Thus, the Bauchi State Government and the World Bank concluded that the extension of the Gombe Agricultural Development Programme concepts on a state wide basis would provide the main bases for the Bauchi state's agricultural development drive during the fourth Five-Year Development Plan 1981-1985.¹⁷ The BSADP was more successful and manifest in Toro area when compared with earlier government programmes. It opened up the rural areas to modern ideas of farming and trading. This is because between 1975 and 1985 there were not less than twelve financing agencies in the BSADP western zone, notably First Bank of Nigeria Limited, Bank of the North Limited, Union Bank of Nigeria, Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperative Bank Limited, Nigeria-Arab Bank Limited, International Bank for West Africa Limited, Bauchi State Cooperatives Financing Agency Limited, Bank of Credit and Commerce International Limited, Nigeria-Industrial Development Bank Nigeria Limited, Nigeria Bank for Commerce and Industry Limited, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives (Trade & Industry Division).¹⁸ The activities of these agencies strengthened the connection of Toro markets as established traders transacted in them by collecting loans to obtain goods or sell in the markets. Secondly, the emergence of financing agencies provided credit to farmers mostly for the purchase of current inputs, such as seeds, fertilizer, pesticides and implements. Thirdly, the administrative headquarters of the BSADP in Nabordo led to increase in demand and supply of commodities in the marketplace.

Operation Feed the Nation (OFN)

This programme evolved on 21st May, 1976 under the military regime of General Olusegun Obasanjo and remains one of the most widely publicized agricultural programmes. It was launched in order to bring about increased food production in the entire nation through the active involvement and participation of everybody in every discipline thereby making every person to be capable of partly or wholly feeding him or herself.¹⁹ Available pieces of lands in urban, sub-urban and rural areas were meant to be planted. Government distributed inputs and subsidies, such as agrochemicals, fertilizers, improved variety of seed/seedlings, day old chicks, machetes, sickle, hoes, etcetera, to government establishments.

Even though the OFN programme had its own draw backs –such as farming on any available piece of land irrespective of suitability, lack or little farming background to the programme participants, mono cropping, preference to government establishments and individuals in authority over the poor farmers (who were the real producers of food), incidence of endemic poultry diseases that wiped out the birds due to lack of quarantine and necessary routine inoculation/vaccination amongst others²⁰ –some gains were recorded.

The programme stimulated Nigerians to farming. It addressed the problem of rising food crisis, rural-urban migration and escalating food import bills. Some of the people interviewed in Toro recalled the mobilization to go back to farm through this programme following the beam on what the future may hold for the country

due to neglect of agriculture, especially food crop production, which exacerbated after independence.²¹ It was clear that Nigeria was leaving in self-denial when its attention drifted from crop production to export crops from the early 1960s and then from agriculture as whole to industry sector characterized by Crude petroleum dominance, and solid minerals and manufacturing decline. This is because Nigeria was not actually self-sufficient to shift focus to export crops. The need to enlighten the people about going back to farm may have been reinforced by the devastating droughts which affected northern Nigeria and the rest of Sahel Africa in 1973.²² The programme led to people embracing new inventions in agriculture and marketing. Traders from different parts of the country frequented with variety of goods such as farm inputs, such as fertilizers and seedlings.

The Green Revolution Plans

This is another government plan which demonstrated that Nigerian Economy was witnessing structural transformation. Agriculture sector hitherto dominant in contribution to the country's GDP output, employment and revenue was giving way to other sectors, especially industry and services. The government of Alhaji Shehu Shagari set out the Green Revolution Plan in April 1980, with the aim of achieving self-sufficiency in food provision by 1985, when the fourth National Development Plan terminated. For this goal, the plan emphasized the need for comprehensive development of the rural areas, and the projects were concerned not only on food production per se, but building food processing firms, developing rural roads, providing houses, improving education and health facilities, and installing of water and electricity systems. The plan was pursued by the partnership of agencies such as the Ministries of Agriculture, Water Resource, Labour, and Commerce; 11 River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA) established in 1976; and Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs).²³ Support went first to the RBDA, which resulted in a concentration of investment in Northern Nigeria, where many river basin projects were carried out.²⁴

The Green Revolution also manifested in Toro area, from interviews carried out, the government under Shagari made attempts to modernise agriculture by introducing the use of agrochemicals and improved seedlings such as that of grains which were the major food crops produced and sold in the area. Extension agents were sent even though they did not reach out to the bulk of the population whose majority was farmers it stimulated interest in mechanized and irrigation farming amongst others,²⁵ and the commodities in the markets were predominantly agricultural or agriculture related.

The Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP)

The SAP was one of the major economic programmes that had far reaching consequences in the contemporary economic history of Nigeria. The then minister of Finance, Dr Chu S. P. Okongwu, of former Military President Babangida, in a special press briefing on 23rd September, 1987 to review and appraise the one year of SAP (July, 1986-June, 1987), gives a background of the economic crisis, that led to the imposition of SAP in Nigeria as thus;

The 1970s witnessed the transformation of the Nigerian Economy from one dependent on agriculture to one heavily dependent on oil. For instance, the share of agriculture in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) declined from about 40 per cent in the early 1970's to about 20 per cent in 1980. By the latter year, oil accounted for about 22 per cent of GDP, 81 per cent of Government revenue and 96 per cent of export earnings.

The so-called "Oil boom" of the 1970's brought about profound changes in the Nigerian Economy. Efforts were made by the authorities during this period to use the relatively massive oil revenues in restructuring the economy and some progress was actually made in the areas of social and economic infrastructure. However, widespread distortions and imbalances in the economy emerged during this period."²⁶

The Minister's disclosure demonstrates the changes in the Nigerian economy. For it traced the development in industry, especially the induced transformation of the economic structure of the country. The Minister further disclosed that Government intervention in the economy occasioned by the boom led to proliferation of parastatals and public investments of dubious disposition and were beyond the capacity of government agencies. He, for instance, mentioned the proliferation of manufacturing industries, especially construction, with heavy reliance on imports which had little local value to Nigeria's economy. It can be deduced from Dr Okongwu's speech that the heavy reliance on oil and imported inputs made the economy vulnerable to external shocks. Consequently the global oil crisis from the mid-1981 extended to Nigeria as its impact began to be felt for;

The country's official foreign exchange reserves, which stood at about US\$8.50 billion at the end of May, 1981, declined sharply to only about US\$2.85 billion by the end of December, 1981. The Economic Stabilization Act, involving stringent exchange and trade control measures, introduced in April, 1982, proved ineffective, and the end of 1982. There was no significant improvement in the country's foreign exchange position nor in the economy. More stringent measures introduced in 1983 and 1984 and retained in the 1985 Budget accomplished little.²⁷

From the above quotation, the economic climate in which SAP was initiated was that of inappropriate and ineffective policies of the past and the payment crisis brought about by the collapse of oil prices, besides the staggering external debt burden. The economic scene on the eve of SAP was, in summary, characterized by dwindling oil revenue, low installed capacity of many industries, high rate of unemployment, declining per capita income and high level of domestic and foreign debts, heavy reliance on foreign imports, irregular payment of salaries by most public agencies and pervasive corruption.²⁸

Therefore, President Ibrahim Babangida implemented in 1986 as a "home-grown Nigerian variant of the one-size-fits all SAP of the World Bank and IMF."²⁹ The objectives of SAP in Nigeria are: firstly, to restructure and diversify the

productive base of the economy in order to reduce dependence on the oil sector and on imports. Secondly, achieve fiscal and balance of payments viability. Thirdly, create a sustainable non-inflationary growth. Fourthly, enhance the growth potential of the private sector.³⁰ The main elements of SAP revolved around free-market capitalism and its elements of deregulation, downsizing, flexibility, currency devaluation, tariff reduction, trade liberalization, the privatization of public enterprises and the promotion of non-oil exports.³¹

Some of the successes of SAP in Nigeria include: fostered efficiency and competition by economic agents on the basis of price and services to the consumer; improved allocation of resources; boosted and made export more competitive; enhanced government revenue; and restored international confidence in Nigeria's external payment arrangements, thus, returned international credit worthiness of the country.³²

The SAP is, however, argued to have failed to improve the Nigerian economy and instead deteriorated it. It amongst other effects worsened the country's debt crisis, created low capacity utilization of industry, pauperized the peasantry, deteriorated working conditions for working class and de-subsidized provision of social and infrastructural services.³³ Its side effects on the Nigerian labour is captured by I. N. Obasi in the following words:

...retrenchment, privatization, commercialization, withdrawal of subsidies on certain goods and services, reduction in government expenditure, scrapping of commodity and marketing boards, deregulation of price control system and fostering reliance on market forces.³⁴

Obasi's statement is valid as the programme contributed in the transformation of the Nigerian Economy through trade liberalization which bred the policy of retrenchment and privatization as well as commercialization of public parastatals. The dilapidation of public infrastructure and the removal of government subsidies in agrochemicals, especially fertilizer and seedlings which were then becoming imperative for mechanized and irrigation farming, dealt a blow to the Nigerian Economy and the local economies in particular which were predominantly agricultural base. The programme reversed some of the gains made in previous governments in the area of agriculture, manufacturing and construction.

Conclusion

This paper demonstrated the linkages of the markets in Toro to other parts of Nigeria. It was shown that the linkages were significant for understanding the transformation of the Nigerian economy and the developments of the markets in Toro. The establishment of the Bauchi State Agricultural Development Project (BSADP) western zone, which was an extension of the pilot scheme by Federal government, had positive impact on markets in Toro and Nabordo market in particular. Farmers whose produce found their ways into the markets benefitted from the various national development plans and governments agricultural plans, policies and programmes. The citing of the BSADP western zone administrative

headquarters in Nabordo benefitted farmers who were producers of commodities, especially food grains sold in the market. Secondly, the building of the project's staff quarters in the town increased demand and supply crowds in the markets.³⁵ There were also Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Shagari's Green Revolution, and SAP which had impact on the markets just as the markets contributed to the national economy. Although most of these policies failed to achieve their desired goals, they influenced the connection of the markets to different parts of the country. This could be seen in food items purchased by both local residents of the markets' towns and to a lesser degree outsiders from neighbouring states. But for livestock, oil, and some exotic items, they were sourced from both within and outside the state boundaries and sold to other states within and outside the north eastern region of Nigeria.

Endnotes

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