

## Review

# Is the wind of change blowing? A Study of Socio-cultural Context of Access to a Place to Sell in Zaria, Nigeria

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**This paper examines the relationship between urban governance structures, traders and their organisation in accessing a place to sell as well as the traders' role in market management and provisioning. The report further analysed female economic activities and space. The female economic activities basically remain within the household compound spaces in keeping with restricted contact between men and women as dictated by Islamic and cultural codes of conduct that defines public and private space for males and females in a predominantly Hausa Fulani Islamic communities. The report notes that the intensifying female economic activities in household spaces are linked to the market space without demanding for a place.**

**Key words:** Governance, gender, market, reform, urban management, access, redevelopment.

## INTRODUCTION

Reform make meaning if it expands citizens' socio-economic space, opportunities and abilities to influence or participate in decisions that affect their lives and well-being. Nigeria, within the last two decades, has been undergoing two major reforms. The first was the structural adjustment programme (SAP) whose major features include deregulation, devaluation of the Naira against the US dollar and appropriate pricing policies in all sectors social service sector inclusive. The second is the democratisation process truncated by the Babangida regime (1985 to 1993), virtually jettisoned by the Abacha regime (1993 – 1998) and finally attained by the Abdulsalam led military junta in May 1999. Both forms of transformation touch on the lives of the people. In deed, the transformations meant increased involvement or marginalisation of citizens in the socio-economic and political activities of the country.

The economic reforms increased levels of unemployment due to cuts in employment in private and public sectors. This was accompanied by declined real income of the people particularly the urban poor. Of course with low employment capacity of both private and public sectors, unemployment soared to 3.8% in rural areas and 6.3% in urban areas in 1998. Within this period, the official minimum wage was 1, 561.00 Naira and a maximum of 7, 037.00 Naira (Central Bank of

Nigeria, 2006). These were simultaneously happening with the collapse of virtually all social and development infrastructure (water, electricity, and supply of fuel products). The failing infrastructure led to a decline in production as indicated by a fall in capacity utilisation in the manufacturing sector, which was at its lowest ebb of 29.1% in 1995. Livelihoods and household provision increasingly became difficult and informal. Informal livelihoods took form of buying and selling demanding for space in public pavements and market places. The increasing informalisation of economic activities has ramifications for urban management and gender dynamics. The urban manager is faced with problems of providing space for people that needed it for economic activities "as anti-poverty initiative. ...through physical and services upgrading strategy" (McGill, 1994), while individuals explore personal capacities to acquire places within the limits of socio-economic and cultural defines of the society. This personal exploration generates hot contest for space use to the extent that urban managers can be reduced to mere mediators (Hansen and Vaa: 2004).

The political reforms offered opportunities to citizens to determine their leader, and make input into policies and there by re-shape their lives. The democratisation process also afforded individuals avenues to achieve self and push various interests. For instance, as part of the

democratisation process, Islamic reforms were being pursued in parts of the country. The essence of the Islamic reforms is to make people live under Islamic codes of personal and socio-economic conduct given the abysmal failure of secular state institutions in social security, justice and service provisioning. This further crystallised a gendered access to market space in such communities, as Islamic societies are principally male dominated with the females operating from the background.

The assumption of office by the civilian regime in May 1999 only marked the end of transition from Military to democratic civil regime in Nigeria. The democratic government came in at the hills of shrinking formal employment and increasing expansion of self-employment particularly in distributive trade. In this context, it is pertinent to examine the extent to which urban administrative structure vis-à-vis socio-economic and cultural beliefs and practices that concern gender determine access to urban basic infrastructure particularly the market space.

The issue of access to urban market space is critical economic survival of citizens particularly the low non-skilled urban dwellers. This is more so as the economic reforms enlarged the "third economic sector". The political reforms define situations under which people operate, relate to government and access urban infrastructure, in this case, a place to sell. In this situation, it is the survival of the fittest. An area in which individual capacity to negotiate physical space for economic activity can be demonstrated is the market place. The need for this demonstration lies in the fact that knowledge of the ways the poor in traditional cities of Africa negotiates space for livelihood is rather scanty compared to existing data on issues like access to housing and even proportion of poor people in slums (Cheema, 1987).

The market space is a basic urban infrastructure that allows urban rich and poor to generate own income, maintain a welfare level and participate in activities of the society. Thus individuals mobilise capital and other resources to set up businesses as means of livelihood. A most viable place for this type of livelihood is the market place. Indeed, in addition to regular market traders, hawkers crowd around the market to take advantage of market population. Vendors or hawkers also take up spaces along streets to access livelihood opportunities. In this sense, providing space for economic activities, particularly the market space, is significant to the people. Again, development or redevelopment of urban market offers opportunities for new entrants into the trading livelihood to obtain market space for their economic activities. As Knox and Marston (2001) asserted, "all categories of land users --- compete for most convenient and accessible locations." This is not less for market traders.

Access to market space means access to income generating opportunity and that income is a form of empower-

ment, which is significant to participation in political and economic reforms. Thus traders and potential traders compete for market space in a manner the various land users compete for urban space. Indeed, the extent to which citizens have access to market space determine availability of livelihood opportunities and the much poverty that can be reduced.

In Nigeria, market administration and management is the responsibility of the local councils. Zaria local government council (ZLGC) has two major markets under its control – Zaria City and Tudun Wada markets. This is similar to the situation in Sierra Leone where the Freetown City Council "is in charge of 31 markets and trading sites" (Abraham, 1993). The council is currently redeveloping the City market working with the citizens. Such redevelopment has its politics and economics that require critical evaluation from socio-economic, cultural and gender perspectives. These perspectives provide basis for examining levels of inclusion and exclusion of social groups including gender in the competition for urban space. Bringing issues of gender and socio-economic differentiation to the fore in market stall and space allocation is critical to understanding urban governance and welfare particularly in the traditional city of Zaria. A context to attempt this understanding is a study of access to market space given that all people do not have equal access to facilities due to inclusive and exclusive discriminating cultural and gender practices. The on-going redevelopment of the city market and the accompanying allocation and re-allocation of market stalls and spaces provides an opportunity for examining these issues.

With the redevelopment of the market under an elected urban local government council the questions to ask are: under the new dispensation, what conditions and procedures determine a citizen's access to a space or a stall in the market? What are the procedures for space allocation and what are titles to allocated spaces in the Market? How do the procedures of access, allocation and conditions of occupation affect various socio-economic strata and gender in the society? What are the points and forms of contact between government institutions and the citizens and what are the implications of such for urban governance?

Answering these questions makes it imperative to probe into the structures that are involved in market place planning, administration and governance. This probe is in the context of prevailing socio-political, economic and cultural factors that influence access to a place to sell by various social categories and gender in Zaria.

Within the context of economic and political reforms and Islamic culture, this study focuses on ways, processes, potentials and constraints to accessing market stall or space in Zaria city market. This entails an evaluation of the role of urban government in market planning, reconstruction and allocation of space to citizens. This study therefore seeks to establish social, economic and

cultural beliefs and practices concerning gender and socio-economic categories that determine access to market space using Zaria City as a case study.

The study keeps in view the fact that the prevailing Islamic culture secludes women from men and that the husbands are in charge (in the sense of keeping the wife, providing her with shelter, clothing and household allowances) as prescribed by Islamic doctrine. The prevalence of this culture notwithstanding, the males who are themselves under various socio-economic pressures, do deviate from the ideal to the extent that the females do provide for self and family members. As observed by Vaa (1996), "while Islamic norms enjoin a man to provide for his wife and children ---- many urban men fail to do so". Also, the multiple wives also multiply the directions of attention of the husband socio-economically. This is more so under the structural adjustment regime such that the wives are put in the position of providing for self and even the household in certain situations. How do women achieve this self-provisioning when they do not have access to a place to sell due to seclusion? That is, what are women's accesses to market place opportunities in a highly patriarchal and religious society typified by Zaria City? The seclusion turns the house to an income yielding space for the women. For the multiple wives therefore, the household space provides avenues for a competition for *a place to sell*. For the female group, the house is not just a dwelling place but an economic floor, a warehouse for a fundamental struggle against poverty (Kazimbaya-Senkwe, 2004).

In addressing the central issue of whom has access to which market space; the study assesses the processes of acquisition and conditions of occupation by traders in the market place. The focus is on the redevelopment, management and access to space within the Zaria City market in the context of democratisation and Islamic religion particularly the aspect of gender practices.

Premised on the foregoing, the objectives of this study are to establish the characteristics of the market and the traders; evaluate the types and conditions of occupation of market stalls and market space in relation to gender and social differentiation. In this respect the study examines how the structures of urban governance allocate market spaces and traders' reaction to and perception of urban governance together with an assessment of the position of women vis-à-vis men in accessing the market space in Zaria City. Finally, the study discusses constraints, potentials and policy options needed for enhancing access to income generating opportunities particularly for women in a male dominated society as in Zaria City.

Data collected covered age, religion, ethnic group, place of origin, gender, tenure type, rents and fees, income, processes of space allocation, organs of allocation and conditions of allocation. Data on procedures of space allocation, approval of application, articles of trade, market administration and management and revenue generation were also collected. To collect these data, a

structured questionnaire soliciting responses on the types of data listed above was administered on 70 sampled traders in the city market. A list of traders obtained from the Market Manager's office was the sampling frame for 60 out of 1, 243 listed traders; and another 10 from among the unlisted vendors and hawkers on the basis of availability. This is in addition to discussions with the general public particularly in *Anguwar Karfe*, groups of male and female traders, the Market Manager and staff and officials of Market traders association. The focus group discussions were held with groups of traders who were willing to participate. The male traders were 5 in their group while the females were 4. Discussions with the market Manager and the Staff and, later the officials of Traders' Association, were held independently to facilitate cross checking of data. At each of the discussions, notes were taken and this made up the qualitative data. While the questionnaire data was analysed using the SPSS package, the qualitative data was manually organised thematically.

This paper has section and sub-sections in addition to the introduction. Next to the introduction is the background note on the study area which is followed by a brief note on the notion of a place to sell. After these, the paper launches into data presentation beginning with market management policies, and on to revenue generation, roles of Traders Association, democratisation and market redevelopment processes. The section that follows dwells on people and access to market place for trade operation in the city. This led the discussion to the spatial, administrative, gender and social dynamics of access and utilisation of market place in Zaria. The paper concludes with a note on the strengths inherent in the market redevelopment strategies and a pointer in new research frontiers.

## BACKGROUND NOTE ON ZARIA CITY

Zaria city, which pre-dates colonialism, has a rich traditional culture. The compounds are large and mostly built of mud. The people live in large compounds made up of about three to four nuclear families such that the compounds are composed of extended family members. The City is mainly inhabited by Hausa-Fulani indigenous population and Islamic scholar migrants, which include the Yoruba, Nupe and a few other ethnic groups.

Zaria urban area is made up of the old Zaria city, Tudun Wada, Sabon Gari and Samaru. These are in addition to other small villages, such as Chikaji, Dan-Magaji, Hanwa that have been engulfed by urban expansion. The various segments of Zaria have a market place. However, the prominent markets in Zaria urban area are the main market located at Sabon-Gari, Tudun Wada market, Samaru market and Zaria City market. The city market is a satellite market in Zaria urban market system. It is located in Zaria City, the traditional area of Zaria urban area in Kaduna State. In the markets of city, buying and

selling take place daily. The 1991 national population census puts the population of Zaria at 73,585. This could be more as the 1952 census puts the population of Zaria at 53,794 persons.

Zaria was a major trading centre where duties were charged on merchant goods (Mabogunje, 1968) during the trans-Saharan trade. The market place is one of the major spatial elements in traditional Hausa cities (Mabogunje, 1968). The location of Zaria city Market conforms to the description of markets in Islamic cities by Knox and Marston (2001):

“the major streets lead from these gates to the main cover bazaar or market (suqs)--- Those (markets) nearer the gates typically specialise in bulkier and less valuable goods such as basic food stuffs, building materials, textiles, leather goods and pots and pans”

The roads from Kofar Gaya, Kofar Kuyanbana and Kofar Doka converge at the city market. With the Zaria city market as a major place to sell and buy, such places as the Kofar Gaya market and commercial ribbon from Kofar Kuyabana to Gwargwaje are lower hierarchy markets within the Zaria city market sub-system. The market, which started as an open free for all place, came into existence over 100 years ago. It evolved through three main development stages. The first stage was when the market was an open space with few shops in form of “sheds”. The sheds had neither doors nor windows as they have only roofs. Traders at that time go home with the unsold wares at the close of the market. The second stage was when the traders or shed owners further improved on their sheds. This was when the sheds were built with mud structures and roofed with zinc or thatched roofing materials. At this point lock-up zinc stalls also came up. These sheds had doors so the stalls could be locked-up. The final stage is the on-going erection of permanent shops using sandcrete. This is being crystallised by the on-going redevelopment of the market. However, some traders still operate in temporary stalls of zinc materials.

The city market offers greater opportunity for more sales and wider variety of both agricultural and manufacture goods than Kofar Gaya and Kofar kuyanbana markets. The ability of the existing market to cope with demand for space by both buyers and sellers has become a problem and congestion, including traffic congestion, has resulted. These together with other factors have further necessitated market redevelopment.

The market is currently located on 3 hectares of land and has a total of 790 stalls. Out of this 300 are permanent while 490 are temporary. All the stalls, either permanent or temporary, are lock-up stalls. Shop owners and hawkers in the market total about 1,243 or about 414 persons per hectare. Given the market land area and number of shops there are about 263 stalls per hectare. This is a very dense commercial activity space from the

point of view of the capacity of the land area to carry the people and their activities (Chapin, 1965).

### **A CONCEPTUAL NOTE ON A PLACE TO SELL**

With increasing economic crunch on individuals and families, urban dwellers are increasingly developing a sub-culture of informal income generation akin to the sub-culture of poverty (Horton and Hunt, 1984). The operation of the sub-culture of income generation is organised by individuals and families around space. This is more so, as in Zimbabwe, where the formal sector has substantially lost the capacity to create employment (Kamete, 2004). A place to sell is a fundamental economic facility in the urban space. A place to sell connotes a geographical space and location that presents a configuration of people, buying and selling goods and services, “It is a geographical location and a position on social hierarchy” (Cresswell, 1999). The social hierarchy is observed in the character of the buyers and sellers at that geographical point. A place to sell goes by various names including shopping plaza, commercial ribbon and market. By whatever label, a place to sell is a spatial expression of relationships between buyers and sellers. A market is a public space where exchange of goods and services takes place. As Hodder and Ukwu (1969) defined it, the market is an authorised concourse of buyers and sellers limited to an associated time. By this concept, “large urban concentration (of people) represent market” (Fellmann et al., 2005:322). The buying and selling interaction between persons in the market has space as the physical container. The container, that is, market places have specific characteristics that include “physical structure and cultural content” (Fellmann et al., 2005). Authorisation of the concourse could be by community consensus, the traditional ruler or a modern state agency. In most pre-colonial towns and cities as Zaria city, markets were set up in places indicated by community consensus or as decided by the ruler of the community. Beyond the choice of location, the market grows without any meaningful or preconceived structure plan such that allocation of spaces for traders (sellers) is based on the rule of the thumb.

The market may not necessarily serve only the economic purpose. The market provides space for community meetings, religious worship or festivals such that the market square takes on both religious and political functions in addition to economic functions. Traditional market places in villages, towns and cities have these as major functions. Other than this, the market has dual functions of providing economic base for individuals and government. For one, the market offers opportunity to citizens to sell and buy and earn a living. For this group of people, livelihoods are organised around the market. For those who earn a living in the market, it is important they have access to the market facility particularly the space. For another, the market provides a revenue base

for local councils, and this is common in developing countries as “markets have remained an important source of revenue for the councils (Abraham, 1993) and such money can be used for other activities of the council. In addition to these, given the proportion and frequency of people that meet in market place, the market serves the purpose of providing an avenue for information and innovation diffusion and exchange of ideas.

As places to sell and buy, markets may have local and regional scale. The regional market has a wider service range and has larger range of goods and services than the local market. For instance, while the Zaria main market at Sabon-Gari draws sellers and buyers from far and near, the Zaria city, Tudun Wada and Samaru Markets in the Zaria urban area largely serve their neighbourhood populations.

## MARKET MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND REVENUE GENERATION

A major function of the local council as earlier noted is to administer the market, maintain its environment and ensure that the construction of stalls is to specifications as in the case of Zaria city market.

Traditionally, the *Sarkin Kasuwa* who administers the market is turbaned by the Emir of Zaria but with the transfer of market management from the Emirate Council to the LGC, the LGC now appoints the market manager, still referred to as *Sarkin Kasuwa*. The *Sarkin Kasuwa* administers the market. The manager works directly with the finance department and the elected Councillor in charge of that department for day-to-day administration of the market. Revenue generated from the market is paid to the bank account of LGC and the finance department is duly informed. For the purpose of the redevelopment, the *Sarkin Kasuwa* works closely with Councillor for Works and physical development planning staff of works department. The works department is directly charged with the responsibility of ensuring adherence to space allocation and stall construction standards.

Management of a facility like the market involves maintenance, administration and generation of funds for the LGC. The attention of Zaria City market management is more on revenue generation and administration. A major component of the LGC revenue collected in the market is the commercial activity operation fees charge per trader. The local government council has market officials stationed in the market to supervise and collect business operation fees from shopkeepers in the market.

In 1997 the LGC collected 153,170 Naira from traders. In 1998, it was 178,570 Naira. In 1999 the sum of 158,540 Naira was collected, this rose to 332,740 in year 2000 but declined to 318,700 in year 2001. As at the time of the survey, in the year 2002, a total of 31,700 Naira were collected for the months of February and March. Note that the revenue fell between the year 2000 and

2001, is attributed to the fact that the Market Manager's office has no record of collections made by a Revenue Generation Task Force set up by the council to generate revenue. For instance, there were no records for the months of November and December 2001 and January 2002 in the Market Manager's office.

Fees collected for economic activity operation in the market are derived from permanent stalls (N100 per stall) and temporary stalls (N50 per stall). Sometimes, collections are made from hawkers who are expected to pay about N5.00 per month. However, they hardly pay and as mobile traders, it is difficult to monitor their payment and non-payment.

## The market association and market management

Market unions or associations are common social and political feature of West African markets. Gugler and Flanagan (1978) documented how traders association aid procurement of wares and protection of other commercial needs and interest. Though male dominated, Zaria city has an association of traders that promote and protect the interest of traders. The association has two wings – youth and elders wings. This association, particularly the youth wing, is visibly active in the market redevelopment process.

Majority of the traders ordinarily discussed with are not aware of the existence of a market union. This is premised on the fact that the association is said to be inactive and the traders lodge complains (on electricity, security and sanitation etc.) to the market manager directly rather than through the association. Further to this, some of the respondents claimed that an association exists but they do not know anything about its meetings and who the officials are. Those that are aware of a market union said the officials are elected into various offices. Opinion of the traders on the association is divided as some traders said the association is not aiding the progress of the market while others claimed the association help in one thing or the other to keep the market going. From this, it is not that the associations do not exist, it a matter of appreciating its activities by various social categories in the market.

This divided perception of the activities of the market association can further be illustrated by examining traders' reaction to problems regarding their trades and the market and the market manager's perception of the association. In the sample 2.9% claimed that problems of stall or space are discussed with the association officials or even the market officials themselves. On the other hand, 11.4% discuss such problems with owners of the stall, ward representative in the LGC or own relatives. In the same vein, problems with market officials are taken directly by individuals to the LGC for resolution. The implication of this is that the tendency for traders to route their problems through the association is very low. The

opinion of the market manager on the activities of the association is however positive on the activeness of the association. What explains this is not clear more so that the manager perceives the associations as partners in progress in the administration of the market. According to the Market Manager,

The market associations help the authority a lot. They help them in general market administration. They handle crisis at their levels and only report to the authority when they cannot solve it. They do have their set backs too. Sometimes they boycott the Market Manager and report straight to the local government chairman on matters concerning space allocation.

A discussion held with the executive committee members of the two wings of the association is revealing. The association solves problems that arise between traders in the market, traders and customers; and provision of facilities such as security, toilets, which they are currently working on. The association does not allocate selling space in the market. However, the association can assist in getting space from the local government. The association networks with other market associations in Sabon Gari, Kofan Gayan, Tudun Wada, Dan-Magaji markets to discuss common interests and problems with the aim of working out common strategies

The association has about 1,000 registered members. The association meets at regular intervals. The executive committee meets bi-weekly while a general meeting is held once a month. For every meeting, a loudspeaker is hired at the rate of N200.00 for the purpose of making an announcement in the market a day before the meeting and an hour to the meeting time. At the meetings, general problems, welfare and election are discussed. Before an election, a caretaker committee comprising of 7 members is set up to handle affairs of the association till election is held. The members elect all the officials at a general meeting after intensive campaign by respective contestants. The executive Committee is often dissolved before an election is conducted into the various offices.

The market association generates its revenue from selling the association's Identity and Membership cards. More so, during general meetings, members are requested for generous donations. The money is used to run the association and to assist members who have financial problems. The association, as part of its function to members, solves problem of dispute over selling space between traders. This confirms the views expressed by the market manager on the activities of the association.

There are smaller associations, based on various and services sold in the market, within the market association. In the market there is a wide range of goods and services such as tailors, textile sellers, grains and perishable food items traders, bookshops, household wears and general provisions sellers in addition to medicine stores, and repair services in electronics, shoes, watches and clocks among many others. These goods and services form bases for small unit associations for

which the market association is an umbrella body. The umbrella market association executive committee meets with the representatives of these smaller associations once a week to discuss common problems and issues so as to harmonise positions, interests and strategies.

At discussion group formed with the leadership of the two wings of the market association to examine the role of the association in the administration of the market it was observed that the youth wing emerged when the youth felt they have more energy and could handle matters with more zeal. Apparently the youth wing emerged when the elders' wing went into a long slumber. The traders who claim no knowledge of the existence of an association are most likely members of the elders' wing. The discussion was conducted with the Elders Wing Vice-Chairman, Alhaji Shehu Datti and the Youth Wing Chairman, Alhaji Abdulrahman Baba.

The women do not have any form of market association and they do not seem to be interested in forming one. To evaluate their positions, a discussion was held with three women traders. The female traders in the market are not members of the association so they do not attend meetings but they do convey their problems to the association through males. This is because the females are perceived as weak, shy and are also prohibited from mixing with males by the Islamic injunctions

## DEMOCRATISATION AND MARKET REDEVELOPMENT

Nigeria is under going several socio-economic reforms. Of interest to this paper are aspects of the reform that touches on democratisation of structures of governance, religious re-awaking and redevelopment of the market with specific reference to Zaria City. Since 1966, Nigeria has been administered by a string of Military dictatorships with brief interruptions of democratisation. The first major interruption is the civilian regime of 1979 to 1983. Nigeria is yet under going another attempt at democracy. That is, the Military administration is currently having an interruption with elections into local government councils, state and federal executive offices and legislatures. This offers opportunity for a wider public participation in governance. This is more so at the grassroots level. Local government councils are the grassroots structures of governance. Urban local councils have enormous responsibilities in urban governance, administration and provision. The local council is responsible for the maintenance of wide range urban facilities including development and maintenance of a market place.

Zaria City market is thus the responsibility ZLGC. The Works, Health and Finance departments of the council manage the market under the auspices of the local council Chief Executive Officer. The market is currently undergoing a re-development, which entail re-organising the market and re-building of stalls. The local council (LC)

is at the centre of re-organising, allocating and re-allocating spaces within the market. In carrying out this, certain religious and cultural practices and values on gender define relationships and access to space in the market. This is more significant in the context of the ongoing Islamic religious re-awakening that manifests in the call for Islamic codes as bases for public conduct. The Islamic religion has definite injunctions on the status of women vis-à-vis- men, which have consequences for the visibility, and non-visibility of men and women in such public spaces like the market. Thus, a gendered access to a place to sell is examined in the Zaria city market from the position of a shared space or places of inclusion and exclusions of social categories.

### REDEVELOPMENT OF THE ZARIA CITY MARKET

Redevelopment aims at containing blight to make a given environment more conducive to human activity. The increasing population struggling for space in the market, poor structures that are prone to fire and wind disasters and lack of maintenance of structures and poor trading environment make it imperative for the redevelopment of the Zaria city market. The need was further consolidated by fire incidents in 1997 and 1998 respectively. The fire incidents resulted in the loss of traders' stalls and wares amounting to several millions of Naira. The redevelopment is similar to urban renewal or regeneration, which can be executed piecemeal

Indeed, the on going market redevelopment stems from the initiative of the traders after experiencing fire disasters in the market. Following several meetings with the traders, the LC Department of Works prepared a layout plan, which provided for circulation in the market. Based on rules and regulations and discussions between existing traders' representative and LC officials, priorities were accorded existing owners of stalls and spaces such that existing owners were allocated spaces first before prospective new owners.

The existing traders that have stalls in the market were given prototype designs that specified dimensions, size, height and construction materials to reconstruct their stalls. Beyond this, a self-help approach was adopted by the ZLGC. This approach does not completely conform to any of the three models outlined by Laquain (1983). The traders mobilised the construction resources and implemented the development design to standard under the supervision of the works department of ZLGC. The redevelopment model does not allow traders to plan own stall based on personal needs and aesthetics. The traders acted as their own contractors hiring trades men and workers as the need arises.

Development permit were issued to market stall developers on payment of 2,500 Naira (US \$21.19) to the council treasury. Trading activities were disrupted during the construction period from one section of the market to

the other. There is a consensus among traders that the re-development is desirable given that they now have a more secure shop. Traders are however constrained by ability to mobilise construction finance and other resources, this was particularly so with the few women traders as gathered from a discussion with them.

The redevelopment of the market entails the construction of permanent stalls by the stakeholders who are the traders, private citizens or individuals and the Zaria Local Council. While the council prepares the development plan and enforces construction standards in the erection of stalls, the citizens are completely responsible for funding the redevelopment. The stall is a property of the individual since funds committed to redevelopment by traders are neither refunded nor converted to rent payable to the council. Further to this, the traders still pay monthly fees to the local council through the market office.

Legally and theoretically, the market and its facilities belong to the local council managed in public interest. In that perspective, the traders have no title to any property in the market except their wares. Traders are simply tenants of the local council. The owner of a stall occupies the space to the exclusion of others except the local council. Traders' tenure is simply by leasehold. Given this tenancy arrangement, problem arose when traders have to use own resources to redevelop the stalls. Efforts by the market manager to convert the total investment in stalls to rent were resisted by the traders. The implication is that these stalls are now personal properties of individuals who redeveloped their stalls. As personal properties, the stalls can thus be inherited such that complications will arise between the heirs and the local council on the death of the individuals.

In re-planning the market, since original shops have no regular space dimensions, unified stall space size created problems of loss of space (for those who had large stalls) and encroachment on others (for those who originally had little space) in the market. During the survey a dispute between a "rich" and a "poor" trader was witnessed. The dispute arose from the fact that the rich trader was developing a stall and in the process not only encroached on the poor trader's space but also pushed off the roof of the shed belonging to the poor trader. This type of disputes is very common in the market. Given that the market is within a densely built residential area, the market had expanded into frontages and inside residential structures. This expansion has created problems of control and ownership of trading space between individuals and local council. Individuals who operate from their front house and are affected by the contention are engaging the council in law courts to determine ownership and control.

The local government converted an existing motor park to be incorporated into the market space to facilitate expansion. The space is being laid out as selling spaces i.e. for the construction of market stalls and a community

bank. This is being resisted by the National Union of Motor Transport Workers who have refused to move away from the site and continuously pull down any construction work at the site. The trader association is keeping a way from this problem, as either party in the dispute did not consult it.

The traders are satisfied with the terms of redevelopment given out by the government. When temporary shops are demolished and permanent ones are erected, the fee payable by shop owners rises from N50.00 to N100.00 monthly. This increases the revenue base of the council and possibly the capacity to manage the market more effectively. The cost of reconstruction of a permanent stall varies between N80, 000.00 and N100, 000 depending on construction strategy. The number of the reconstructed stalls at the time of the survey was about 300 since the reconstruction was started.

## PEOPLE IN ZARIA CITY AND ITS MARKET

This section presents the socio-economic characteristics of traders in the market and the general public represented by the sample interviewed in *Angwar Karfe*.

### The Traders

Zaria City dwellers are Muslims thus all traders are Muslims except for two non-Muslim Ibo traders who come to sell in the City market from Sabon-Gari daily except Sundays. Non-Muslim do not reside in the city as a matter of principle. In the sample of traders, 77.1% are males and 22.9% are females. The females are predominantly Yoruba but Muslim and have a long history of living in the city. The cultural practices of the Yoruba group have little or nothing against adult women engagement in economic activities outside the home. In other words, as Muslim, the Yoruba population has no inhibitions regarding indiscriminate mixing of males and females which of course is a major constraint on the participation of Hausa women in economic activities outside the home. Thus, while the Yoruba women in Zaria city can come out and compete for market space, the Hausa women cannot. However, the women interviewed at the market and *Angwar Karfe* complained of being left out of government programmes like the Poverty Alleviation Programmes (PAP).

The traders in the sample are aged 30 years on the average. They have an average monthly net income of 1,785 Naira. The highest qualification of the respondents is primary education (68.4%). All the respondents have Islamic education. Based on these forms of education, it was found that about a third can read and write English language but nearly four out of every five can read and write Hausa language. The mean calculation of income indicates that males earn more (1785 Naira) than females

(1649 Naira) per month. This can be explained by the scale of trading activities of the males vis-à-vis the females. During the survey, it was observed that while the males trade in articles (textile, books, whole sale food items and general merchandise) that required large capital base, the females were found trading in (plastic items and cooked food and other petty commodities) that require small capital. There is no doubt, the higher the capital, the higher the returns on it thus the males earn more than the females.

The incomes earned have implications for ability to pay for a market space, but not ability to gain access to a market space as a result of politics of allocation or ability to understand the processes. It is important to note that affairs of the LGC and the market administration is conducted in Hausa, the local language therefore, the level of education is not necessarily an impediment on the ability to negotiate and process access to a market space.

### The general public

Occupation of the respondents from Anguwar Karfe is wide varied. Males, youth and middle aged were discovered to be drivers and farmers. Others are involved in buying and selling of grains from village to village. The old men are either retired skilled workers or petty traders. The sample indicated the occupations of women in the city to include petty trade (42.4%) in the home or use of children to hawk and hand craft such as embroidery and tailoring (7.2%). This was earlier documented by Meagher and Yunusa (1996) when they noted that "the area of most dramatic expansion of female participation is in the highly labour intensive hand embroidery of men's traditional gowns". Another 21.7% said that women depend on their husbands. Except for dependency on husbands, all economic activities indicated require space. It is in this framework that it became pertinent to examine the ways traders and prospective traders gain access to a place in the market from the perspective of the general public.

From discussions with male inhabitants of Anguwar Karfe, it was established that any person is allowed to sell or own a shop in the market provided the person can pay for the space and the local government monthly business operation fees. Beyond this, the applicant for space must be a Muslim as non-Muslims are not tolerated residents and business operators in the city. The non-Muslim, (*kafir*) can reside and operate in other places like Sabon-Gari and Tudun Wada markets.

Among the general public, very few have stalls in the market. In any case some have their shops within their houses or hire shops along the streets. Further to these, the people use various networks to gain access to a market place. Some of the traders use the link of their spouses (11.4%), friends (25.7%) and direct contact with



the local council (24.3%) to get space allocation in the market. Spouses and friends who have family members or friends in the LC exploit it to get market space allocation for own spouse or friends. From these, it can be observed that access to a place to sell require development of reliable social network, formally or informally to benefit from allocation policies. Failing this, the individual should develop capacity to obtain a market space at more than the LGC rate or pay some inducement to the space allocation officials or get a place to sell outside the market.

### **Social content of a market place**

Another social phenomenon in the market place is that trading is used as a strategy to get a husband or wife. This is not new in Islamic communities where individuals either go round to socialise with fellow Muslims or get a wife as reported in traditions of the Prophet. A hadith, that is Hadith 53.6 in General Section on Greeting in Al-Muwatta reported that

"Yahya related to me from Malik from Ishaq ibn Abdullah ibn Abi Talha that at-Tufayl ibn Ubayy ibn Kab told him when he visited Abdullah ibn Umar one morning and went out with him to the market, and when they were out, Abdullah ibn Umar did not pass by anyone selling poor merchandise or selling commodities or a needy person but that he greeted them.

At-Tufayl said, "I came to Abdullah ibn Umar one day and he asked me to follow him to the market. I said to him, 'What will you do in the market if you will not stop to sell nor seek any goods or barter with them or sit in any of the assemblies or market?' Abdullah ibn Umar said that we should sit down and talk, and then he explained, 'Abu Batni, (lit. father of the belly, at-Tufayl had a prominent stomach), we go out in the morning only for the sake of the greeting. We greet whomever we meet.' "

Another hadith in Sahih Al-Bukhari, Hadith 5.124, narrated by Sads father reported that

When the emigrants reached Medina. Allah's Apostle established the bond of fraternity between 'Abdur-Rahman and Sad bin Ar-Rabi. Sad said to 'Abdur-Rahman, "I am the richest of all the Ansar, so I want to divide my property (between us), and I have two wives, so see which of the two you like and tell me, so that I may divorce her, and when she finishes her prescribed period (i.e. 'Idda) of divorce, then marry her." Abdur-Rahman said, "May Allah bless your family and property for you; where is your market?" So they showed him the Qainuqa' market. (He went there and returned with a profit in the form of dried yogurt and butter. He continued going (to the market) till one day he came, bearing the traces of yellow scent. The Prophet asked, "What is this (scent)?" He replied, "I got married." The Prophet asked, "How

much Mahr did you give her?" He replied, "I gave her a date-stone of gold or a gold piece equal to the weight of a date-stone." (The narrator, Ibrahim, is in doubt as to which is correct.)

Both cases of socialising and search for spouse could be found in the city market. The market place is exploited for this because girls of marriage age have restricted circulation by their mothers such that grown up males who are not indiscriminately allowed into compounds can only have access to the girls in public places like the market. The youth come out for a late afternoon market, *Kasumar La'asar* selling very small wares in trays or polythene bags. The essence of this is not for trading, but to meet possible suitors and husbands. The set up is that the girls come out dressed in their best cloths carrying very small wares. The boys in search of wives come with a lot of money to buy the girls' wares, and possibly negotiate marriage.

### **PROCESS OF MARKET STALL AND SPACE ALLOCATION**

Previously, the local government council constructs market stalls and allocates them to traders in need. This is no longer so due to inadequate resources. The council only allocate spaces and in doing this priority, is placed on type of business to be carried out rather than the person requesting for space. For instance, a trader who intends to sell alcohol in the market is given far low priority over others who want to sell textile materials, grains, and such other items.

There are three ways of acquiring selling spaces in the market. The most formal is through a written application that is submitted to the local government authority stating the kind of business to be carried out in the stall. This application is processed to the stage of allocation or rejection by the authority. Obtaining a place to sell follows the process of buying a form, fill it and submitting to the Market Space Allocation Committee. The market manager, the local government treasurer, the Head of Health, the Head of Works, and finally the local government Chairman must endorse a completed application form. Thereafter, the committee that run the affairs of the market considers the application. A committee is composed of the councillor for Works who heads it, the Market Manager a representative of the traders and the District Police Officer. The local

government chairman constitutes this committee different from the market committee that helps to run the affairs of the market. The allocation committee is guided by certain rules and factors in market place allocation. The Committee publishes names of successful applicants.

The written applications to the local government are by filling the prescribed form, and returning it to the LGC through the Market Manager for processing. Thereafter individuals follow up. The follow-up is a lobby process

through which officials could be politically or financially induced by applicants to obtain a space in the market. The lobby could be intensive as several hundreds virtually scuffle for few selling spaces available in the market. This intensity stresses the relevance of social networks as a facilitator.

There are rules that guide the allocation and use of space in the market as set by the LGC. The factors and rules considered in the allocation of space by the committee include (as outlined in the document):

“Obey all rules and if you are convicted twice in a court, the allocation is withdrawn or revoked; You should not sell, transfer, hire or let a temporary or permanent shop; Pay business operation fees regularly on or before the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month; Failure to pay for 3 months may lead to withdrawal of allocation; You should not sell goods except that which you have pronounced to sell; You should not sell outside your limited area; You should not tamper or change anything in your shop without the knowledge of the local government; You should not close your shop for more than 2 months without informing the local government; You should not destroy or forge the allocation paper; You should return allocation papers to the market manager whenever you decide to leave the shop/market; You should report the loss of allocation paper immediately, which will be replaced with a token fee of N50 (fifty Naira); Usage of the market from 6 a.m to 6 p.m (not enforced); You should have a copy of these guidelines; You do not sell prohibited items e.g. drugs, alcohol in the market.”

Based on these, the market space Allocation Committee either approves or disapproves allocation to applicants.

The second means to get and use space in the market is through political patronage. In this case, a trader gets direct allocation from the local government chairman or through the council staff. To achieve this the LGC Chairman allocates vacant spaces to the beneficiary after obtaining information from the market manager. The third way is when an owner of a market space dies and the stall is retrieved or it is returned to the market authority. Such spaces are re-allocated using any of the first two modes of space allocation. However, in most cases the next of kin of the deceased is allocated the space. This is seen as some assistance to the family of the deceased therefore it is a privilege extended to the public by the council through the market committee.

Traders, who set their wares on tables in open spaces within and around the market to sell, do not apply to the local council for market space. They are classified with hawkers in payment of fees to the local authority. The disadvantage faced by this group is that there is no guarantee of tenure of the space they occupy as they could be moved at any time.

### **Length of occupation of market space**

Issues were raised with respondents on how long traders

have traded in the market as well as their previous trading places before settling to a place in the Zaria city market. The essence of this is to establish the history, duration and permanency of occupation of places to sell. In the sample, 17.1% of those that responded to the question on where they traded before, some were hawkers (either stationary or itinerant), 2.9% had traded in Tudun Wada market, 1.4% in Sabon Gari market and 8.6% in places outside Zaria. In essence, 28% of the respondents had traded in various places before settling down in the city market. The traders moved to the city market because they can afford a market stall (18.6%) to increase their sales turnover (18.6%) or were quitted from their previous trading places.

Once the traders have settled they tend to stay over a long period of time. For instance those that have traded in the market between 1960 and 1979 constitute 20% of the sample, 45.7% settled in between 1980 and 1999 and 28.6% came in between the year 2000 to date. The fact is that with redevelopment, additional trading spaces were created from space sub-divisions thus the nearly a third of the sample that moved into the market since the year 2000.

Ownership of a stall in the market is important in understanding how long a trader could stay in the market and employment security of traders as well as wares. The ownership of stalls is such that 7.1% had the stalls as gifts, 24.3% bought theirs, 12.9% inherited while about two fifth (41.4%) are renting the stalls. Landlords who are not traders constantly harassed the tenant traders over rents and use of stalls. For all types of tenure and title to a place to sell, the traders have documents to prove.

A woman, who has been trading in the market for a long time, said she got her stall from her mother about 20 years ago. She started by trading in an open space, which she later converted to a temporary stall and now a permanent structure. Since people stay long in their stalls in the market and the total land area of the market is small foreclosing possible expansion without demolition of residential buildings, obtaining a stall in the market is riddled with intensive politics of lobbying.

### **Market Infrastructure**

Markets are expected to have a range of facilities. These include a bank, fire station, security post, administrative set up, parking space and toilets. Not all these are available in the City market. The administration has already been discussed except to note that a building houses the office and a police post in the market. The market lacks parking space for cars and mini buses that frequent the market. The community combated the fire incidents that gutted the market in absence of a fire station. Further to this, the market lacks toilet facilities such that men and male children urinate at various crevices of the market. This lack of conveniences is worse for the females (from whom the society demands

modesty) that have no place to go.

These notwithstanding, some facilities and services are available in the market. Despite the existence of a police post, the market security was previously organised by individual traders who employ guard men (*mai gadi*) to protect their stalls at night. Currently, every trader pays some money twice a week to the vigilante group (a community based security organisation) that deploys guard men to the market. The umbrella trader association coordinates this in cooperation with the market manager. There is no water facility in the market. Indeed, water supply to the entire Zaria City has been problematic (Yunusa, 2001). The traders buy water they use each day. There is electricity supply in the market for which the traders pay as they consumed based on meter readings.

To maintain sanitation, the traders are responsible for the cleaning of their surroundings and pay those, mainly *almajiri*, that pack away the garbage for them. The market association is working on the authorities to bring back the old system whereby Local Council staff sweep and clean the market environment everyday. The elected LGC is putting some workers on the ground to clean the market daily but this is not enough to keep the sanitation of the market.

From the above it is apparent that the inability of the LGC to meet basic infrastructure needs of the market creates room for collaboration between individuals and groups on one hand and the LGC on the other in urban facility provisioning and management.

## WOMEN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES BEHIND THE WALLS

The economic activities of women have been a subject of academic discourse as division of labour is gendered (Tati, 2004). In the market there are not many women traders, particularly of the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group. The Hausa-Fulani female traders are more the children, teenagers and the very old though young women can be observed among the Fulani *nono* or *kindirmo* (fresh milk and yoghurt) sellers. The women that sell in the market and also own shops are mostly Yoruba. Thus the female traders in the market are made up of the Yoruba females, and the young Fulani and Hausa girls who do not own shops but occupy open spaces in the market where they sell a variety of wares particularly *fura* and *nono*, cooked foods, groundnut oil and *kulikuli*. It was observed that only old Hausa women could be selling very small wares in the market. The adult women who are still attractive to males stay at home and trade within their household spaces (Meagher and Yunusa, 1996). Sometimes their daughters and trading agents buy and sell for them. Some times the Hausa females have agents in the market with whom they dropped their goods for sale.

The adult Hausa women do not sell in the market because of the Islamic religion, which prohibit indiscri-

minate mixing of males and females. This is in addition to religious and cultural practices which puts female at the back scene. In addition to this, seclusion is a mark of fitness or capacity to keep a wife and provide all her needs. Indeed it is a mark of higher status (Aristocratic?) for the males (Gugler and Flanagan, 1978).

The reason why Hausa women do not come out to sell in the market is more due to orientation as explained by the market manager. This contradicts earlier explanations based on religion and culture. The Market Manager insists that the Local Government Council is willing to assign stalls to the women if they apply for it but the women are not interested in trading let alone the space. Some of them are heavily dependent on their husbands. I believe the wind of change is blowing such that with time they will come out and start selling in the market.

This assertion is contestable at least intensive economic activities are going on in the compounds. However, as observed the dependency of the females on the males can spark change in the demand for market places. In other words, heavy economic burden on the men, economic deprivation on the side of the women and the need to enhance family earning and welfare induces this wind of change. This thought of the manager may be utopian as the women in seclusion may simply intensify their economic activities in the compounds. Western educated elite in the city insists that no matter the "storm" and dependency rate, the females will remain behind the walls for their economic activities for a long time to come. The prevailing culture of seclusion of women is a major restriction on the visibility of women in the market place and other public places in Islamic communities. Yet the women can be instrumental to male access to a market space as claimed by 4.3% of the sample. Due to *purdah*, Hausa women are more involved in petty trade from their homes. Some of them use their children as trading agents for income, which are useful in acquiring wedding wealth and gifts for the girls and even the boys. Some of the Yoruba women discussed with also added that shops are not being allocated to women due to ethnic differences rather than gender. This explains, particularly the virtual non-existence of diverse ethnic groups of Nigeria in the city market.

The women are engaged in the selling of sweets and cooked food from inside the compounds. Some have carts and jerricans, which they rent out to young men who sell water. One woman engaged in wholesale or retail of manufactured goods such garments, toiletries etc. from seclusion, has agents in the market that sell for her. Others are engaged in knitting and embroidery. From these activities the women help out in household up keep. For example, almost half of the women interviewed asserted that they do not necessarily make monetary profits from their sales but they are able to feed their children from what they cook to sell.

The Chairman of the Youths Wing said that women in Purdah also sew for females. It is important to note that the compounds are no entry (*ba a shiga*) places for non-family member adult males. The women get sewing materials by sending the husband or Islamic pupils (*almajiri*) to buy for them from the market or shops. Some other women sell grains, cooking oil from their houses. They get the grains through the husbands or use male agents to buy for them from the villages. Buyers patronise the women by going to their respective homes. Adult male buyers send their agents into the compounds to buy for them.

By tradition and religion, the Hausa-Fulani women do not come to the market to sell but they do a lot of trading at home. Due to this and the nature of the city build up, space for economic activities is sometimes invisible as residential and commercial land uses can hardly be distinguished. The land use may be seen as completely residential, in reality intensive economic activities go on in the compound space. The urban form enables various economic activities to go on within a place. This can be illustrated in many ways. A youth leader in the market said that

“one of my wives does embroidery which I take to the market to sell for her. The other is a tailor and the third sells soft drinks. They do all these in their bedrooms. An *almajiri* or I procure sewing materials and wares for them. Women that do wet grinding at home are allocated space within the household courtyard for the grinding”.

In furtherance of the strictness on the prevention of indiscriminate mixing of men and women, the market association Youth Leader said:

I get everything they (his wives) need or require for the various trades they are engaged. I believe most men do the same thing for their wives”. Most often, each household is observed to have an “*Almajiri*” who comes there to serve as an errand boy to the secluded women. Our wives feed them with lunch and dinner. The women really work hard doing business in their homes. A lot of them sell grains to Igbo and Yoruba women who come to buy the grains to re-sell in Sabon Gari and Tudun Wada markets.

After talking to some females in seclusion and their husbands, some girls were also talked to at the market place. A girl, who sells *kunu*, prepares it herself at home. Though the business is for her mother, she helps her and she will continue with this trade till she gets married. For the *kunu*, she buys grain from her father who also sells grains at home. This indicates that even males also utilise household space for trading activities. Another girl that was interviewed sells oranges, which, she gets from male orange seller who has a shed in the market. She returns the proceeds to him at the end of the day and gets paid N40.00 as commission. The girl started this trade 7 years ago and hopes to continue until she gets

married. The orange hawking business belongs to her. The profit she makes is given to her mother who uses it to buy marriage gifts (*kayan aure*) for her.

Two things are cleared from these interviews. First, behind the walls and in seclusion a great deal of people, men and women utilise household space for selling and buying activities. This makes the city a configuration of network of buying and selling spaces, which sometimes have links to the market place. That is, in addition to the market the household is an Archipelago of places to sell as alternative market places to mainly females and some males. In this situation, “the courtyard takes on a symbolic meaning---- it is the place where women (and some men in this case) own their economic enterprise” (Tati, 2004). Secondly traditional urban design and planning seem to make provisions for trading activities in the households thus enormous trading in goods and services still find space in the compound. This greatly reduces pressure on the existing city market space which has become very small for the population of the city but complicates the understanding of land uses in the traditional city like Zaria.

## CONCLUSION AND NEW RESEARCH FRONTIERS

Access to a place to sell in Zaria city is a product of complex inter-relationships between individuals, socio-cultural setting and the local council. This relationship has its politics, which is indicated by lobbying and various frames of social network. It took the traders association initiative to induce and negotiate a process of reconstruction that not only improves the market place but also enhances LGC revenue base. The traders' Association has indeed followed the path of problem solving in which pressures were mounted on the local council based on the existing problem (McConnell, 1981). Responding to the pressures, the local council is noted for responsiveness in terms of meeting the “needs and preferences of people most affected by the’ reforms (McConnell, 1981). The political pressure exerted by the traders may have yielded nothing or little under non-democratic process of governance.

The role of the LGC in the allocation of stalls and spaces within the market only extends the frontiers of patronage, which in most cases create problems of development control, abuse of space organization principles and further compounds problems of congestion in the existing market. In the redevelopment process, officials of the physical planning unit of the LGC Works Department constantly evaluate, monitor and enforce basic standards to produce a healthy trading environment.

The self help strategies used in redevelopment enables the council to partner with the people in development. On the other hand it offers the traders to redevelop their stalls on incremental basis without development. Incremental development which is also used in housing renewal makes possible for the poor and rich traders to rede-

velop their stalls at own pace. However, the model of self-help approach adopted for the market redevelopment still enables the LGC to abdicate its basic responsibility of providing, managing and maintaining of the market facility. Under a dictatorial regime of a military junta, the form of partnership developed and used with the traders may not have worked out as the LGC would have insisted on its responsibility without executing it. In the face of financial constraints, the traders bear the responsibility of mobilising resources and finance to reconstruct the stalls. This further tilts the gender balance in favour of the males given the limited capacity of the females to effectively mobilise resources for such. Access to space, space allocation, market management and associational life in the market are exclusive world of males or male dominated. Religions beliefs and cultural practices only keep the females behind the walls socio-economically but intensive and extensive income earning activities go on behind the walls. To this extent, the females are excluded from the politics of a market place and therefore have no access to a market space as the males. Behind the walls, the females remain invisible traders in the market place run and occupied by males. Can a wind of change blow to alter the balance? It is possible but the direction and speed of the change is unpredictable under the weight of culture and religion.

Finally, it should be observed that the details of how the household courtyards are organised, managed and controlled remains obscure and therefore a frontier for further research. The ways space is allocated for economic activities in situations of multiple demands by wives and even males, the areas of conflict and compromise and the ways balances are maintained by heads of households remain part of this new research frontier. Indeed, a further probe into the mix of enterprise "space" and domestic "space" will be a useful guide for the planning and design of traditional cities in Africa.

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