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ANALYTIC LAND REGISTRATION TRENDS, DIFFICULTIES AND THE WAY FORWARD IN ADAMAWA STATE

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ABSTRACT

An analysis of land registration data collected for a period of fifteen years (1970-1993) was carried out to examine the trend patterns. Also, efforts are made to identify probable set backs and difficulties. Suggestions are made to ensure appropriate land registration as a way forward.

INTRODUCTION

Land registration is a device essential to sound land administration. It is dichotomised into urban (registration of statutory right of occupancy) and rural (registration of customary right of occupancy). In Adamawa State, the two systems of land registration exist.

The statutory right of occupancy is a right granted under any written law emplaced by law by the Governor, the Minister or the Public Officer of a native authority that is duly authorised and empowered for that purpose. It is normally granted to natives as well as non-natives. The customary rights of occupancy is the title of a native or native community using or occupying native land in accordance with native laws and customs. A non-native cannot hold a customary right of occupancy. One disadvantage inherent in this, is the ambiguous definition of the location and extent of the land area.

The registration of land helps the government to generate revenue to carry out development projects. Also it enables individuals or occupiers of land to conduct land transactions safely and quickly. Further, through land registrations, it makes it easier for government to take inventory of the national land resources.

This paper examines the trends of land registration activities in the past years. It aims at identifying lapses, inadequacies and difficulties for proper land registration and to ensure as a way forward, a strong geodetic network for future registration which will make realisable a secure and clear system of property rights; development of an efficient land market and establish a land evaluation capacity.

CADASTRAL SURVEY

Though land is plentiful but the rise in population of people and settled agriculture has induced competition for land. This necessitates the subdivision and allocation of land to individual or groups. For orderliness and proper records to be kept all the rudiments of land measurements and registration are required.

During the process of land registration, a cadastral survey must be undertaken to spatially identify land compile cadastral map series, which provides a spatial index for identifying land parcels. It goes without saying that such coverage of cadastral maps requires well-defined national co-ordinate system that can readily be accessible to surveyors. Ono (1998) has identified low coverage of geodetic controls of Adamawa State and suggested for network densification for future and well planned development.

Therefore, the immediate consequences of this, are that:

(i) there are no enough controls to connect cadastral surveys in many areas

(ii) no quick and appropriate identification of land boundaries and finally

(iii) no land registration is possible in those areas

It is discovered too that there are many datums being used in Adamawa State, which is a direct problem to entire Nigeria. We have; Minna Datum on which the Nigeria Primary Triangulation is referenced; WGS72 Datum (Doppler) which was for African Doppler Observations (ADOS) Programme; and the local origins established here and there at the whims of the survey

There is of recent the establishment of GPS controls based on WGS84 Datum but this GPS Campaign has remained inclusive. Hence, the proliferation of reference datums (Frames) causes considerable confusion among survey practitioners and even to customers. This is so because of the uncertainty about the relationships between these reference datums.

It has also become apparent that some primary controls are decaying or have been destroyed by Accidental damage and civil construction projects

DATA SOURCE AND DATA ANALYSES

In order to have quick insight into the land registration trends, data were sourced and obtained from Department of Land and Survey in Yola, and Zonal Survey departments of Adamawa State. The data give information on the number of registered land for a fifteen-year interval (1979-1993). The data

is grouped into three zones, namely:

(i) Yola Zone (1)- comprising of Yola, Jimeta, Song, Fufore;

(ii) Numan Zone (2)-made up of Numan, Demsa, Mayo-Belwa, Guyuk and Shelleng.

(iii) Mubi Zone (3)-made up of Mubi, Michika, Madagali, Maiha, Hong and Gombi.

Table 1. Number of Registered land (Source: Survey Division, Yola)

YEARS AND NUMBER OF REGISTERED LAND IN ZONES														
	'79	'80	'81	'82	'83	'84	'85	'86	'87	'88	'89	'90	'91	'92	'93
1	162	165	90	153	140	90	82	39	112	49	121	83	112	17	112
2	42	40	18	22	53	14	39	18	17	40	29	38	52	77	14
3	120	200	81	111	94	119	58	100	56	87	42	15	35	19	43

From this, a straight-line trend was fitted by the method of least squares. From time series analysis the computation of trend value (i.e. $Y_t = a + bx$) is simplified by transforming the x-variable, which is the independent variable - 'time' to simpler variable with few digits. The constants in the trend equation are interpreted as; a - is the computed trend figure for the period, and b - is the slope of the trend line or the amount of change in Y_t per unit change in x (per year). The trend equations for the three zones are respectively given as:

$$Y^n_t = 92.27 + (-7.30)x \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \quad (1)$$

$$Y^n_t = 34.20 + (0.886)x \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \quad (2)$$

$$Y^m_t = 78.87 + (-8.74)x \quad \ldots\ldots\ldots\ldots \quad (3)$$

Equations (1), (2), and (3) show that b = -7.30, 0.886, and -8.74 respectively. This indicates that except for Numan zone with b = 0.886 the others are negatives. The implication of this, is an indication of decrease in number of registered lands. Conversely, for positive b, it shows marginal increase in the number of registered lands. Figures 1, 2, and 3 show the trend line fitted for Yola, Numan and Mubi zones respectively.

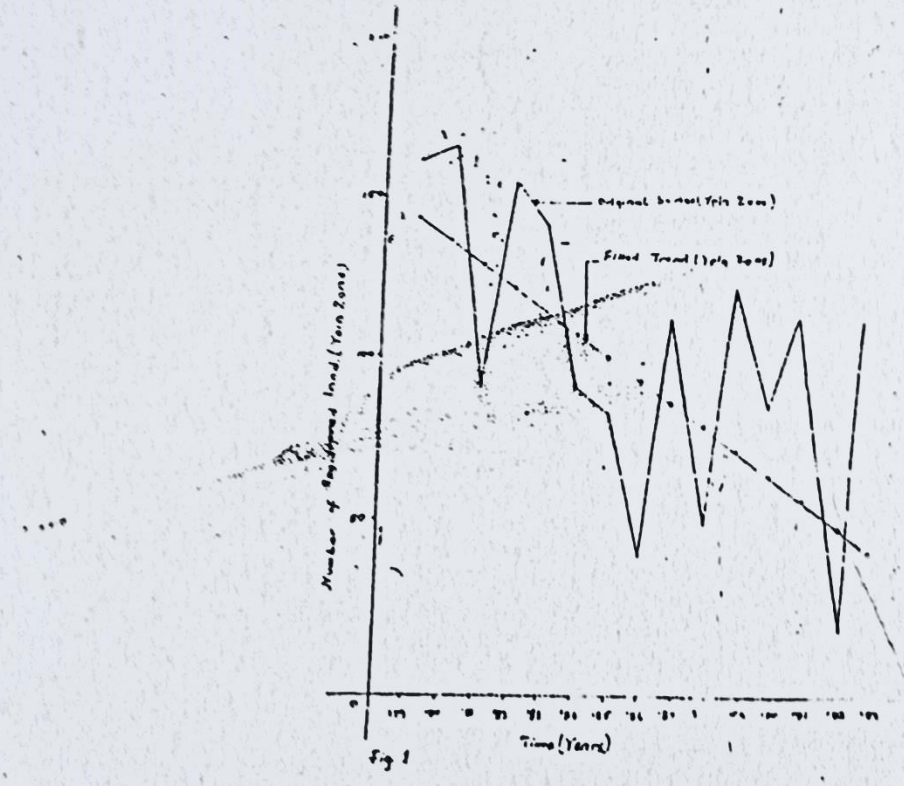


Fig 1

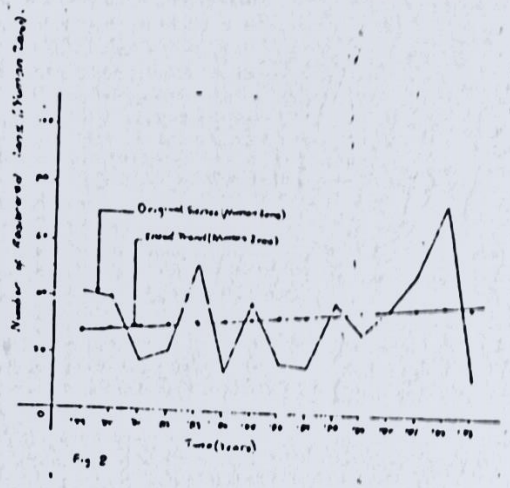
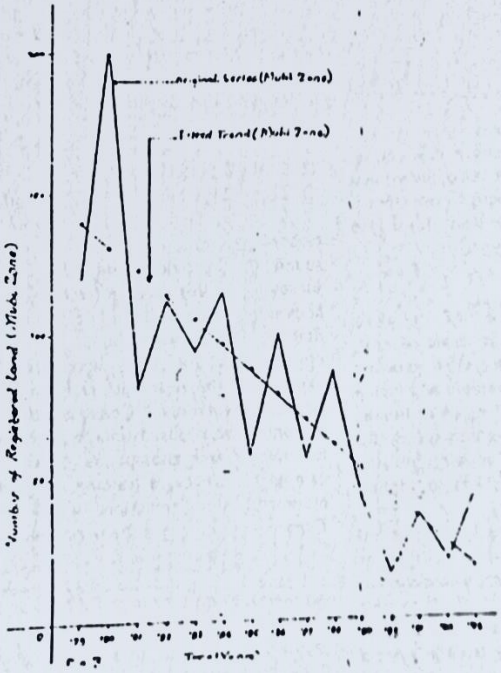


Fig 2



DIFFICULTIES IN LAND REGISTRATION

From the analyses of trends, there is marginal increase and decrease recorded in land registration. The decrease is attributed to the following:

(i) Lack of Geodetic Infrastructure

(ii) Ill-motivated personnel

(iii) Heavy capital funding

(iv) Red-tapism

(v) Lack of strong registration policy

(vi) Lack of adequate enlightenment exercise

(vii) Improper/inaccurate records

(i) Lack of Geodetic Infrastructure

Land registration requires maps and plans of correct representation of boundary demarcations and correct rights and interests on land. The realisation of these, rests on cadastral surveys supported by a well-laid out geodetic infrastructure. A look at fig. 4 shows the geodetic controls in Adamawa State. The shaded portion shows the areas not covered by any geodetic infrastructure. This goes to support the low rate of land registration or survey activities recorded especially in Yola and Mubi zones.

(ii) Ill-Motivated Staff

The salaries paid by government are generally very low and irregular which makes it difficult to recruit and retain good and highly motivated personnel. Low and irregular salaries also increase the temptation for corrupt practices. Hence, it may not be surprising for expected revenue from land registration to be found in private pockets.

Therefore, provision of decent salaries and consequent recruitment of higher calibre staff can be an improvement on land registration. Also, a well laid down training programmes and workshops/ conferences will bring out the best from the personnel.

(iii) Heavy Capital Funding

No doubt the establishment of geodetic infrastructure is no mean activity in terms of cost, speed and accuracy. Even, a low order geodetic infrastructure is quite an expensive venture and then a high accuracy geodetic facility requires an enormous capital funding. It, therefore, follows that survey for land registration is an expensive activity but the benefits derivable are motivating factors to commit such fund on the project.

Also, funds are needed for the actual buildings and facilities for registration offices. Such facilities as computers and full automation of the whole system require serious capital. The encouragement is to start small and develop as the system grows and through fees, the costs of maintaining the registration system can be met.

(iv) Red-Tapsim

One of the disturbing aspects of land registration is the slowness or the time lag in actualising the full registration. A lot of time and bureaucracy are required to attain the added benefit of ensuring that problems and potential conflicts are identified. These can be possibly resolved before any of the defined area or portion is registered. But a well established geodetic system and adequate facilities for information storage, retrieval and manipulation will be a spring board to timely registration.

(v) Lack of strong registration policy and enlightenment

If actually, government is serious about land registration, it should as a matter of policy embark on public enlightenment of the benefits and needs of land registration. Also as a matter of policy, Government should engage fully on extension and densification of geodetic infrastructures to the rural populace. The enlightenment policy will go a long way in making the people receive and avail all necessary and required information when demanded. As a deliberate policy, the rural populace should be made the direct beneficiaries of all land policies in the state since they constitute the majority and much of the agricultural land lie in their domain.

(vi) Improper/Inaccurate Records

From the data examined one can infer that proper and accurate records have not been kept. This is evident from the jumps in the plotted profile of registered land. It is either that all surveyed lands are not or that the registered land records are not properly compiled. Therefore, serious painstaking effort is required in this direction for attainment of accurate records.

THE WAY FORWARD

(i) Technology and Training (T and T)

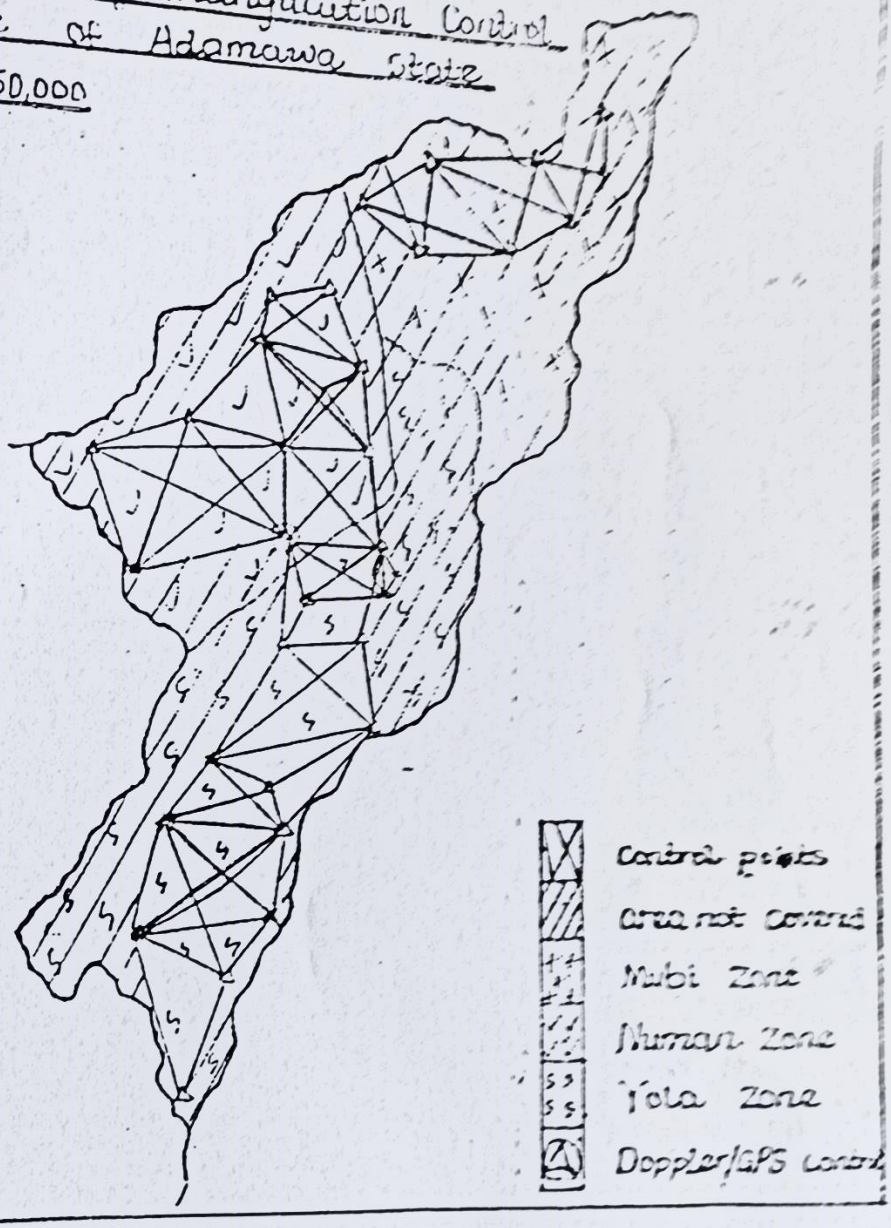
A sound land registration also requires sound technology and training. This encompasses personnel sound in theoretical and practical experience in surveying. In this modern (technology) age, there are abounding state-of-the-art equipment; GPS, Total Station, GIS workstations etc. Unfortunately, opportunities for GPS acquisition and practical experience are restricted and limited due to high financial involvement. Consequently, the state and its personnel are in disadvantage position to acquire the technology and attempt its own GPS observation campaigns. Hence, a training programme should be mounted in conjunction with Federal Surveys Department to provide the necessary practical skills to sustain its own operations.

(ii) Sound Foundation

A sound geodetic infrastructure put in place will produce a sound, first order geodetic network throughout Adamawa State. This would have produced a uniform system of control network based

Fig 4 : Primary Triangulation Control coverage of Adamawa State

Scale: 1:50,000



on or related to WGS84 datum. Hence, putting to a stop the proliferation of reference datums. Therefore, this is propagating the use of GPS technology.

With geodetic infrastructure, a sound foundation is provided to support all survey (cadastral and others) and mapping activities for the future and land registration. Then, one can be confident and rest assured that the core infrastructure now exists to support the accurate and unambiguous measurement of land boundaries for effective land registration system and also provide more precise information for countless other positioning applications already occurring in Adamawa State.

CONCLUSION

The most basic need of land registration is the geodetic infrastructure and the most significant factor affecting it is economics. This is so, as geodetic operations involve expensive instrumentation and extensive field operations that result in large expenditures. This should not deter or discourage the effort as the benefits are quite enormous and ensure orderly development and peaceful environment. In fact, proper land registration system ensures secure ownership, security of credit, greater management and efficiency in land taxation, support for land resources management, improvement in physical planning and keeps land litigation to minimal level.

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