



## City profile

## City profile: Kaduna

Y.A. Bununu<sup>a,b,\*</sup>, A.N.M. Ludin<sup>a</sup>, Nafisa Hosni<sup>a</sup><sup>a</sup> Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Built Environment, University Teknologi Malaysia, Johor Bahru, Johor, Malaysia<sup>b</sup> Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Environmental Design, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

Kaduna's colonial origin and function as an administrative town ensured that it was well planned and had good and well distributed urban facilities and services in the early years of its existence. However, the pressure of urbanization that has seen the city expand beyond its planned limits into hitherto rural settlements along the urban fringe has today given the city a different character from the once celebrated well planned and beautiful town. On the one hand you have the earlier settled areas of the city with good roads, quality housing and other necessary urban facilities while on the other you have the new expansion areas that have grown outside of formal planning control and are characterized by haphazard development, poor quality housing and lack of basic urban infrastructure and services. It is within this context and the scarcity of resources that the city authorities are struggling to cope with the challenges continually posed by rapid urban growth. The article emphasizes recent initiatives of the government aimed at confronting these challenges through a critical examination of their implementation and the outcomes therefrom.

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## 1. Introduction

Cities in the developing regions of the world are experiencing astronomical rates of population growth (Abubakar, 2014) and Kaduna is no exception. UN estimates in 2010 puts Kaduna's population at 1,561,000 with a growth rate of 2.55% per annum (UNDESA, 2009) and it is today the fifth largest city in Nigeria behind Lagos, Kano, Ibadan and Abuja in descending order. The high rate of population growth in Kaduna in the recent past is mainly due to natural increase of the urban population (UNDESA, 2009) after the initial period of very high rates of in-migration between 1955 and 1965 and the period of the industrial boom between the 1970s and the late 1980s (Max Lock and Partners, 1967). Interestingly, just a little over a century ago there existed no city called Kaduna and the site of the present day Kaduna was nothing more than barren land in the savannah of northern Nigeria. It is this story of relative youth in comparison to other Nigerian cities that gives Kaduna one of its unique attributes. The other being that, the city was established by the British colonial government wholly for administrative purposes, the only city with such a heritage in Nigeria. Because of the uniqueness of its

beginnings, Kaduna emerged early on as an orderly, well planned town with beautiful tree-lined avenues that had well-planned and well distributed facilities (Agboola, 1986).

However, during the last 20–25 years, the pressure of urbanization consequent upon the high rate of population growth has led to a rapid peripheral expansion of the city's built fabric into surrounding rural areas and agricultural lands. The mostly residential neighborhoods that have emerged in the peripheral areas of the city and are today housing a large chunk of its population are characterized by uncontrolled, haphazard and disorderly development that is lacking in basic urban services and infrastructure (Bununu, 2011).

This article chronicles the historical development of Kaduna from its establishment as the headquarters of the then Northern Protectorate in 1912 by the British colonial administration headed by Lord Frederick Lugard to the independence and post-independence period when Kaduna became the capital city of the Northern Nigeria Regional Government, to its current status as the capital of present day Kaduna State. The article also examines the population and demographic changes that have taken place in Kaduna over the years and the urban planning policies and strategies that have shaped its evolved urban form and environment. Lastly, challenges confronting the city today are critically analyzed alongside recent government initiatives at meeting such challenges while offering recommendations on the way forward.

\* Corresponding author at: Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Built Environment, University Teknologi Malaysia, Johor Bahru, Johor, Malaysia.

E-mail addresses: [abyakubu2@live.utm.my](mailto:abyakubu2@live.utm.my), [ybaliyu@abu.edu.ng](mailto:ybaliyu@abu.edu.ng) (Y.A. Bununu), [b-anazri@utm.my](mailto:b-anazri@utm.my) (A.N.M. Ludin), [nafisa@utm.my](mailto:nafisa@utm.my) (N. Hosni).

This review relied on data mainly from secondary sources. The data consists of maps, satellite images, data on the city's population and population growth trends and historical accounts of the city's origin and development. The maps and satellite images were subjected to change detection analysis to establish the trend and spatial pattern of urban growth while the population data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to reveal overall change in population and the trends of change over the period of the review. Existing reports such as master plans, official documents, databases and newspapers were subjected to content analysis in order to obtain required information.

## 2. Location and physical characteristics of the Kaduna city region

The city of Kaduna is located in the northern Guinea savannah zone of Nigeria. It lies between latitudes 10 and 11 degrees north and longitude 7 and 8 degrees east at an altitude of 645 m above sea level. The city's central location makes communication with the rest of Nigeria relatively easy (Fig. 1). Two major weather systems regulate Kaduna's climate. These are the Sahara high pressure system and the Atlantic low-pressure system. The interface between the two, known as the Inter-tropical Convergence Zone, is a front which moves irregularly in March up to October when it retreats. After October, the Sahara system dominates the

weather. The rainy season in the Kaduna city region starts around March and ends in October. Annual rainfall averages around 1200 mm. The rainfall pattern is traditionally characterized as monomodal with peak precipitation between July and August. The drainage pattern is dominated by the River Kaduna with its seasonal variation between flood conditions in the wet season and almost dry exposed river beds in the dry season. Its tributaries provide useful recharge opportunities and traditional "fadama" development. The Kaduna area is characterized by a dry season with dry, cold conditions from November to February when the "Harmattan" wind blows from the east-northeast; and a rainy season with warm, humid conditions with southwest winds from March through to October. The mean monthly temperature generally varies between 26 °C and 34 °C with maximum temperatures occurring in February, March and April and minimum temperatures in the "Harmattan" months of November, December and January. Kaduna's mild climate owing to its location in the Guinea Savannah vegetation belt, a rainy season that lasts from April to October and abundance of fertile land that supports agriculture act as magnets that draw more and more people to the city.

## 3. Historical development

Kaduna, the capital of present day Kaduna State is today one of the largest and most important cities in northern Nigeria

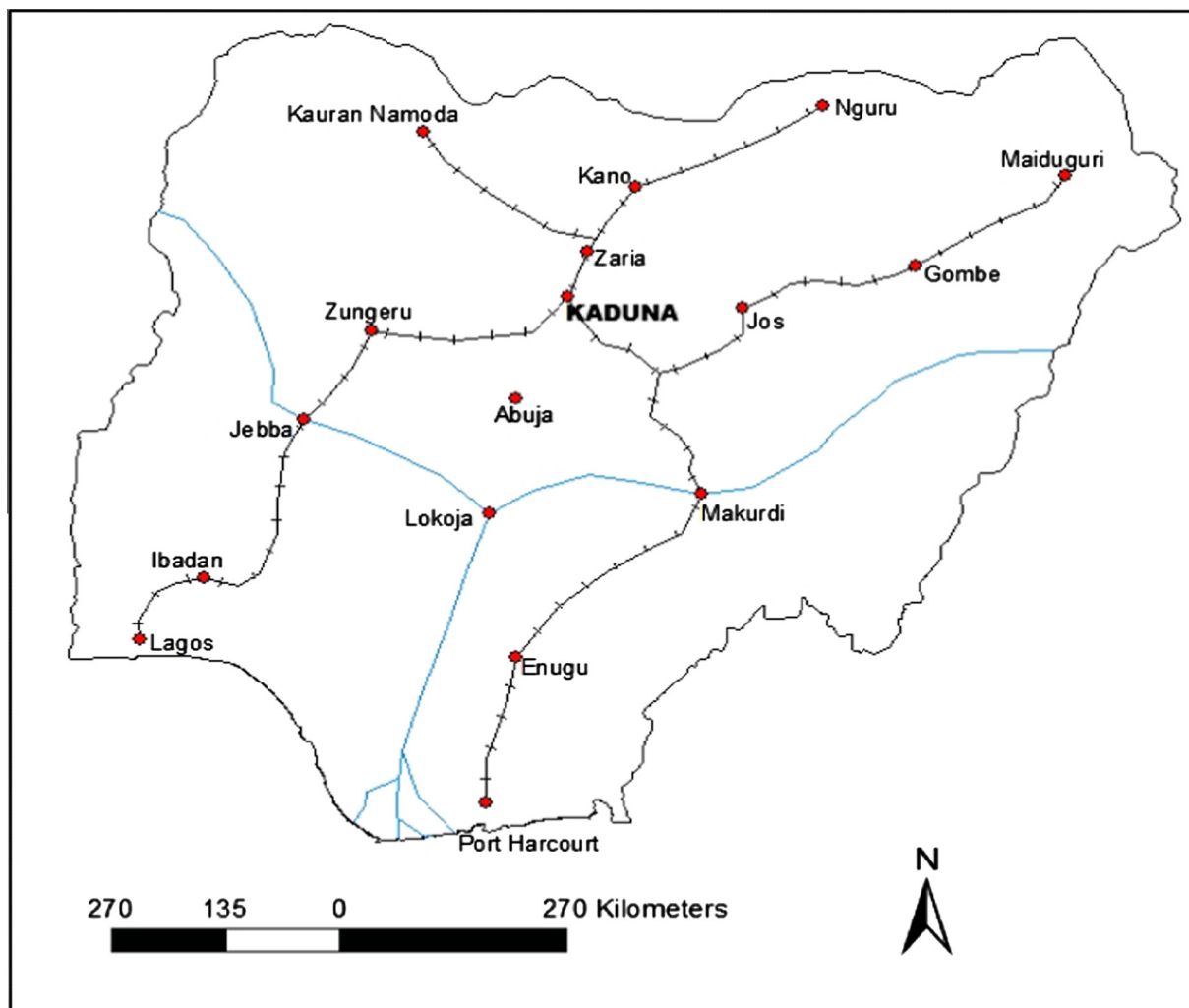


Fig. 1. Map of Nigeria showing the location of Kaduna. Source: Authors.

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