Forging the link between land registration and job creation.

A spatial economic growth model for Kano Nigeria

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Abstract

The expectation of land registration projects is the creation of a database of ownership and use that secures tenure. Additional benefits such as employment and improved planning capacity are presumed to follow but generally do not materialise.

Many land registration projects have been implemented globally. The primary goal of delivering land title has generally been achieved but little evidence is available to demonstrate that the expected economic impacts have been catalysed through registration of land as predicated by de Soto etc.

The Systematic Land Title Registration (SLTR) project in Kano State in Nigeria has taken steps to gather additional data in addition to that required to prove title. That data incorporates information on local skills, education and provision of services such as electricity and water. By having such information geo-referenced at household level it becomes possible to project local demands in healthcare, education, transport and sanitation and to also identify local trade clusters suitable for development. The various reports culminate in a strategic master plan that facilitates private sector led growth in pursuit of the SDGs. By appreciating the local value chains and market opportunities investment can be more focused with greater likelihood of success.

Key Words: Spatial Economic Development, Nigeria, Land Registration, Investment
Forging the link between land registration and job creation. A spatial economic growth model for Kano Nigeria

Contents

Forging the link between land registration and job creation. A spatial economic growth model for Kano Nigeria ......................................................................................................................... 3
1. Background ........................................................................................................................................................................ 4
2. Kano in context ........................................................................................................................................................................ 5
3. Keeping it simple ......................................................................................................................................................................... 6
4. Impact of social data collection on parcel recording tasks.............................................................................................. 8
5. Addressing concerns of participants .................................................................................................................................. 10
6. Cross referencing SLTR social data and physical data sets in pursuit of the SDGs ......................................................... 12
7. Analysis and projection of solutions for Kano ....................................................................................................................... 15
8. So how does all of this translate into job creation? ............................................................................................................. 18
9. Towards spatial economic development and better land governance ............................................................................... 20
10. Specific examples ................................................................................................................................................................. 22
11. Broader economic impact ..................................................................................................................................................... 25
12. Immediate benefits to the private sector and the state ....................................................................................................... 26
13. Supporting the development of state policy ....................................................................................................................... 27
14. Longer term strategic development plans ......................................................................................................................... 27
1. Background

The expectation of land registration projects is the creation of a database of ownership and use and the provision of secure tenure for occupants that result in more efficient land administration systems. Additional benefits such as improved employment prospects, mortgage markets, increased entrepreneurial activity and improved town and socio-economic planning capacity are presumed to follow but generally do not materialise. As a consequence the ‘locked capital’ remains locked and impacts over and above the generation of the cadastre are few.

Many land registration projects have now been implemented globally over the last twenty years. The systems developed in Eastern Europe support dynamic administration systems that regulate the land market and generate revenue efficiently. The transformation of the Russian land administration system over the last ten years draws interesting comparisons with the Nigerian context on which this paper is based. Ten years ago Russia had a population of 150 million people and a chaotic, inefficient land registry with long delays and high costs. Very often these costs were ‘unofficial.’ By investing heavily in institutional reform, streamlining practices and reducing steps and cost in registration Russia now has over 150 million registered titles supporting 50 million registration actions each year. Revenue is significant, Russia stands at number 8 in the WB Doing Business rankings for land registration and economic growth has been increasingly positive on the shoulders of land reforms.

Ten years ago Nigeria also had a population of 150 million people and a similarly parlous land registration system. Several state or local level land registration projects have been implemented over the last ten years but little demonstrable impact can be observed on the land administration system itself or the economy. The primary goal of delivering land title has generally been achieved but weak institutional capacity has failed to catalyse change in the mortgage market or access to finance as proposed by de Soto et al and improvements in the formal land market have not materialised. Frequently subsequent transactions of parcels registered within the computerised land record generated through regularisation remain tied to antiquated paper based systems. This immediately reintroduces the problems of delay, rent seeking and opaque, discretionary based decision making.

The Systematic Land Title Registration (SLTR) project in Kano State in Nigeria has taken steps to apply the lessons learned in other Nigerian projects to deliver a more efficient land registration system. Given,
however, that the primary objective of the parent project of SLTR, DFID’s ‘Growth and Employment in States’ (GEMS3) was the creation of a better business environment that generated jobs through investment, simply creating a cadastre was not enough.

Over and above the essential information required to assign legal title through a ‘fit for purpose’ regularisation project additional data was gathered that would aid the identification of value chains. That data incorporates information on local skills, education and provision of services such as electricity and water. By having such information geo-referenced at household level it becomes possible to project local demands in healthcare, education, transport and sanitation and to also identify local trade clusters suitable for development. The various reports culminate in a strategic master plan predicated on spatial economic theory that facilitates private sector led growth in pursuit of the SDGs. By appreciating the local value chains and market opportunities investment can be more focused and more relevant with greater likelihood of success. The data also allows other development needs, e.g. access to healthcare and education by key sectors of society, to be addressed.

2. Kano in context

Kano State comprises some 14 million people governed by a system of 44 local government areas (LGAs). Increasing urbanisation will place massive demands on infrastructure which the state will fail to address in the face of falling oil revenues. The population is likely to triple in size by 2050 with attendant urbanisation placing an increasing burden on the major urban centres. Future development strategy will demand significant private sector inputs but the market data on offer from the scheme aids better, evidence based business modelling.

Against this background the GEMS3 project initiated a land regularisation project in 2013. There had been earlier attempts at mass formalisation of titles in 2006 and 2011 but limited investment meant that they failed to reach scale. GEMS3 used that existing methodology in its approach in 2013 and 2014 registering some 11,000 plots but it became apparent that the expected project goals of efficiency and focussed improvements on women’s economic empowerment and the broader business environment would not be met.
In 2015 the SLTR project therefore opted to completely register all land holdings in a single, urban LGA using an improved ‘fit for purpose’ process using satellite imagery, general boundaries and public display as the means of obviating dispute.

Experience in previous land registration projects had highlighted that simply generating land certificates did nothing to improve the business environment. Critical data in respect of local markets and key value chains was also essential. Rather than relying on separate projects to address these shortcomings the land registration project added a simple ‘census’ type process resulting in a geo-referenced record of relevant trades and skills together with a demographic breakdown of each household.

Over a period of eight months some 30,000 land parcels were recorded comprising high, medium and low density housing and commercial structures resulting in the most comprehensive record of land holdings in any LGA in Nigeria. The social data outlined in this paper was also recorded.

As of February 2017 the project employs some 400 staff and has registered 130,000 plots and achieved comprehensive registration of three LGAs in Kano city.

3. Keeping it simple

Incorporating the collection of social data within the land registration activity necessitates limiting the amount and nature of information to a minimum. The approach adopted in Kano was intended to generate a stepping off point for further study and was never intended to offer the exhaustive socio-economic data required under a fully-fledged governance reform or master planning project. In an effort to keep the process manageable core data relevant to social development, investment, job creation and town planning were identified. These were further refined into a minimal number of indicators that households were most likely to respond to positively and openly:

- Educational attendance
- Educational attainment
- Core trades or activities in each household
- Access to basic amenities – electricity & water provision to plots

The distinction between educational attendance and educational attainment is pertinent. Anecdotal evidence prior to implementation of the scheme had suggested that attendance rates were diminishing.
If proven then significant longer term impacts in terms of literacy, skills and employability were likely. Geo-referencing the responses household by household and cross referencing with the location of existing education providers would identify winners and losers based, potentially, on location and social status. The goal would be to offer appropriate solutions.

Educational attainment allows a better understanding of the potential workforce and the scale and nature of the market. Educated, aspirational professionals would support a different range of activities than unskilled, poorly educated communities.
Trades and activities at household level also deserved scrutiny. Previous studies, primarily focused on gender, indicated that significant amounts of commercial activity by women took place within the home. These small scale, single person businesses might offer scope for clustering, skills improvement and cooperative working to increase opportunities for economic empowerment and more structured training for younger females. Other trades, such as carpentry, mechanics, building etc. which take place in unregulated workshops or inappropriate locations might also offer solutions for skills development and apprenticeships and, equally importantly, allow improved planning capacity and better urban design solutions. If, for example, multiple tailors are identified scattered across multiple sites with poor access to electricity and limited market shares the opportunity might exist to cluster these trades into a central location with better economies of scale, formal training and quality control mechanisms and more efficient value chains and access to market. Re-locating ‘dirty’ trades such as mechanics or butchery might also be necessary under environmental reforms made possible by improved planning capacity at government level.

Consequential data on access to electricity or water at household level could also inform planning and healthcare decisions once the scale, and thus market potential, are quantified and geo-referenced relative to populations at community level. Service provision is poorly regulated in Kano and water and electricity supplies disrupted by illegal access or ‘tapping in.’ Irregular access to electricity and water can have significant impacts on business and also the health of local inhabitants,

4. Impact of social data collection on parcel recording tasks

The primary goal of the Kano SLTR project was land regularisation. Expectations had been defined by the State and DFID in terms of parcels to be recorded versus a ‘value for money’ business case that would develop a sustainable business model on project closure. The burden of social data collection had to minimal not only because of the potential to reduce daily registration totals but also because land registration field teams could not be given the skills to apply a complex social data questionnaire in the time available.

Some consideration had previously been given to incorporating information on income, gender attitudes within the home, perception surveys of the likely impact of land, tax and investment reforms in Kano
and the ability to ‘do business’ locally and nationally. The value of such qualitative data is considerable but it was concluded that such a survey would significantly slow down plot recordation and, more importantly, be difficult for field teams to apply. Most importantly, perhaps, was the need to minimise suspicion surrounding the registration process itself. Fears had already been voiced by communities that registration was a pre-cursor to the imposition of punitive taxation regime. Questions probing livelihoods and incomes were likely to invite negative and potentially hostile outcomes.

A single page data collection form was finally developed. Simple, direct, quantitative responses would deliver a base line of fundamental information that could be built by other actors.

The need to simplify the various trades within basic sectors did demand a modicum of explanation to the staff. Basic headings were applied as a means to ‘catch all’ relevant participants:

Mechanical – to include: Car mechanics, motorcycle mechanics, general mechanical trades, tool sellers, electrical goods repair etc.

Administrative – to include: Civil servants, accountants, book-keepers, secretaries.

Healthcare – to include: Doctors, nurses, medics, traditional care providers and healers.

Education – to include: Teachers at all levels, skill development specialists, apprenticeship providers.

Agriculture – to include: Livestock of any sort, poultry of any sort, market gardeners, landscapers, horticulturalists, seedsmen.

Textiles – to include: Seamstresses, tailors, hat-makers, weavers, dyers, material sellers, retailers.

Construction – to include: Bricklayers, block makers, painters, plasterers, drainage, labourers, cement and material sellers.
The technique is too simplistic to fully analyse value chains but it informs the scale of markets and highlights areas worthy of more in depth study with a view to improving service provision and business modelling.

Exceptional trades which might exist in the area outside of these sectors were not included. The approach was intended to identify fundamental skills capable of improving market share and reaching scale as easily as possible. Specialist areas, with only a few participants, would not meet the criteria for selection to engage in additional training or clustering though it is acknowledged that some break out or innovative MSMEs, though having a potential to create larger returns pro rata, might be overlooked.

5. Addressing concerns of participants

Some degree of suspicion was anticipated at the outset of implementation. Collecting personal data could not be made compulsory under the project terms of referenced but, to achieve a meaningful result, significant returns were essential. The SLTR programme had been in play for some years previously and sensitisation and public outreach strategies were well defined and local relationships with traditional leaders strong. Ultimately it was possible to allay fears of participants by developing strong messages defining the background and intended scope of the exercise. These are typical examples:
Job creation. A better understanding of the existing demographic in association with data on local skills and underutilised brownfield sites allows linkages with other programmes seeking to improve MSME and skills development. The social data informs market size and share reducing risk to investor while allowing a stronger voice for entrepreneurs with local planning authorities.

Better master planning. Government institutions in Nigeria typically offer master planning solutions promoting green field locations rather than pursuing the inclusive, socially led reforms that will support more sustainable socio-economic growth. Given that government typically lack the finance and professional capacity to undertake the in depth social analysis required to develop mature master plans the data gathered under SLTR offers important insight for short and medium term solutions. Knowledge of markets also invites private sector initiatives obviating dependency on state funding.

Access to education. Education provision is weak in Nigeria as a whole and particularly so in Kano. Class sizes are large and teaching skills poor with schools scattered around the city in locations which can be remote or difficult to access. It is hoped that the data generated through land registration will allow better focussed schooling within communities and that education providers, with definitive data on the demographic of any location, will implement better business models more capable of delivering valid qualifications that will enable access to better jobs or increased opportunities for higher education.

Improved provision and access to healthcare. As with education the quality of healthcare provision in Kano is poor. Hospitals are often located in hard to reach locations and service is inadequate. A growing population is place greater and greater demands on providers yet investment remains minimal. The demographic and physical data generated by the land regularisation exercise allows better informed decision making for government and service providers. The state is able to identify need and identify potential location of new facilities; investors gain an appreciation of the scale and nature of services required. Clearly maternal health is a major consideration at this point in time but gains in this area will influence alternative services if infant mortality rates are addressed.

Improved revenue generation. Attitudes to ‘revenue generation’ in Kano are mixed. The populace does not wish to be taxed and land reforms are treated with suspicion as a mechanism by which to introduce expensive property taxes. The introduction of property tax is inevitable over time but the real focus of revenue generation is through business reforms. Land registration and associated reforms are intended
to make locations more attractive for investors and thus generate jobs and local growth. The increased market activity offers increased revenue that can be re-invested under the various ‘tax for service’ initiatives within the State. The extent of revenue that might be generated is unknown at this stage. Preliminary economic analysis at LGA level suggest SLTR alone will generate growth of 1.6%pa per additional factors, such as job creation, remain under scrutiny. A fuller economic impact assessment will follow on the closure of the GEMS3 project in June 2017.

*Contributing to a ‘better business environment.’* The purpose of the whole exercise is the ultimate creation of an inviting, transparent, effective location for economic activity. By participating in the social data gathering exercise the LGAs gain a significant competitive advantage over other locations to attract investment. The data available mitigates the risk to the investor, informs them on markets and skills, identifies transport link and access to services such as electricity and water. No such data is available from a central resource anywhere else in Nigeria. Engaging positively with the land regularisation project not only secures tenure and inheritance rights it proposes a long term legacy for successive generations.

6. Cross referencing SLTR social data and physical data sets in pursuit of the SDGs

The Sustainable Development Goals set a challenging agenda for the developing world. The sheer scope of the vision ties in many disparate themes but there is no clearly defined binding agent that cross-cuts the various initiatives. The author contends that land reform may well be the key.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS THROUGH SYSTEMATIC LAND TITLE REGISTRATION IN CONJUNCTION WITH SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) End poverty in all its forms everywhere</td>
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<td>2) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture</td>
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<td>3) Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages</td>
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<td>4) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</td>
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<td>5) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</td>
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<td>6) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</td>
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<td>7) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all</td>
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<td>8) Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all</td>
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<td>9) Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation</td>
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<td>10) Reduce inequality within and among countries</td>
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<td><strong>compact between government and the people with a positive reduction in inequality.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>11) Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</strong></td>
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<td><strong>13) Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts (taking note of agreements made by the UNFCCC forum)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>15) Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss</strong></td>
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17) Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

| Probably unrealistic to assert that land reform, with or without social data, will revitalise global partnerships but it may play a stake in generating better cross-border business relationships. |

The above table is, of course, simplistic. Solutions will only come to fruition if connective policies are implemented in collaboration with land reform. Other institutions may resist the assertion that ‘land is the key’ but, in the absence of a stronger argument from other spheres, it at least generates a means of focussing initial attention and forging connections between agencies and tying them together in a structured way. Only then will the various tasks become manageable and implementing institutions accountable.

The real value of the data for Kano will only be realised if capacity exists to utilise the information make coherent, holistic decisions in support of short, medium and long term planning policies. At this stage Kano State MDAs lack an explicit development policy and so the nature of solutions available are consequently small scale and standalone.

The potential value of being able to identify local needs and/or demand by cross referencing tangible, recent quantitative data is huge. As mentioned elsewhere in this paper the primary objective of the exercise to create a simpler land administration system that supports job creation but over and above that there exists space in the market to improve healthcare, education. The ability of local actors to assess raw figures and project solutions is low and

7. Analysis and projection of solutions for Kano

The current datasets are only complete for a limited number of LGAs. Given that some of the registration activity is ongoing it is appropriate to limit observations to the data gathered in Tarauni, the first LGA completed.

Tarauni occupies a central location within the metropolitan area. It comprises a broad mix of housing types in high, medium and low density settings housing the more affluent, middle income and poorer
citizens respectively. The land regularisation project was limited to properties in private ownership but additionality offered by including the social data would allow greater understanding of the lifestyles within these various wards and an appreciation of their relative access to services and social amenities. It became apparent that many of the more affluent neighbourhoods did, in fact, benefit from existing certificates of occupancy dating back many years and precluding them from the social data gathering exercise. Given their status it was felt that little would be gained by pursuing the data as lifestyles in these areas were probably better than the high density wards that would benefit more directly from the reforms proposed under GEMS3. The majority of the baseline data for the LGA, and consequent projection from it, must therefore appreciate that solutions are generally focussed on the poor rather than ‘the whole.’

Whilst Tarauni is largely residential there is meaningful commercial activity in hotel and retail trades plus additional land use including schools, hospitals, mosques and industrial depots. Since SLTR is limited to residential property in private ownership it was not possible to extract any in depth analysis of commercial activity but, given that the majority of private homes also house trades on a small scale, with people living ‘over the shop’, some insight of local skillsets and market activity could be deduced. Whilst full registration of the non-residential sites was not undertaken all sites were plotted and recorded in the hope that the data would feed in to an eventual ‘master plan’ for the LGA that would enable more sustainable socio-economic development plans initially at local level but eventually, on completion of SLTR, city wide.

It should also be appreciated that participating in SLTR was not compulsory nor, for those that did participate, was it compulsory to provide the household data. Following an effective sensitisation strategy based on the messages outlined in section 6 above the results allow credible conclusion to be drawn as the statistical sample is very high indeed.

Poor records make it impossible to specify the exact population of Tarauni. Figures available range from approximately 250,000 to approximately 375,000 at the current time. By August 2016 the SLTR project had recorded over 30,000 plots of land in Tarauni with social data available for 75% of those plots. The result supported anecdotal reports that occupancy rates in excess of ten people per household were common and reinforced the likelihood that the current population was at the higher end of the estimated population figures. Given a predicted increase in urbanisation of 75% in Kano over the next 30
years and a year on year national population growth in excess of 3% improved planning capacity is critical.

By utilising the data available to identify both the risks and the opportunities presented by SLTR it is hoped to encourage more serious study of Kano by the relevant institutions.

The ‘youth bulge’ that is representative of population growth in SSA is evident in the above graph. This group represents both a challenge and an opportunity for local areas. If properly trained and empowered they are capable of assuring sustainable growth and security. If neglected the counter argument offers an alternative future for them and the region.
8. So how does all of this translate into job creation?

“From the perspective of theory, spatial inequality is fundamentally determined by the location decisions of firms and households. Firms choose locations to maximize profits whereas households do so to maximize job market outcomes and utility.”¹

Within the dynamic economic framework of Nigeria effective modelling of these factors is problematic and generating and collating sufficient, relevant data to serve truly informed spatial development decisions will take many years. The SLTR derived data can at best be viewed as a simplistic rapid appraisal of the larger picture but it is still capable of delivering solutions that can lead to jobs but remains vulnerable to existing political institutions. In Nigeria these power-plays are complex but, as the economy struggles to cope with diminishing oil revenue, changes in attitude will be inevitable.

In seeking to generate jobs within the context of a single LGA in Kano city the factors are limited to existing skills, access to markets and a supportive business environment in which to learn new skills, improve business models and grow. Growth initially may only be from micro to small or small to medium enterprise but the growing population ought to be capable of sustaining growth if businesses are better managed and regulatory burdens reduced. At the time of writing Kano benefits from several skill development initiatives, both local and donor funded, plus a focus on improving the way in which business is conducted. This includes a reduction or elimination of informal taxes and the introduced of simpler, harmonised taxation system that significantly reduce the compliance burden on small traders.

Information gathered so far indicates key trades worthy of attention:

Textiles and tailoring: The growing population will always need to be clothed. Considerable activity is ongoing in this sector but the value chain demands further analysis. As a ‘clean’ trade that can be pursued from home opportunity exists to improve co-operation between participants and improve economies of scale following various proven methodologies extant in the Asian countries.

Mechanical: Notwithstanding significant activity in this sector it is unclear whether basic standards are applied with a resultant potential impact on safety. The sites betray poor adherence to waste disposal

and there are consequent implications on health and safety in the local environment. With an increasing child population the health risks to be understood but, equally, the opportunity exists to develop business incubators and skill acquisition centres in dedicated sites that can make better, more effective use of vacant land.

Construction: Building standards are low. Increasing demands on infrastructure through urbanisation will necessitate more measure attitudes to planning regulation and building control. Improved safeguards are essential to protect against further degeneration of local infrastructure and better waste management is critical. Pro-active development of construction skills, and the creation of small scale capital projects, allow improvements in skills and livelihoods and, perhaps more importantly, living standards amongst the most vulnerable communities.

The structural shift in populations arising from urbanisation is also expected to follow the trends identified by Murata\textsuperscript{2} viz “the structural shift from agriculture to manufacturing is gained by introducing non-homothetic preferences, which, by invoking Engel's law, shifts consumer demand from agricultural to manufacturing goods. In this model, the pre-industrial economy is defined by prohibitive interregional transportation costs. As transportation costs fall with development, the extent of market increases for manufactured goods and consumers’ purchasing power rises as prices fall. Initially, at low demand for manufactures, due to low agglomeration economies, manufacturing remains dispersed. As transportation costs continue to fall further, however, the increase in expenditure shares in manufacturing leads to agglomeration forces sufficient enough to create a pattern of core-periphery.”

9. Towards spatial economic development and better land governance

Kano has, at its core, an ‘old city’ that grew organically over hundreds of years. More modern building, though initially subjected to the constraints of a planning regime intended to regulate development, now reflects a haphazard system of multiple, often inappropriate land use throughout the city:

**Fig 1.** Some State or Federal allocations of land made during the late eighties and nineties now demonstrably waste valuable land within the city limits. The central teaching hospital in Tarauni was granted and occupies a site far in excess of its useable purpose. In consequence over half of the site is used as farmland notwithstanding a pressing need for affordable housing or improved business units.

**Fig 2.** A large tract of land allocated to the NNPC as a fuel storage depot has been surrounded by development over the last thirty years. The facility now represents a significant hazard, or potentially security risk, to the thousands of people living in its shadow.
It will be appreciated that these locations benefit from good transport links, better than adequate service provision and a local population with reasonable skill levels or business acumen. Re-purposing sites such as these could create a far better business model for the government, it would gain revenue and improved security, and a better opportunity for business that might otherwise be offered an unserviced site on the outskirts of the city. Such remote locations over-burden what are often parlous business models by lacking transport links and local workers.

The argument holds true across Kano. Significant areas of the city that benefit from local trades, local markets and good transport links lie redundant. They offer the most cost-effective solution to business start ups or new commercial initiatives.

Government agencies will explain that ‘there is no land available; in the centre of city capable of supporting growth and that, in consequence, they are forced to direct investors to per-urban or rural locations. The data set coupled to SLTR belies this. By encouraging government to capitalise on these brown field sites returns in investment, in every sense, come to fruition more quickly. Environmental impacts are reduced and the state land portfolio is better managed. These factors alone will create tangible support to an improved business environment for Kano.
10. Specific examples

Education & Healthcare provision

Fig 3. Despite significant populations in the high density areas service provision in health and education has scope for improvement. The sheer scale of the demographic is capable of supporting effective business models ‘for profit’ or, alternatively, to highlight deserving locations for NGO assistance.
Security

Fig 4. Particular demographics will become increasingly vulnerable over time. Projections of population growth allow an estimation of demands for maternal health care in the short and medium term. The data highlights a paucity of facilities in central locations and further highlights the fact that existing facilities are likely to become overwhelmed unless investment can be found. Securing that investment should be made easier if providers can utilise the available data and improve planning capacity.

Fig 5. The graphic demonstrates the limited police presence in Tarauni. High density areas, with a combined population of at least 150,000 people, lack any immediate access to security personnel notwithstanding the fact that these areas suffer more from crime than the low density neighbourhoods. It would be prudent for security personnel to take account of the rising population, and predictable increase in criminality, to improve the police presence in.
Co-operative working & skills development

Fig 6. The prevalence of core artisanal crafts in the neighbourhood offers opportunity for MSME development and co-operative working. Current levels of competitive between, say, tailors tends to drive down market prices and also quality. By capitalising on the relative availability of nearby brownfield infrastructure real possibilities exist to create business incubators and the institution of training and apprenticeship regimes that will provide both improved economies of scale and better opportunities for youth.
Environmental concerns

11. Broader economic impact

‘Traditional’ land registration projects are typically measured by numbers of parcels recorded and cost per unit. This is usually sufficient to meet the project frameworks agreed by service providers and the institutions funding the projects. This approach often fails to address the fundamental expectation of land regularisation schemes to improve governance, livelihoods and ease of doing business.

Weak institutional capacity within MDAs means that the public sector is unlikely to capitalise fully on the opportunity presented by the socio-economic data gathered. It is hoped that the private sector will assume an influencing role by demonstrating the potential of geo-referenced data in business

Fig 7. Housing layouts are proposed with little appreciation of the changing impact of climatic and environmental issues. Land continues to be released in areas adjacent to ongoing commercial activities with potentially deleterious effects. The photograph demonstrates such a site to the south of Tarauni. Sand dredging has destabilised local soil levels and impacted on housing estates that cannot now be completed. A loss of housing stock for the city and a loss of revenue for the state.
development. Effective growth is only going to be facilitated by more ‘joined-up thinking’ between government agencies than is currently the case and overcoming the silo mentality of civil servants will be challenging.

Experience of land reform projects elsewhere in Africa highlight the fact that economic impacts may not be immediate. A mass registration project in the 1960s generate millions of title yet a study in 1987 indicated that the anticipated economic impacts had been negligible. Now, thirty years later, it is suggested that the programme is finally yielding rewards. The Digital Standard reported on May 8, 2014 that:

“A random check across the country reveals a big disparity in socio-economic and infrastructure development, with titled areas recording much progress and untitled areas lagging behind. Apart from land registration guaranteeing and protecting rights and interests of individuals thus improving access to credit, services and predictability of land markets, it also accelerates infrastructure planning and protection of the environment within local communities and helping in poverty alleviation.”

It is to be hoped that comparable rewards will be manifest in Kano within a shorter timeframe.

12. **Immediate benefits to the private sector and the state**

The most conspicuous benefit to the state is the access to a predictable revenue stream generated by formalised transactions that has hitherto been unobtainable because of poor data sets. The broader benefit is, however, the opportunity to utilise the demographic and physical data to forge linkages between relevant institutions to initiate credible planning policy. Immediate examples are:

- Knowledge of household size and structure that will indicate the need to improve access to education or healthcare. Not only are the relevant ministries able to identify the societal demand the physical data allows sites for new building to be identified in the vicinity of the communities needing support.
- Local trade clusters, for example tailors or mechanics or carpenters, can be organised into more effective co-operative structures. This offers them improved access to business development

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services, access to finance and improved access to market. The state in turn benefits from improved planning capacity not only in terms of land use but in business environment reforms generally.

The registration process also offers meaningful opportunities for the private sector. With a knowledge of the scale and location of existing value chains and markets business becomes far more predictable and likely to succeed. Coupled to LGA level innovations in tax reform and skills development the LGA becomes a more attractive proposition in which to trade. A knowledge of the demographic, and supportive access to appropriate, registered and serviced plots also allows education, healthcare, training etc. to be treated on a commercial basis as market size and scope are known thus mitigating the majority of risk for the investor.

13. **Supporting the development of state policy**

Current data on all LGAs in Nigeria is limited. Consequently very little planning is possible and that which does take place is generally simplistic and based on guesswork rather than hard data. Frequently plans are crafted by external consultants on lucrative contracts but, with limited qualified staff, the consultative process is ineffectual and subsequent oversight and feedback mechanisms non-existent. As SLTR extends its reach across the state and more data is harvested the State gains the facility to ‘take stock’ of its physical and human capital. That knowledge finally allows the creation of state development policies capable of reacting to the measured and defined needs of the population rather than political whim or the demands of the elite.

14. **Longer term strategic development plans**

With credible policies in place it becomes possible to develop short, medium and longer term strategic development plans. Given the likely tripling of the population in Nigeria by 2050, culminating a projected population of 1 billion by 2090, effective planning is more critical than ever.

These development plans must be predicated on the fact that state funding is unreliable and hence the models must meet the needs of the private sector first and foremost. Given the data generated through land registration business models can be created for business development, healthcare, education, provision of infrastructure and power in a properly regulated business environment.
Critical gaps remain at this stage, in particular the long-standing shortcomings in service delivery by other departments of government. By empowering the individual LGAs, however, and treating them as a place to do business rather than a bureaucratic dead-end, they become free of the shackles of state oversight. The SLTR process delivers real prospects for the achievement of the SDGs in particular better property and inheritance rights for women, access to education and work and sustainable improvements in access to water and better healthcare for all.

Kano’s most pressing need is job creation. As has hopefully been demonstrated in this paper a very real prospect exists to exploit the land registration process to identify core businesses at small and medium enterprise level that are capable of lifting the poorest sectors of society out of poverty in urban areas and generating more sustainable solutions in urban land use. Only by actively shifting government attitudes that have relied on direct funding to a situation in which government service provision is based on service delivery that meets the needs of the business and private sector, and which generates a profit for state coffers, will Kano be able to regain its status as a commercial hub in Nigeria.