



## THE CREATION OF NIGER STATE AND THE EXPANSION OF INFRASTRUCTURE

**FACILITIES IN MINNA TOWN, 1976-1999**

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### Abstract

**T**his article focuses on the creation of Niger State in Nigeria and the subsequent expansion of infrastructure and amenities in Minna Town between 1976 and 1999. The formation of Niger State in 1976 brought about rapid development in the region, with a particular emphasis on improving the quality of life for residents in Minna Town. The period saw significant advancements in areas such as transportation, education, healthcare, and urban planning. This study

aims to examine the key initiatives and projects implemented during this time frame, shedding light on the factors that contributed to the growth and progress of Minna Town. Through a

### Keywords:

Infrastructure,  
Facilities,  
Development,  
Expansion and Minna  
Town.

comprehensive analysis of historical documents and scholarly research, this article seeks to provide insights into the challenges and successes of this critical period in the history of Niger State and Minna Town.

### Introduction

**I**n the period between 1976 and 1999, Niger State underwent significant changes in both its administrative structure and physical landscape. This era marked the creation of Niger State out of the former north western state as a separate entity within Nigeria and the subsequent focus on improving infrastructure facilities within its capital city, Minna. The developments during this time frame played a crucial role in shaping the modern identity of both the state and its major urban center. This paper will delve into

the key milestones and initiatives that contributed to the expansion of infrastructure facilities in Minna Town during this transformative period.<sup>1</sup>

### **Politics and the Urban Expansion in Minna**

There is no doubt that State creation has been an important factor that facilitated the growth of several towns and cities in Nigeria. Towns designated as State capital witnessed rapid population growth due to the opportunities they offered. In fact, State creation in Nigeria serves as pull factor migration process. That must have been why Ajaegbu observed:

Since the creation of States and Local Government Area in Nigeria from 1967, through 1976, 1989, 1992 and 1996, many settlements have become State Capitals, or local Government Headquarters, while Abuja had been made Federal Capital Territory. Many of them have also become not only administrative/political centers, but also economic, academic and cultural nerve centers at various levels. They have, thereby attracted many migrants that have swelled their populations.<sup>2</sup>

The creation of Niger State in 1976 with Minna as the Capital was a major landmark in the history of the growth of the town. Generally, the newly state capitals established in 1976 witnessed rapid urban growth due to the increased socio, economic and political activities that also increased the influx of migrants into the areas. In the case of Minna as the new administrative and economic nerve centre of Niger state, it became attractive to migrants who came in search of new opportunities.<sup>3</sup>

However, Minna even before its position as a State capital in 1976, was dominated by civil servants, this is because the area had been the administrative headquarters of Niger Province and Minna-Kagara Native Authority. During the struggle for the creation of Niger State the major urban centers in the former Niger Province like Bida, Kontagora, Suleja and Minna bid for the position of state capital. But at last Minna was chosen due to its strategic location at the centre of Niger State and its easy accessibility from all parts of the State. So also, the railway factor played a considerable role in the choice of Minna as the state capital in 1976.<sup>4</sup>

With the emergence of Minna as the capital of Niger state, there resurfaced the phenomenon of return movement of civil servants, traders and contractors from Sokoto, the former capital of North-Western States to Minna, the newly capital of Niger state. The

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1 Girbert A.G. and Healey the Political Economy of Land: Urban. Developed in An Oil Economy, London. Gower 1985.

2 H.I. Ajaegbu, Urban Development and Prospect, London, Heinemann, 1976, p. 400

3 Ibrahim Salihu, "The Historical Development of Minna Town in Nigeria, 1976-2015" PhD Thesis, University Utara Malaysia, 2018

4 Estimate of the Government of Niger state of Nigeria, 1976, Government Printers, Kaduna.

creation of Niger state reduced the population of Sokoto state, because of the outward movement of Nigerlites to Minna. According to one informant, Minna became the centre of attraction not just to Nigerlites, but also to many other ethnic groups like Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa seeking for white-collar jobs.<sup>5</sup> With this the area became a melting pot of culture as a result of inward migration. The nascent state under Commodore Murtala Nyako started the process of developing the new Capital on one hand and the State on the other.

The major attention of the nascent Capital was how to provide, social amenities, transportation, office accommodation and housing to the large influx of civil servants into it. More roads were also constructed and the existing ones were expanded and tarred. Some roads like Bosso road became dualised. In order to ensure accessibility to the state capital, more roads were constructed to link the Local Government Areas with the state capital. For example, roads like Minna-Zungeru, Minna-Abuja, Minna-Paiko, Minna-Lapai, Minna-Agaie and Minna-Kuta roads were tarred.<sup>6</sup> The reconstruction of these roads network eased and encouraged large number of rural-urban migration from different parts of the state into Minna as the seat of power. More so, rural dwellers were attracted into the new capital for job opportunities and bright-lights it offered. The table below provided population projection of Minna based on 5% growth rate from 1976-1980. The basis of this projection was the 1963 census figure of Minna town, which provided that the town had a population of 72, 098.

**Table 1: Population in Minna Town 1976-1980**

S/No	Year	Estimated Population
1.	1976	135,951
2.	1977	142,749
3.	1978	149,887
4.	1979	157,381
5.	1980	165,250

Source: Niger State Statistical year book, 1978, p. 10

The above table, even though, based on projection, shows to the steady increase in the population from figures 1976. The major reason behind this population growth was the regular migration of people into Minna as a state capital. The population growth may also be associated with improved healthcare facilities that reduced death rate and increase birth rate. It is important to note that the population of Minna during this period not only

<sup>5</sup> A.D. Umar, Oral Interview, aged 54, civil servant, Minna 25th May 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Niger State at Ten, 1st April, 1976 to 31st March 1986. Ministry of Information Youth Sports and Culture, Minna.

civil servants but also a mixture of different occupational groups from different parts of the country and even beyond. There was large number of educational institutions established in Minna due to Universal Primary Education programme during this period. Added to this was the state secretariat complex constructed for proper administrative convenience. All the state ministries like finance, works, education, health and commerce were concentrated in the state capital. This inevitably encouraged the settlement of people particularly civil servants and businessmen in the town. Moreover, people came into Minna in the 1970s due to oil boom that brought too much money in circulation, particularly in the Nigerian urban centers.<sup>7</sup>

The concentration of all state Ministries and parastatals in Minna contributed to the growth of the area as all state functionaries live in the area. The construction of these Ministries engulfed the suburb areas of Minna.<sup>8</sup> The unexpected creation of Niger state, and the citing of Minna as the capital initially created serious office and housing accommodation problem in the area are use to solve the problem by governments. Temporary office and housing accommodation were made to civil servants. In the form of acquiring rented houses to serve as both dousing and office accommodation especially in such areas as Paida housing in the state, succeeded in the construction of three set of housing units that include the airport quarter, known as 1,2,3, quarters along airport road. The two other housing units are the commissioner's quarters and the senior officer's quarters along the present GRA area. These houses were constructed between. 1976-1980 and were distributed to privileged senior officers in the civil service.<sup>9</sup> But the Niger State Housing Corporation also constructed large number of public housing estates in the state capital, thereby reducing the accommodation problem facing the civil servants in the area in the period between 1980 to 1988.<sup>10</sup>

### **Housing in Minna Town 1976-1999**

As mentioned earlier; the unexpected creation of Niger state, and the citing of Minna as the capital initially created serious office and housing accommodation problem in the area are use to solve the problem by governments. Temporary office and housing accommodation were made to civil servants. In the form of acquiring rented houses to serve as both dousing and office accommodation especially in such areas as Paida housing in the state, succeeded in the construction of three set of housing units that include the airport quarter, known as 1,2,3, quarters along airport road. The two other housing units are the commissioner's quarters and the senior officer's quarters along the present GRA

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<sup>7</sup> Niger State Statistical year book, 1978, p. 10

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Three years of Governor, Gwadabe, December 27, by contact communication Ltd for Niger State government

<sup>10</sup> Niger State Statistical year book, 1978, p. 10

area. These houses were constructed between. 1976-1980 and were distributed to privileged senior officers in the civil service.<sup>11</sup> But the Niger State Housing Corporation as shown in table 2 also constructed large number of public housing estates in the state capital, thereby reducing the accommodation problem facing the civil servants in the area in the period between 1980 to 1988.<sup>12</sup>

**Table 2: Public Housing Estate in Minna 1980-1988**

S/No	Housing Estate Projects	No. of Units	Year Completed
1.	Tudun Wada Housing Estate Low income houses (3 bedrooms) Minna	260	1980-1981
2.	Tudun Wada Housing Estate intermediate (3 bedrooms) Minna	60	1980-1981
3.	Zurumai Housing Estate (4 bedrooms), senior staff quarters Minna Purchased from NNDC He developers	34	1980
4.	Niger, House Estate 3 and 4 bedrooms (executive house) Minna	35	1980-1982
5.	Bosso Housing Estate 2,3, and 4 bedrooms Minna low Cost Houses	56	1982-1983
6.	Progress Quarters, Minna 3 bedrooms Flat	12	1986
7.	Corporative housing scheme on bedroom houses, Minna	40	1988
8.	Simeon Oduoye housing Estate, Minna 2 bedrooms houses	50	1988

Source: Niger State Housing Corporation, Minna

The construction of these urban houses was an attempt to solve the acute problem of housing in the state capital. The houses contributed to the urban growth of Minna thereby expanding the urban space, covered large area of land. The housing units also provided accommodation to the teaming population, particularly civil servants in the State capital. What is also clear from the table is that the houses in the town were meant for the upper and middle-income groups only. This is evident from the provision of three- and four-bedrooms units in most of the housing estates, with very little or even no emphasis on one and/or two-bedroom houses for the low-income groups. Presently all these housing units were sold to the public on the basis of owner-occupier.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Three years of Governor, Gwadabe, December 27, by contact communication Ltd for Niger State government.

<sup>12</sup> Ibrahim Salihu, "The Historical Development of Minna Town in Nigeria, 1976-2015" PhD Thesis, University Utara Malaysia, 2018

<sup>13</sup> Ibrahim Salihu, "The Historical Development of Minna Town in Nigeria, 1976-2015" PhD Thesis, University Utara Malaysia, 2018

It needs to be noted at this point that after the creation of Niger State in 1976, and the subsequent growth of Minna as a state capital could be attributed to the rising revenue profile of the country that came about because of the rapid increase in oil prices in the early 1970s.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the high rates of economic growth, particularly after OPEC oil price increase of 1974, combined with rapid population increase, and city-bound migration, have provided the stimulus for high rates of urban growth of Minna. Beside the use of the oil revenue in the development and expansion of the town, oil revenue also facilitated the emergence of administrative and professional middle classes who demanded better housing urban services, vehicle loans and better road development. This in turn generated the rapid expansion in construction industry particularly in housing as shown in table .Besides housing estates, more offices, road network and drainage systems were constructed. Therefore, the period between 1960 and 1976 was a major landmark in the history of urban growth of Minna. The above periods also represent the time when Minna started growing. However, in spite of the provision of houses by both state and federal governments, urban housing still remains the major challenge facing urban dwellers in Minna. This probably was due to the failure to continue with the aggressive policy of constructing additional housing units from 1976. Between 1990 and 1999 there was virtually no any single unit that was put in place. This portrays a bleak future for urban housing development in the area.<sup>15</sup>

At this juncture it is important to say that Minna town witnessed tremendous population increase and massive physical expansion that pushed Minna to incorporate the suburb areas of Bosso, Tudun Fulani, Tugan Danboyi, Shango and Chanchaga among others. The stagnation of the town from 1967-1976 as a result of the Nigerian civil war and creation of Northwestern state, led to drift of population out of the area from 1976 when Niger State was created, Minna once again continued to physically expand. The population, ethnic composition and infrastructural facilities also massively increased. There is indeed no doubting the fact that Minna in the period between 1960 and 1976 possess all the characteristic features of an urban center and true metropolis.<sup>16</sup>

### **Transports and Communication in Minna Town 1976-1999**

Effective transport and communication system have been some of the major catalysts in the growth and development of many cities. The emergence and growth of Minna as an

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<sup>14</sup> Girbert A.G. and Healey the Political Economy of Land: Urbar. Developed in An Oil Economy, London. Gower 1985.

<sup>15</sup> Idris Abubakar Zakari, "The Socio-Cultural Ceremonies amongst the Gbagyi in Minna in the Nineteenth Century" in Terhemba Wuam and Mohammed Lawal Salahu (Eds), *Aspects of Niger State History- Essays in Honour of Professor Ibrahim Adamu Kolo*, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai, Niger State, Nigeria, 2014

<sup>16</sup> Idris Abubakar Zakari, "The Socio-Cultural Ceremonies amongst the Gbagyi in Minna in the Nineteenth Century" in Terhemba Wuam and Mohammed Lawal Salahu (Eds), *Aspects of Niger State History- Essays in Honour of Professor Ibrahim Adamu Kolo*, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai, Niger State, Nigeria, 2014



urban centre was partly due to its location on the Lagos-Baro railway terminus, which seriously rejuvenated the town. Beside the railway network that linked Minna with other cities, there are roads such as Minna-Bida, Minna Zungeru and Minna-Kaduna routes which became rehabilitated at the end of 1999.<sup>17</sup> These roads facilitated the movement of goods and services and linked Minna town to be directly into the national traffic movement. With the rehabilitation of the roads, distance from Minna to other surrounding towns became reduced drastically. For example, Suleja is now forty minutes drive from Minna instead of the former 2½ hours before the rehabilitation of the road.<sup>18</sup> More so, the rehabilitation of Minna-Suleja road was a milestone in the urban growth of Minna. This brought the town more closely to Federal Capital to the point that some civil servants who work in Abuja resided in Minna where rents are not exorbitant and standard of living not too costly.

In an attempt to reduce transportation problem in Minna and Niger state as a whole, Niger State governments launched Shiroro line in 1980. This mass transit started with 19 buses under the control of Niger State Ministry of Works and Transport. Both inter and intra-states services were provided by the mass transit. The Shiroro line gradually metamorphosed into Niger State Transport Authority (NSTA) in 1988. With this; the authority has a very wide area of coverage with the following routes: Minna-Jos, Minna-Sokoto, Minna-Kaduna and Minna- Kano among others.<sup>19</sup> Even though there are other private transportation services, like Niger Line, Umfani motors and Royal transport among others, passengers prefer to travel through NSTA because it cost less.

With the rehabilitation and subsequent dualization of urban roads in the 1980s, it became possible for taxis and motor cyclists to start operating. As at the end of 1999 there are more than one thousand eight hundred (1,800) registered taxi-drivers and 2,853 registered motor cyclists in the town.<sup>20</sup> Both the motor bike riders' known as okada riders and taxi drivers influenced the movement of goods and persons from one part of the town to another, which facilitated urban economic activities. Minna has a standard international airport constructed and commissioned by the then President, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida in August 1980s.<sup>21</sup> The airport which is located at Maikunkele not only connect the town with other states of the federation but connected

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<sup>17</sup>This is Minna...

<sup>18</sup>Ibid

<sup>19</sup>Niger state at 20,(1976-1996), A publication of Niger State Ministry of Information Youth, Sports and Culture, Minna 1996, pp 34-35

<sup>20</sup>Mr. Abdulwahab Oluwale, 76 years, Chairman, Minna taxi drivers union, mobile Minna 18th December 2008. It is worth noting that taxi driving in Minna is dominated by Yoruba people. The chairman argued that, it is so because the Yorubas are hardworking and had early experience of taxi driving in Nigeria before any other ethnic group.

<sup>21</sup>Niger at 20. op.cit

the town with outside world as both tourist and international businessmen can now access the town through the airport.

In the area of communication, the town witnessed tremendous development since the creation of the state in 1976. One year after the creation of state, the Broadcasting Corporation of Niger state, otherwise known as Radio Niger was established in Minna, and in 1986, Newline Newspaper Company, a Niger state bi-weekly newspaper was established. Added to that, Minna also became connected to the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) in 1986.<sup>22</sup> These media agencies stimulated the dissemination of information within and outside Minna, making the people more enlightened and more comfortable. The availability of digital telecommunication system and courier services such as DHL, Speed Post, and compliment the services provided by media houses in Minna. The combination of all these gave and additional boost to the expansion of the town. With this development, the town became open to industrialists: small, medium and large-scale industries established enterprises for the economic development of the State.

#### **Water Supply in Minna Town 1976-1999**

Access to portable drinking water is a basic necessity that enhances the settlement of people in a given area. Prior to the construction of Bosso dam in 1949, the colonial government drilled considerable number of boreholes along railway quarters and settlement areas: of Kwangila, Limawa, Ketaren Gwari and Paida areas among others. These boreholes provided water for domestic use of the people. The construction of Bosso dam in 1949 was meant to supplement the various borehole drilled and wells dug by the colonial government.<sup>23</sup> The initial capacity of this dam was 10,000 liters of water per day.<sup>24</sup> Despite all this provision, the water supply in Minna Township was inadequate and this spilled over into post- colonial period. At independence more boreholes were drilled in the town to cope with the increasing population. In fact at the inception of Niger state in 1976, the daily water supply to the town was 1620,000 liters per day which was also grossly inadequate considering the new status of the town as a state capital.<sup>25</sup>

In order to meet the demand of Minna urban water supply, the newly created state, awarded a contract worth N6.9 million, for the construction of Tagwai dam, which after the completion will completion will increase water supply from 1620,000 liters to 13.62 million per day.<sup>26</sup> With this the water supply in Minna became adequate and stable. But since the late 1980s the problem of inadequate water supply came up again due to

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>NAK: Minprof File No.523/1949: Bosso Dam Minna.

<sup>24</sup>Niger State Water Supply Report for the period of October 1979 to October 1982, p.10.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid

<sup>26</sup>Ibid



perpetual increase in the demand of water that resulted from population explosion. Since then there has been the problem of inadequate water supply in the town.<sup>27</sup>

At present, Niger state water board provides 1.2 million liters of water per day too Minna and its environs, which is far below the capacity needed in the town, Also the board provided seven water tankers in Minna for the distribution of water. The tankers include Bi-water tank located at Chanchaga, Top medical tank, Paida tank, INEC tank and police school tank.<sup>28</sup> These tanks are located in all the strategic locations in Minna municipal area and it is expected that the water tanks would distribute water to the whole town. It is important to note that this effort, to supply water in Minna town is grossly inadequate, for the board could not maintain even the 1.2 million liters per day. The supply of 1.2 million liters per day is far below the demand of the urbanites.<sup>29</sup> Some of the stationed water tanks as observed during the fieldwork are temporarily out of use.

The resultant effect of this inadequate water supply is that individuals and corporate bodies resorted to digging and drilling of wells and boreholes in their areas. This no doubt is the result of the failure of state to supply portable drinking water to the people. Despite this perennial water problem, there is large number of people living in the town. Therefore, if the water scarcity problem is reduced, it will enhance the living standard of the people in the town and its environs. It would also attract more people into the town, adding to its population density and ethnic composition. Beside water supply the education institutions as observed earlier influence the growth of Minna town during the colonial period. At independence more educational institutions came be established and this further ensure the speedy growth of the town.

### **Health in Minna Town 1976-1999**

In the medical field, the colonial healthcare delivery institutions attracted people seeking for medical services to Minna. The colonial government first established a small clinic around the railway station in 1910<sup>30</sup>. The clinic was meant to cater for emergency cases from the various railway camps. Increase in population and demand for healthcare services made the colonial government to upgrade the clinic to a modern hospital standard in 1918, and it was named Minna Native Hospital (MNH),

It is important to note that the Minna Native Hospital, being the only modern healthcare delivery institution in Minna and its environs at that time, served the colonial officials, railway workers as well as the communities of Bosso, Kuta, Maikunkele, Paiko and Gwada

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<sup>27</sup>Engineer, Salisu Ladan, aged 48 Distribution manager, Niger state water Board, Minna, Minna water Board, 17th September 2008.

<sup>28</sup>Mallam Sanusi Aliyu, 40 years, Assistant Director Commercial services, Niger state water Board Minna 17th September, 2008.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Ahmadu Dada(85 years)retired police officer,Minna 28-03-08.

among others.<sup>31</sup> There was constant movement of patients from Gbagi speaking areas and beyond into Minna seeking for medical attention in the hospital.<sup>32</sup>

With the establishment of the Catholic Church, another hospital was established in the church. Due to the pressing cases of leprosy in the area of Minna and its environs, the colonial government established leprosy center in Chanchaga Minna, in 1946 and this remained the only leprosy center in Niger province. Leprosy cases were referred to Minna Centre in Chanchaga from different parts of the province. Minna Native Hospital was also upgraded in 1950. With this development the Minna General Hospital became reference centre for patients. This development attracted more patients into the area for proximity of healthcare services, which subsequently facilitated the growth, and urbanization of the town.<sup>33</sup>

Although there are so many healthcare facilities ranging from traditional healers to chemist and the known clinics and healthcare centres, this study zeroed-in on the common health facilities particularly those associated with rendering approved and professional services within the seven slum neighbourhoods. These seven neighbourhoods were selected as slum settlements because of the poor human living conditions, the quality of dwellings and lack of access to basic services and infrastructure like sanitation and healthcare in the areas

In an interview conducted with the management of the primary healthcare centres, the management of the primary healthcare centre in Dutsen-Kura Hausa, Kpakungu and Fadikpe opined that the healthcare facilities within the neighbourhood were adequately distributed due to the population of the area and the health needs of the people, they also stated that they had adequate personnel needed to provide treatment for minor ailment and first step treatment they are required to provide for the people. PHC Bosso stated that they are in need of other types of healthcare facilities although they have adequate primary healthcare centres with trained staff, need for basic healthcare centres with doctors and mini surgical theatres were still required. PHC Dutsen-Kura Gwari held that the healthcare facilities in the neighbourhood were inadequately distributed because they are unable to cater for the health needs or demands of the patient at some given time.

### **Electricity in Minna Town 1976-1999**

The major challenge facing Minna and indeed all other parts of Nigeria is the inadequate and unstable power supply. Even though nicknamed the Power State, Minna cannot at present boast of having steady power supply in the State Capital not to talk of the Local

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<sup>31</sup>NAK: Minprof File No.526/1919/Minna Native Hospital 1918-1920

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Bello Dada, 80 years, retired civil servants, Minna 05/04/08

Government Areas. The history of Minna electricity supply started during the colonial period when all the areas that constituted the Minna Township were connected with electricity.<sup>34</sup> With independence, some of the streets and residential quarters were connected with national electric authority as was known in those days. With the emergence of Minna as state capital in 1976, the town became connected to the National grid through 132kv double circuit along Shiroro hotel Minna. The station with 132/33/22k step down transformer was commissioned in 1988. With this, there came steady power supply in the town and the urban sprawl like Kpakungu, Barikin Sale, Maikunkele and Bosso among others were connected with electricity.<sup>35</sup> By 1990 the Minna transmission sub-station was overstretched because of population increase and demands for local craft work. This brought the problem of constant power interruption that became more acute due to connecting surrounding villages with the national grid.<sup>36</sup>

It is important to note that the state is popularly known as the power state on account of the existence of the three big hydro-electric power stations: Shiroro hydro-electric power station commissioned in June 1990 by the then President, General Ibrahim Babangida and the Kainji power station as well as Jebba power station.<sup>37</sup> With the official commissioning of Shiroro hydro power station in June 1990, Minna town came to benefit from the station and steady power supply was resumed. The situation continued with very little power outage. Most of the people in Minna could testify that throughout 1990s there was relative stability of electricity supply in the town. This really attracted more people to Minna and the power supply stimulated socio-economic activities. However, the town started witnessing power outage in the year 2000. This is not different from the general power outage in the country and consequently the use of generators in both residential houses and business activities in Minna became very common.<sup>38</sup>

### **Sanitation in Minna Town 1976-1999**

Sanitation is an important aspect that contributes to the health and well-being of individuals in the society. In Minna town between 1976 and 1999, sanitation practices were not up to standard, and this had adverse effects on the residents. The major problem was the lack of proper disposal methods for waste. Garbage was often left to pile up in residential areas, and the stench was overwhelming. This attracted rodents, flies and other pests, causing the spread of diseases. The situation was worsened by the poor

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<sup>34</sup>This is Minna opcit. p.9

<sup>35</sup>Ibid

<sup>36</sup>Engineer Mohammed Abubakar, Assistant control manager, Minna Sub-Station, 48 years. 18th December, 2008, Minna.

<sup>37</sup>A.B. Mamman and J.O. Oyebanji et.al(eds) Nigeria: A people United, A Future Assured. Vol.2. Gabumo . Calaba 2000, p.400.

<sup>38</sup>Mallam Abubakar Businessman, op.cit

drainage system which resulted in flooding during the rainy season. This further aggravated the already poor sanitation conditions, leading to more health hazards. However, in 1992, the government of Niger State started a sanitation campaign which aimed to provide better sanitation facilities for the residents. The government provided refuse bins and established a system of waste collection and disposal. This went a long way in improving the sanitation situation in the town. Additionally, the campaign also included public education on better hygiene practices. People were taught to keep their surroundings clean and to dispose of waste properly. The government also provided public toilets which were accessible and well-maintained. As a result of the government's efforts in 1992, the sanitation situation in Minna town improved significantly. The provision of refuse bins and establishment of a waste collection and disposal system helped to reduce the amount of garbage left in residential areas. This led to a reduction in the number of rodents, flies, and other pests which are known to spread diseases.

More so, the public education campaign on better hygiene practices was effective in changing people's attitudes towards sanitation. People became more aware of the importance of keeping their surroundings clean and disposing of waste properly. The provision of public toilets also contributed greatly to improving the sanitation situation in the town. The government's efforts in 1992 had a significant impact on the sanitation situation in Minna town. The establishment of a waste management system, provision of public toilets, and public education on hygiene practices greatly improved the overall cleanliness of the town. With the availability of refuse bins and an organized waste collection and disposal system, garbage was no longer left to pile up in residential areas. This led to a reduction in pests such as rodents and flies which are known to spread diseases. The public education campaign also helped to change people's attitudes towards sanitation, leading to better hygiene practices. Furthermore, the provision of public toilets made it easier for residents to access clean facilities. They were well-maintained and contributed significantly to improving the overall sanitation situation in the town.

Thus, while sanitation practices were poor between 1976 and 1999, the government's intervention with its sanitation campaign greatly improved it. The establishment of a waste management system, provision of public toilets, and public education on hygiene practices were essential in achieving better sanitation practices in Minna town. while sanitation practices were poor in Minna town between 1976 and 1999, the intervention of the government with its sanitation campaign greatly improved it. The establishment of a waste management system, provision of public toilets, and public education on hygiene practices were crucial in achieving better sanitation practices in the town.

### **Education in Minna Town 1976-1999**

The availability of Educational institutions whether western or Islamic was another important factor that aided the growth and expansion of Minna during the period of study. Western education was first introduced in Minna in the first decade of the twentieth century by the catholic missionary organization.<sup>39</sup> The motive of this missionary organization was to teach the gospel of Christianity along with western education. With this in mind, the catholic mission established its first primary school in Minna known as Baptist Primary School in the railway quarters in 1928. The Gwari Native Authority in collaboration with the catholic missionary organization established another primary school known: as Community Primary School in 1936.<sup>40</sup> Our Lady of Fatima Secondary School was also established in 1934 and in 1950 St. Malachy Teachers Training College was also pioneered around the present Federal University of Technology Minna. The reason for the, establishment of these schools was to educate the people on how to read. Write and understand the Bible. These schools were the pioneer western educational institutions, not just in Minna alone, but also in the whole of Niger province.

Oral sources reveal that students from other provinces like. Kabba. Zaria, Ilorin and Sokoto and those within Niger province attended these schools. The St. Malachy Teachers Training College was the only Teachers Training School in the Niger province.<sup>41</sup> These educational institutions enhanced the growth and expansion of Minna during this period as different ethnic groups move into the area as teachers and students. In fact, Minna served as educational nerve centre during the colonial period. This is due to the number of western educational Institutions in the area. Below are the names of both primary and post- primary institutions established during the colonial period.

**Table 3: Primary and Secondary School in Minna from colonal Era to 1999.**

<b>S/No</b>	<b>Name of Schools</b>	<b>Date of Establishment</b>
1.	Baptist Primary School, Minna	1928
2.	Baptist College, Minna	1930
3.	Community Elementary School, Minna	1938
4.	Kuyanbana Primary School, Minna	1946
5.	St. Michael Primary School, Minna	1947
6.	St. Michael Primary School, Minna	1948
7.	Senior Boarding Primary School, Minna	1948
8.	St. Malachy Teachers Training College, Minna	1950

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<sup>39</sup>Y. Turaki, An Introduction...op.cit.

<sup>40</sup>Marthin Sanda,85 years,retired Gwari Native Authority Staff, Minna ,5th June.2008.

<sup>41</sup>Mr. Marthin Sanda,a retied Native Authority Staff age 85,Tunga Minna 25/11/2007

9.	St. Lewiston Primary School, Minna	1950
10.	St. Stephen Down Primary School, Minna	1952
11.	Gwari Native Authority Primary School, Minna	1953
12.	St. Dominic Primary School, Minna	1958
13.	St. Stephen Primary School, Minna	1958

Source: Mr. Martin Sanda, a retired Native Authority Staff.

These schools and colleges enhanced the Minna population density and diversity. The school as earlier said pulled teachers and students from far and near to Minna. Similarly, the structures raised have helped in diversifying the town by increasing its size, which consequently gave the town a more cosmopolitan outlook. Compared to what it used to be before this educational development. The schools provided the first-generation nationalists who struggled for Nigerian independence and also provided manpower for the newly independent nation. With independence these schools were taken over by the government, though, some of the schools still retained their initial names. However, majority of these schools changed their names due to government intervention in the 1970s.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Mr. Martin Sanda, a retired Native Authority Staff