

The Abandoned Madaki Road Project

Madaki Quarters of Bolari East Ward is a residential area located at the southern part of Gombe Metropolis in Gombe State. The inhabitants of the area are mostly middle to lower class families with a negligible percentage of high class families.

In 2016, the State Government, under the leadership of Dr. Ibrahim Hassan Dankwambo brought tremendous relief to the masses of the region. From the famous 'Sharp Corner' axis through to the city's bypass is rough, asphalt-less, potholed dominated road. It was a huge nightmare for motorists. By constructing a dual carriage road that runs from Union Bank roundabout through to the city's bypass road, smiles were brought to the faces of Okada Riders, Tricycle Owners and indeed all motorists who pass the place regularly.

However, for some parts of Madaki Quarters, it was a curse in disguise.

The water drainage route of the road was channeled into a street in the residential area. It was all believed that since the water will drain in that street, a road, alongside an adequate drainage route, will be constructed to control the influx of water during the rainy season.

But to the utmost surprise of the residents, nothing was constructed. The severity of the impending damage was over-looked. When eventually the raining season came, it was horror in full glare. With each falling of the rain, the waters gush in turbulently into households, shops and schools. Some mud houses were dissolved in the water, while more resistant houses have their foundations worn out. The uppermost layer of the earth was slowly flushed away. By and large, by the end of the rainy season, a great deal of havoc was wrecked by the waters.

After the elapsing of the rainy season and perhaps seeing the severity of the damage, the State Government began a survey of the area. The State Ministry of Works delegation came and examined the place. After two weeks or so, the road measurements began. Red arrows were painted on houses to be demolished. Suffice it to say, the project was all set to commence.

For some strange and unclear reasons, however, the project was abandoned. And after a year, the rainy season was back again; this time the effect was more pronounced - destructive and devastating. More houses were swallowed up. In fact, the waters dug so deep that gully erosion ensued. The place became not only a water drainage route, but a mini-river, River Madaki as the residents mockingly call it.

This Government-induced flood continued its merciless ravage until it forced scores of families out of their homes. Others, with nowhere to go stayed in their rendered-by-flood half houses. One house in particular has its wall slanted, as though falling, and only a single room for all the family members.

Fed up with the destructions, the Madaki Community Development Initiative, an association concerned about the welfare of the area's residents, took a high powered delegation consisting of the District Head and some top ranking officials to tell the State Governor of the ordeals of the people of Madaki and to seek for the Government's intervention. The Government did not say a word, nor did a thing. The association sustained its effort of reminding the government. Social media campaigns were held by various individuals and groups, but all effort seemed futile.

Rumors had it that the Governor once visited the place at night and saw for himself the helpless condition of the residents. Again, nothing happened.

Meanwhile, the residents kept on suffering. For the inhabitants of that area, it is not a question of 'if' but 'when' their houses will be brought down by the waters.

And because the residence does not house commissioners, special advisers or other high ranking Government officials, they are made to taste the bitter experience of neglect and abandonment. The story has been like this up till this time. And even if rain will fall tomorrow, further destructions will occur.

All they need is a road, with accompanying adequate water drainage passage so that the waters coming in will safely move without causing any damage. Yet, the Government stands still, arms folded and does not a thing.