



THE STATE OF WOMEN PRISONERS IN NIGERIA: ASSESSMENT OF PROBLEMS AND OPTIONS

By:

Agomoh U.R. & Ogbozor E.N.

PRAWA/Nigeria

1a Bode Thomas St., Off Bode Thomas Road,

Onipanu, Palmgrove. Lagos

Tel. +234 1 49713576-8, Fax: +234 1 4971356

E-mail: prawa@linkserve.com.ng

Website: www.prawa.org

Paper presented at the 11th International Conference on Penal Abolition
(ICOPA XI), held in Tasmania, Australia, February 9-11, 2006



CONTENT

Introduction

3 Important Questions

Status

Problems

Options



KIRIKIRI FEMALE PRISON





Global Outlook

Proportion of Women in Prison

India	1.7%
USA	3-4%
Venezuela	1.7%
Finland	8%
Norway	3%
Australia	3.7%
Argentina	3.2%
Nigeria	1.8 - 2.3%



FEMALE PRISONERS IN NIGERIA

Total inmate - 777

Convicted - 200

Awaiting Trials - 577



CROSS SECTION OF FEMALE PRISONERS





3 Critical Questions

Who are these women and why are they in prison? (who?)

How are they treated and what kind of system and regime do they confront when they are inside? (how?)

What are the implications of their imprisonment? (what?)



WHO?

- Socio-demographic background (Poor homes)
- Young adults (18 -20years)
- Mothers with babies
- History of past offending
- Present charge/offences



FEMALE PRISONER'S CASE STORY

“I was forced to drink the blood of a dead woman to prove innocent of a murder case.

I was expected to die after 3 days if guilty of the offence. But I did not die, I was then remanded in prison by Police where I had my first baby.

I am still awaiting trial for close to two years”





HOW? TREATMENT OF FEMALE PRISONERS

PRE-TRIAL STAGE

Lock in Same Cell with male in Police Cells

Crowded Cells in Prison

Await Trial for upward of 1-15 years

TRIAL STAGE

Missing Records

Absence of free legal aid for poor inmate

POST TRIAL

Poor Feeding

No Sanitary provisions



CROWDED ROOMS





DELAY TRIALS





PRISON KITCHEN





WHAT? EFFECT OF WOMEN IMPRISONMENT

Female prisoners and their main worries/pre-occupations

Children, Family, Spouse, Marriage, Sex, Pregnancy, Menopause, Lack of freedom, Education, Lack of Medical Care, Lack of Justice, Missing School and work, Lack of privacy etc



WORRIES





CONCLUSION

Women imprisonment and issue of rehabilitation and resettlement

The importance of cultural perception of what constitute 'real' crime

The 'control' of women contributes to the criminal labeling of women and the imprisonment of women



REHABILITATION





CONCLUSION CONTD.

Need for gender sensitivity training for criminal justice agents

Introduction of a gender-sensitive penal system (Addressing the specific needs of women)

Adequate antenatal/post-natal care for women in prison

Adequate sanitary provision for women in prisons

Adequate family visiting centre/children crèche in women facilities