

FROM HELL TO HELL:

THE TRAVAILS OF EX-PRISONERS IN NIGERIA

By:

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ABSTRACT

It is paradoxical that the difference between prison life and living in the 'free' Nigeria society of today is fast closing up as the inmate in some instances feel better off in prison than outside prison.

Ex-prisoners moves from a life of hell typical by overcrowded cells, poor feeding, poor healthcare, maltreatment by prison officers, life full of denials to another life outside the prison walls that tend to have some similarities with what they had gone through in prison.

Since the society decide to shut the doors of positive living against the ex-prisoners then they feel justified to force the doors open even it has to do it by returning to the same crime that took them to prison in the first instance.



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INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has an inmate population of about 38721 persons out of which about 25029 (over 60%) are awaiting trial persons (ATPs).

Over the years, the Nigerian prison has made several attempts at working out a legislation that would complete the circle of criminal justice administration which as of now has only taken care of arrest, prosecution and conviction.

It has inadvertently left out reformation rehabilitation and reintegration of persons interned to fit into the society on discharge.



OBJECTIVE

- **To review** of the treatment and preparation of inmates for reintegration.
- **To establish** a common understanding of the plight of ex-prisoners and their special needs.
- **To analyze and compare** the above two issues with the view of formulating plans of action and intervention.



- **The Hell in Prison**
- **Crowded Cells**
- **Poor Feeding**
- **Deaths in Custody**
- **Torture**
- **Delay in Trial**
- **Poor Medical Attention**
- **Uncomfortable Accommodation**
- **Maltreatment by prison officers**









SITUATION OUTSIDE PRISON

- **Social Stigma**
- **Unemployment**
- **Survivors of torture**
- **Unskilled**
- **Infected (HIV, TB etc)**
- **Accomodation problem**







SOCIAL STIGMA AND THE LURE OF RE-OFFENDING

- **CASE A**
- **CASE B**



CASE A

I was arrested in 1986 at the Muritala Mohammed Airport, Ikeja, Lagos on the 3rd of June 1986 with 200 grams of heroine as I arrived from Karachi, Pakistan.

I was subsequently sentenced to a term of 27 years imprisonment on the 20th of January 1988 . I was later granted presidential pardon after 13 years and 3 months in 1999. On my release, I was given N40 (0.5 Aus \$).

I did not know where to go to. The only thing I had was a pair of dress. The money was not enough to take me to the next bus station. I have lost contacts with everyone I knew outside the prison walls.

I was confused, hungry and homeless; I felt like going back to the prison or alternatively start pick pocketing from the prison gate.

... Felix Obi



CASE B

I was released 3 years ago from prison.

For two years I was jobless. I lost all of the job opportunities I had because I was an ex-prisoner. I was seen as a social misfit, an unreliable person.

Even my present job is being threatened. I am continually being tempted to rely on my former company; those that made me commit the crime that initially took me to prison.

All my resolution to turn a new leaf is continually being threatened by my status as an ex-prisoner.



EFFECT

- **Begging**
- **Homelessness**
- **Deformity**
- **Involvement in armed robbery**







CONCLUSION

Putting the Cart before the Horse - Release of 25000 inmate and implications

The proposed release of 25,000 inmates by president of the Federal Republic of Nigeria announced in December 2005 should take into consolidation the foregoing or else it will be a mere waste of time and effort as the inmates will be back to prison in no distant time if nothing is done about the current situation.

