PUBLIC ORDER, SAFETY AND CRIME STATISTICS

1. Introduction

One of the datasets on which records or events are usually preserved for quite a long period is public order, safety and crime. Although the original purpose of these records is to facilitate the dispensation of justice, it has also resulted in the availability of data which, if processed, can be useful for compiling the time-series data on public order, safety and crime. Data on this set of vital statistics come principally from the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), Ministries of Police Affairs and Internal Affairs and the National Bureau of Statistics. However, major participants in the generation of the statistics are the legislature, households, the Police, Road Safety Corps, Vechicle Inspection Officers, judiciary and the Prisons. The relevant activities are law making, law breaking, arrest and prosecution of law breakers, dispensation of justice and execution of court rulings and verdicts.

When an offence is committed, it has to be reported to the Police, which will record it as a crime. The Police have to caution the offender or charge him/her to court. The accused has to enter a plea of **guilty** or **not guilty**; the accused will then be tried, convicted, discharged or discharged and acquitted. The record of this sequence of events constitutes what is known as crime statistics.

The most important of the participants in collecting this set of data are the Nigeria Police and the Judiciary, especially in the historical context of Public Order, Safety and Crime. The two establishments have significant relevance in the enforcement of civil order and prevention of crime

2. Coverage, Scope, Uses and Users of Public Order, Safety and Crime Statistics

Public order and safety activities include police duties and administration and the operation of the law courts and prisons. Police duties include traffic regulation, maintenance of law and orde, and the provision of equipment and supplies for police work (such as vehicles, aircraft, vessels and docks). This dataset also includes the statistics generated in the process of the administration and operation of civil and criminal courts, tribunals and the judicial system. Also incorporated are the statistics generated by the rendering of judgement and interpretation of the law including arbitration of civil

actions, prison administration and provision of correctional services (incarceration and rehabilitation services, e.g. jails).

Since official crime statistics cover only those reported to the police, these data in Nigeria only represent a proportion of offences committed.

The collation of data in each State Command of the Nigeria Police Force starts from the Station level. All the data collated at this level are passed on to the Divisional Headquarters, which forward them to the Command Headquarters. From there, they are sent to Force Headquarters. However, some Commands usually route their returns through the Zonal Headquarters. The Zones also generate their own data, which are sent directly to Force Headquarters.

The items of data in this discussion fall under Public Administration and Defence whose ISIC codes are in the range 75-79. The ISIC code 79 in this range is assigned to Public Order, Safety and Crime in the NBS. The 27 items proposed for this division fall into 12 groups, including two multiple- item groups.

Crime statistics from official sources and research findings can be used for predicting the pattern of crime in a society and explaining the present crime pattern in order to be able to assist in the prevention of future crimes. In addition, these statistics are also useful for making international comparisons of crime indices.

3. Sources and Methods of Compiling Data on Public Order, Safety and Crime

There are two sources of statistics on public order, safety and crime in Nigeria. These are official records and surveys. The first major source of crime statistics are derived from the records of the Nigeria Police. They are records of alleged or confirmed criminal offences known to the police. Such events or offences are recorded by the police with emphasis on:

- title of event, date event was reported to police.
- identification of police station/district /State/zone.
- identification of informant/ complainant/accused/witnesses.
- details of event as stated by each of the four categories of persons listed above; action taken by police; identification of investigating police officer.
- if the event is an accident the report will emphasise: type of accident; informant and date; location of site of accident; time of occurrence and time reported; identification of vehicles involved (registration number, type of vehicle, body etc); number of persons:

dead/with serious injuries/with minor injuries; action taken; and identification of investigating police officer.

A total of 11 returns and two reports are produced regularly by the Nigeria Police. The returns provided the materials for the two reports published by the NPF. These returns are:

(1) Returns on Administration of crime and local Acts.
(2) Accident Returns.
(3) Returns on Missing Persons in the country.
(4) Returns on stolen and Recovered Vehicles.
(5) Daily Incident and Situation Reports.
(6) Returns on Religious Disturbances.
(7) Discipline Statistics.
(8) Bank Fraud Returns.
(9) Returns on Religious Denominations within the Police Force.
(10) Returns on Interdiction and Suspension.
(11) Returns on the Enforcement of Petroleum Product Acts.

Each of the returns contains a summary of the events recorded in all police stations in the State. Most returns are prepared monthly, quarterly, biannually and annually from police records such as those on crime and accidents referred to above. After the first stage, collection, editing, scrutiny of the returns from the 36 States and Federal Capital Territory, the relevant information from the returns are manually extracted and aggregated for each Command, State and the Federation by the Management Information Services Division of the Police. Three of the returns (7, 9, and 10) are in respect of police personnel, while the others refer to households in the country.

These 11 returns contribute substantially to two reports produced annually and monthly respectively by the Nigeria Police. These are:

(1) Annual Reports of the Nigeria Police Force.
(2) Monthly Appreciation of Crime Report.

The first report covers all police activities and has the appearance of an annual abstract of statistics. It is produced for use by police commands, Government ministries, universities and the general public. The second report on crime is produced for police commands only.

The second major source of statistical information on public order, safety and crime is the Planning, Research and Statistics Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs which produces prison statistics.

Although this department does not publish prison statistics, it makes them available to the National Bureau of Statistics which publishes them in the **Annual Abstract of Statistics.**

A total of four returns and three reports are produced by this department on prison statistics. These are:

(1) Prisons Monthly Statistical Returns.

(2)   State Prisons Monthly Statistical Returns.

(3)   Headquarters Quarterly Staff Returns.

(4)   Prisons Monthly Lock-Up Population Return.

Returns (1) and (4) are on individual prison situation and prison population respectively.   They cover the 129 prisons nationwide. Returns (2) and (3) are on the prison situations and number of prison staff respectively in each of the 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.   The processing of these returns at the first stage consists of collating, editing and scrutiny and subsequently manual extraction and aggregation on State, national and items basis by the statistics division of the Planning, Research and Statistics Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Some of the forms designed for collecting prisons information are listed below.

The information extracted from the four returns discussed above are incorporated into the three reports issued by the Nigerian Prisons. These are:

(1) Annual Report of Nigerian Prisons Service, which includes statistics on prison population, facilities and staff.

(2) Returns on Prison Inmate Population which is issued weekly/monthly on statistics collected in respect of the first returns discussed above.   It covers   conviction by offence and number discharged.

(3)   Quarterly Report on staff strength of prisons and location.

These reports are produced for Federal Ministries, including Internal Affairs, National Bureau of Statistics, the Director of Prisons and Researchers.   The following forms are used for collecting routine statistics on prisoners and prison staff:

1.   Prisons weekly lock-up population by type of offence, nationality, length of conviction and gender (pristat Forms 4A, 4B, and 4C).

2.   Prison's monthly discharges, release and transfer

3.   Prison's monthly Admission: Convicted (male/female) Unconvicted (Eight categories - male/female).

4.   Prison's monthly Admissions: Religion and Gender.

5.   Prison's monthly Admission: Terms of imprisonment (short/long/Life/Gender).

6.   Prison's monthly Admissions: Nationality and Ethnic Group.

7.   Prison's monthly Admission: Age-group and Gender.

8.   Prison's monthly information on Recidivism: types of frequencies of previous conviction and gender.

These eight forms are to be filled by each of the 129 prisons nationwide.   For most of the information obtained on these forms, State summaries are prepared.

The law courts also constitute an important source of statistics on persons alleged to have committed crimes. In Nigeria most of such statistics are reported either by the Nigeria Police or the Prisons. However, there are certain aspects of court cases which can only be reported by the law courts. These include number of cases registered, pending, heard, with the accused's name, age, alleged offence, and court's decisions, and reasons for adjournments before a case was decided.

Finally, on safety, especially road safety, several agencies are sources of routine statistics. Motor driving tests and motor vehicle inspection services are undertaken by the vehicle inspection officer. Arrests and cautioning or prosecution of defaulting drivers are carried out partly by the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) which maintains the records of all drivers' licenses in the country and by the Motor Traffic Unit of the Nigeria Police. Registration of new vehicles, licensing of all vehicles and issuance and renewal of drivers' licenses are undertaken by the Motor Licensing Authorities. There is a Central Motor Registry (CMR) which is a department under the Federal Investigation and Intelligence Bureau (FIIB) whose duties include:
-    maintenance of records of motor vehicles.
-    issuance of International Driving Permits Vehicle (ICV).

On this aspect of road traffic control, motor vehicle registration and licensing, the FRSC, CMR and the Motor Traffic unit both of the Nigerian Police have overlapping functions which should be resolved so as to facilitate the production, collation and dissemination of motor vehicle statistics in Nigeria.

Besides the routine sources of statistics on public order, safety and crime discussed above, there are potential sources of survey data which have not been given any serious attention. These include:

(1) Victim studies in which people are asked whether or not they have been victims of particular offences in a specified interval of time.

(2) Self-Report Studies which is used to investigate unrecorded offender data whereby people are asked what offences they have committed.

(3) Follow-up Studies on Convicted Offenders.

A major problem with this dataset is the overlap of functions particularly with the Police and FRSC. A way out of the double counting is to narrow down to data provided by the police.

4.   Current Methods of Data Storage and Dissemination

The statistics on public order, safely and crime are generated by several agencies and so far, no single agency has attempted to bring them under one dataset. Consequently, items of data belonging to this data set are available in Annual Report of the Nigeria Police,

mimeographed returns and reports of the Prisons, both of which are not on sale and are therefore, restricted in circulation. However, the **Annual Abstract of Statistics** published by the National Bureau of Statistics is available for sale and widely circulated. Criminal court cases are not presented in forms in which they can be summarised for each State and the country.

Items of data in this dataset are, therefore, available in bits and pieces of hard copies of the publications listed above. When it is recalled that criminal cases recorded by the police are not all the cases reported or known to them, and that those cases reported or known to the police are only a fraction of the number of cases that actually occurred, it will be seen that there is a serious problem of under-reporting of crime statistics in Nigeria.

5. NBS Data Base Coding System for Public Order Safety and Crime Statistics

The data structure for public order, safety and crime statistics is coded according to the convention of International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC), revision 3 issue of 1988. In National Bureau of Statistics, Division Code 79 is assigned to Public Order, Safety and Crime. The Division/Item/Details (DID) coding system is the format for coding NBS datasets. The Item under each Division is the elementary entity or group of elementary entities about which statistical data are gathered. For example, in this dataset, the Division is 79, 7920 is the first Item, while 792001 is the first Detail.

Generally, the NBS is using 6 digit code for variables stated above. The first 2 digits are used to identify a particular division (that is, 79), the first 4 digits for a particular item under the division (7920), while 6 digits are used to identify detail (792001) .

Based on the above coding system, the NBS data structure for Public Order, Safety and Crime Statistics is as shown below.

7920　　Summary of Bank Fraud Statistics (6 Details)

7921　Statistics of Cases Against Lawful Authority, Currency and Local Act (16 Details)

7922　Statistics of Crime Administration (8 Details)

7923　Statistics of Cases Against persons and property (27 Details)

7927　Road Accident Cases (6 Details)

7928-7930 Prison Administration by Type of Offence and by Gender (3 items by 22 Types of cases as Details giving 66 records)

7931　Prison Admissions in Nigeria by Gender and Age - Group (15 Details)

7932 Prison Admissions Classified by Religion, Status and Terms of Imprisonment (20 Details)

7933 Recidivism or Proneness to Crime in Nigeria by Gender (16 Details)

7934 Prisoners by state of Origin and State of Conviction Discharge and Release from Nigeria Prisons (5 Details)

7936 Summary Figure on Missing Persons.(3 Details)

7937 Summary of Vehicle Stolen/Recovered (3Details)

7938 Juvenile Delinquency. (9 details).

From the above, the most detailed aspect of the database as presented in the SOR is on prisons.

The dataset as proposed belongs to no agency, but if each relevant organ makes its own data available in compatible summary forms, the National Bureau of Statistics can maintain a comprehensive database on Public Order, Safety and Crime. Such agencies include the Nigeria Police Force, Nigerian Prisons, Federal Road Safety Corps, Motor Licensing Authorities and Ministries of Justice.

PRISON DATA BASE ON PRISONS AND INMATES

I.   INFORMATION ABOUT PRISONS

1.   Name of Prison.

2.   Location of Prison [Town, Local Govt Area, State].

3.   Ownership of Prison [Federal, State, LGA].

4.   Capacity of Prison [Male Inmates, Female Inmates, Total Inmates].

5.   Date of Completing this questionnaire.

II.   INFORMATION ABOUT INMATES

1   Name; Sex; Age last birthday; Nationality; Marital Status; Ethnic origin; Occupation. Last known Address; Local Government of origin; Religion.

2.   Date of Arrival at Prison.

3.   Date Discharged from prison.

4.   Status in the Prison: convicted; Remand and Awaiting Trial; Civil Detained (unconvicted); special order Detainee (UNC); Military Detainee(UNC); Debtor Detainee(UNC); Civil Lunatic (UNC); Criminal Lunatic (UNC); Borstal (UNC); other status Please state.

5a   If convicted, state reason(s) for conviction Debt; Arson; Affray; Assault; Murder; Treason; Sedition; Abduction; Smuggling;; Immigration: Stealing; Robbery; Armed Robbery; Sex Offence; Currency Offence; Indian Hemp; Contempt of Court; Unlawful Possession; Escape from lawful custody; Forgery/Altering; Native Law; Traffic Offence; other offence not elsewhere stated, please state.

5b   If convicted state length of sentence (Xyrs) $X < \frac{1}{12}$; $\frac{1}{12} -< X < \frac{1}{4}$; $\frac{1}{4} -< X < \frac{1}{2}$; $\frac{1}{2} -< X < 1$; $1 -< X < \frac{1}{2}$; $1\frac{1}{2} -< X < 2$; $2 -< X < 5$; $5 -< X < 7$;

7 -< X <10; 10 -< X 20; 20 -< X < 99 X = 99(Life); X + = 0 (unspecified); X > 99 (Death)

6. If previously convicted state:

(a)the number of previous convictions

(b) the length of each of the previous convictions.

7. If discharged, state the reason for the discharge

Acquitted by court; Expiration of sentence; Pardon; Any other reason, state.

POLICE DATA BASE ON ACCUSED PERSONS

I. INFORMATION ABOUT POLICE STATION

1. Name of Police Stations.
2. Location of Police Station [Town; Local Government Area; State; Zone].

II. INFORMATION ABOUT ACCUSED PERSONS

1. Name; Sex; Age last Birthday; Nationality; Marital Status; Ethnic Origin; Occupation; Last Known Address; Local Government of Origin; Religion; Weight; Height; Peculiarities.
2. Date of Completing this form.
3. Date Arrested or Date of Self-Report.
4. Alleged Offence.
5. Place where offence was allegedly committed.
6. Criminal Record of Accused; last previous offence for which the accused is awaiting trial; was discharged; was discharged and acquitted; escaped from prison custody; escaped from police custody; jumped bail.
7. Names and addresses of witnesses
8. Name and Address of accused counsel
9. Name and address of accused's surety
10. List of exhibits relevant to the case
11. Location of exhibits relevant to the case
12. Police Action(s) taken on the case, update as new actions are taken
13. Present location or whereabouts of the accused: On bail; in police custody; prison custody; discharged; discharged and acquitted; any other please state
14. Name, identification number and location of prosecuting police officer.

6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The items in the dataset on Public Order, Safety and Crime are at present produced by many agencies, some of which (like the Nigeria Police and the Federal Road Safety Corps) have overlapping functions. This should be addressed to facilitate sub-sectoral data production by the bodies.

The two most active agencies in the production of items of data in the set are the Nigeria Police and the Prisons. The National Bureau of Statistics is also active in collation and publication of data received from these two sources, especially those on Prison Statistics.

Routine data collection by these two agencies and the Federal Ministry of Justice will be facilitated if they establish sub-sectoral databases and develop data banks. All the tables which are produced individually and which summarise information about prisons, prisoners, accused or convicted persons on selected attributes such as sex, age, length of imprisonment, type of offence, religion, ethnic or State origin, etc., can be easily produced using appropriate output processing routines. Also, the information on each record can be retrieved, viewed and updated with ease. These agencies will eventually get rid of shelve loads of hard copies of files, having been replaced by computer-readable storage media.