

Received: 06.12.2019.

Accepted: 04.04.2020.

UDC: 343.24(669.1)

343.24:631.1(669.1)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31299/ksi.28.1.1>

Preliminary report

CHALLENGES OF PRISON FARM MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA

Irenonsen Oyaimare Uddin

Department of Agricultural Extension, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

✉ E-mail: uddinirenonsen@gmail.com

Edwin Mbadiwe Igbokwe

Department of Agricultural Extension, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

Jane M. Chah

Department of Agricultural Extension, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on challenges of prison farm management in Nigeria. The empirical results are based on a qualitative and quantitative survey of 54 inmates and 17 prison officers in Ibite-Olo and Ozalla prison farms in Enugu and Edo States of Nigeria respectively. The findings show that the prison farms under study had collaboration with partner agencies such as the federal ministry of agriculture (57.9%), agricultural extension agents (47.4%), agricultural research institutes (42.1%) and NGOs (36.8%), among others. The necessary support from partner agencies covered the following: financial aid (78.9%) and sales/maintenance of farm machinery and implements (68.4%). Furthermore, inmates and prison officers stated the challenges hindering effective running of prison farms' agricultural activities, including: inadequate funding, lack of physical infrastructure, inadequate farm equipment and poor storage facilities. The findings support the conclusion that the Nigerian Prison Service should make an upward review in its budgetary allocation to prison farms to enhance service delivery and inmate reformation, alongside provision of adequate infrastructure, equipment and farm inputs.

Keywords: prison farm; short-term prisoners; correctional staff; recidivism; agriculture; prison-based programs

INTRODUCTION

To a large extent, Nigerian prisons have been confronted with certain problems and several studies have indicated that they are a root cause of inadequacies of the system as a corrective institution. In various respects, life in Nigerian prisons is generally overly regimented to the degree that there is strict control of almost all inmates' activities. This often leaves prisoners in a mentally brutalized manner with broken body and spirit, which destroys the individual (Chukwudi, 2012; Obioha, 2011). In this regard, it is apparent that the Nigerian prisons system is faced with the problem of destroying the individual members of the community, which negates the very essence of imprisonment, amounting to human development wastage in the national calculus. It is evident that various Nigerian prisons are saddled with the problem of releasing maladjusted inmates.

Studies like Obioha (1995), Adetula et al. (2010) have shown that contact with the prison institution in Nigeria makes the less hardened individuals to be more callous in criminal activities upon release, with strong inclination to relapse into criminal activities, which generates high recidivism rates. According to Adetula et al. (2010), the penal institutions subsystems, namely, the justice, the police, the prisons yard and the operative ways of administering justice are believed to bring about breeding and enhancing criminal behaviour and recidivism more than serving deterrence, repentance, reformatory and reconciliatory attitudes between ex-convicts and people in free society to enhance confidence in physical and conceptual security. The fundamental cause of this post-release problem of maladjustment and recidivism could be traced to the lock-up pattern, prison content and failure to implement policies that would support proper inmate reintegration into the society once released (Uddin et al., 2019). In most Nigerian prisons, the remand and convict populations, minor and serious offenders, younger and older inmates are not systematically placed in different cells according to the Standard Minimum Rules (SMR) for imprisonment which prescribes that prisoners should be locked up according to their various categories (Obioha, 2011).

A previous study by Uddin et al. (2019) shows that most implemented programs in Nigerian prison farms were those related to crop production, with less attention paid to animal husbandry. Knowledge gained by inmates in animal husbandry could possibly help them engage in diversified and sustainable agricultural production upon release. Furthermore, in addition to crop production and animal husbandry, there is a need to incorporate activities that will help inmates improve their literacy skills in the areas of reading and writing. Given the opportunity to choose what to be engaged with during incarceration, some of the inmates may prefer other trades and educational learning processes not covered by the prison farms rehabilitation curriculum. Hence, the curriculum needs to be extended accordingly. For instance, some inmates have demonstrated the ability and desire to acquire higher academic qualifications while in prison in order to improve their social status and achieve their educational ambition (Obioha, 2011), which may not necessarily be related to the vocational trades in the prison farm.

Bearing this in mind, it may be difficult for the Nigerian society to have prisoners rehabilitated for better lives. More than that, if these challenges are not addressed, Nigerian prison farms would turn out to be a home for idle minds due to lack of meaningful activities, workshop facilities (Aiyedogbo, 1988; Obioha, 1995) and good skills which prisoners would like to learn (Ishaka et al., 1986; Kangiwa, 1986).

The overall purpose of the study was to ascertain the challenges of prison farm management in Nigeria. In specific terms, the study sought to:

1. identify the collaborative initiative in prison farms' agricultural activities and
2. identify the challenges inhibiting effective running of prison farms' agricultural activities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Zone G (Benin) managed by the Nigerian Prisons Service was used for the study. It covers prisons in Anambra, Edo, Delta, Ebonyi and Enugu States (NPS, 2016). Edo and Enugu States were suitable for the study because of the presence of prison farms, as opposed to the other states under the same jurisdiction that do not have them. The general population for the study came from the management of Enugu and Benin prisons represented by the officers and prison inmates. The total number of inmates in Benin (Ozalla Farm Centre) at the time of the study was 41, while 13 came from Enugu (Ibite-Olo Farm Centre). Interaction was limited to the officers on duty on the day inmates were interviewed as the size of staff was termed classified for security reasons. Hence, 12 and seven prison officers participated in both states. This brought the total population for the study to 54 prison inmates and 19 officers.

Survey design was used in the study, while data was collected from inmates using the interview schedule. Questionnaires were used to elicit responses from the available staff in the July – November 2016 period when the study was carried out. To achieve the objective 1, the staff of the analysed prisons was asked to indicate the stakeholders in partnerships with the prison farms, as well as the support they required from them. The objective 2 was achieved by asking the staff and inmates to identify the challenges inhibiting effective running/implementation of the prison farms' agricultural activities. Respondents (staff and inmates) were required to tick from the following options: lack of funds, lack of physical infrastructure, poor management/administration, fellow inmates and prison staff. Furthermore, strategies to address these challenges were obtained from respondents.

Percentage, mean statistic and standard deviation were used in the analysis and presentation of the data. Hypothesis for the study was analyzed by using the t-test ($p \leq 0.05$). The Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) Version 20 software package was used for the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Collaborative Initiative in Prison Farms' Agricultural Activities

As the Table 1 shows, the selected prisons collaborated with the federal ministry of agriculture (57.9%), agricultural extension agents (47.4%), research institutes and churches in combination with other religious bodies (42.1%). They were also in partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (36.8%), state ministries of agriculture (31.6%), universities (21.1%) and local government departments of agriculture (15.8%). Cooperation with stakeholders outside of prison is important in both the pre- and post-release period. In this regard, Langelid et al. (2009) assert that the release of a prisoner should be prepared in cooperation with social, healthcare, employment and education services in the community as well as third sector organisations so that the prisoner will receive sufficient support upon release. Interrelationship between the prison and other agencies could be achieved through collaborative programmes and prison officers' attendance at programmes organized by other agencies such as research institutes. Agricultural research is one of the driving forces behind the development of the agricultural sector (Mbang, 2019).

Table 1. Collaborative initiative in prison farms' agricultural activities (n=19)

Partner agencies	Percentage (%)
Federal ministry of agriculture	57.9
Agricultural extension agents	47.4
Agricultural research institutes	42.1
Churches and other religious bodies	42.1
NGOs	36.8
State ministry of agriculture	31.6
Universities	21.1
Local government department of agriculture	15.8

*Multiple responses

Support needed from partner agencies: Items listed in the Table 2 reflect the areas that the prison staff identified as the fields in which they need support from partner agencies. Generally, support in the areas of finance (78.9%), sales/maintenance of farm machinery and implements (68.4%) and supply of improved varieties of seedlings was most needed. All of these areas directly point to the challenges hindering the effective running of the prison farms under study and as such will be discussed in the next section (see Table 3). Funding is crucial to achieve the objectives of rehabilitating inmates. Provision of adequate infrastructure, equipment, purchase of improved seedlings and upgrading obsolete farm practices mostly depend on funding. Not to mention that effective management of such funds towards the overall development of the prison and inmates is also important. It may not be out of place to say that prison farms are victims of the overall neglect of agriculture in the nation. Odhiambo (2007) opined that although the role of agriculture in growth and poverty reduction in Africa is well recognized, there has been gross under-investment in the sector over the years.

Table 2. Support needed from partner agencies

Support needed	Percentage (%)
Financial support	78.9
Sales/maintenance of farm machinery and implements	68.4
Supply of improved varieties of seedlings	47.4
Adequate information on modern farm techniques	31.6
Provision of adequate infrastructure	31.6
Supply of agrochemicals and fertilizer	21.1
Supply of drugs and toiletries for inmates	15.8
Extension services/supervision	15.8
Willingness to absorb inmates upon discharge	10.5
Motivation of staff	10.5

*Multiple responses

Challenges Hindering Effective Running of Prison Farms' Agricultural Activities

The results presented in the Table 3 show that inadequate funding (100.0%), lack of physical infrastructure (100.0%) and low staff strength (78.9%) were the biggest challenges hindering the effective running of agricultural activities amongst staff. In terms of inmates, 94.4% indicated inadequacy of agricultural equipment and lack of physical infrastructure, lack/inadequate funding (83.3%) and poor storage facilities (75.9%) as challenges preventing their effective participation in

the activities. The results also show that the improper categorization of inmates (5.3%) was least critical for the staff while, in case of inmates, the less severe challenges include time constraints and complexity of staff, accounting for 20.4 percent.

Apart from funding the prison farms to improve infrastructure, purchase of farm equipment etc., adequate arrangement should be made to help inmates earn some stipends while in prison. This will help them start up whatever agricultural enterprise they choose when released. Against this backdrop, increased budgetary allocations to prison farms and meaningful financial partnerships with relevant financing agencies should be managed by the Nigerian prison service. Such partnerships should cover the overall development of prison farms with due consideration given to inmates.

Good infrastructure affects agricultural productivity. Adequate infrastructure will create an enabling environment for inmates to learn ideal farm practices and improve the overall productive capacity of the prison farm. This view is in line with those of Warner, Kahan and Lehel (2008) stipulating that adequate physical infrastructure supports on-farm production, such as irrigation, energy, transportation, pre and post-harvest storage; ensures efficient trading and exchange, including telecommunications and covered markets; adds value to the domestic economy, such as agro-processing and packaging facilities and enables produce to move rapidly and efficiently from farm-gate to processing facilities and on to wholesalers, for example transportation and bulk storage.

Adequate staff strength is essential for effective management of the overall activities in prison farms. Shortage of staff will result in over tasking and multiple functions and could lead to poor staff performance. Furthermore, an innovative approach to animal husbandry and modern crop production techniques are crucial to improve the level of prison farms' productivity. Hence, there is a need for prison farms to develop more sustainable animal production systems. This will require system innovations in various aspects, such as animal keeping, production and processing. A well-organized, highly efficient livestock farming practice provides the best opportunities for sustainability (Capper et al., 2014; Capper, 2011; Fresco, 2012).

Much of the potential of the analysed prison farms remains untapped due to obsolete farming technology in crop production. One of the primary constraints to increased productivity and profitability stems from the limited use of modern farming technology, equipment, and inputs (Todd, 2013). For example, although prison farms have access to rivers and streams and even sink boreholes for irrigative purposes, if needed, they continue to rely heavily on rain-fed systems. The use of modern equipment could also make harvests more efficient and help to move produce to market more quickly and in better condition (Todd, 2013). Finally, modern agricultural inputs such as seeds, agro-chemicals, and fertilizers can dramatically reduce losses.

The processing units of both prison farms lacked machines to help with timely processing of harvested farm produce and processed animal products. Apart from processing, storage also remains problematic. Storage facilities in these farms were rather low-tech and obsolete. Good storage facilities help to preserve the quality of obtained products. This view is in line with those of Dobermann and Nelson (2013) who state that harvest and postharvest technologies save labour, reduce grain losses and improve product quality. The African Development Bank (AfDB) (2011) further corroborated that where facilities are inefficient and not properly maintained, there is a huge pre and post-harvest loss on the total attainable agricultural products.

Table 3. Challenges hindering effective running of prison farms' agricultural activities

Challenges	Staff (n=19) (%)	Inmates (n=54) (%)
Inadequate funding	100.0	83.3
Lack of physical infrastructure	100.0	94.4
Low staff strength	78.9	51.9
Inadequate collaboration between prison and partner agencies	68.4	-
Inmates unwillingness to participate in activities	52.6	22.2
Poor management/administration	47.4	31.5
Inadequate equipment	42.1	94.4
Improper categorisation of inmates sent to prison farm	5.3	-
Poor processing and storage facilities	-	75.9
Water shortages	-	61.1
Limited agricultural inputs	-	50.0
Poor extension service	-	46.3
Lack of skilled & trained personnel	-	37.0
Obsolete farm practices	-	24.1
Time constraints	-	20.4
Complexity of prison staff	-	20.4

*Multiple responses

Suggestions to overcome the challenges hindering effective running of prison farms' agricultural activities: In terms of suggestions to overcome the challenges, 89.5% of staff were of the view that prison farms should have adequate funding, 78.9% thought that more innovative approach to animal husbandry is needed, as well as provision of infrastructure (63.2%) (see Table 4). Inmates mostly suggested maintenance and acquiring of equipment (94.4%) and provision of good infrastructure (92.6%).

The budgetary allocation to the prison farms under study should be adjusted upward. Also, appropriate mechanisms should be put in place to monitor disbursed funds for effective utilisation. Suffice to say that corruption could be the reason for inadequate funding of these prison farms leading to shortages in the supply of necessary equipment, materials and inputs needed for their operations. If this continues unabated, it would imply that the current challenges faced by prison farms will become widespread. This unpleasant condition cannot be overemphasized, rather, it should be perceived as a sign that the overhaul of the entire prison system is called for (Obioha, 2011).

Table 4. Suggestions to overcome challenges hindering effective running of prison farms' agricultural activities

Suggestions	Staff (n=19) (%)	Inmates (n=54) (%)
Adequate funding	89.5	83.3
More innovative approach to animal husbandry	78.9	-
Provision of infrastructure	63.2	92.6
Employment of more staff	57.9	50.0
Crop production techniques should be reviewed to increase production capacity and revenue generation	52.6	24.2
Proper monitoring of funds released for effective utilization	47.4	-
Adequate collaboration between prisons and partner agencies	42.1	-

Maintenance of existing agricultural equipment	-	94.4
Acquiring more agricultural equipment	36.8	94.4
Good management/administration	31.6	27.8
Motivation of inmates to participate in activities	26.3	24.1
Training and retraining of staff	15.8	35.2
Proper categorisation of inmates sent to prison farm centres	5.3	-
Adequate storage facilities	-	75.9
Adequate water supply	-	61.1
Improved extension service	-	48.1
Adequate supply of agricultural inputs	-	48.1
Uncomplicated prison staff	-	22.2
More time should be allocated to agricultural activities	-	20.4

*Multiple responses

CONCLUSION

There is tangible evidence to support collaboration between the visited prison farms and other agencies. Inadequate funding was a major challenge to effective running and participation in agricultural activities by both the staff and inmates. Huge infrastructure decay was observed. Hence it is recommended that the management of Nigerian prison service makes an upward review in its budgetary allocation to prison farms to enhance service delivery and inmate reformation. This should be done in parallel with provision of adequate infrastructure, equipment and farm inputs. Additionally, mechanisms should be put in place to ensure released funds are properly accounted for. Also, in order to ensure better reformation of inmates, the management of Nigerian prison service should seek support and partnership with government agencies and NGOs, so that inmates could receive sufficient support pre- and post-release. Finally, more studies should be conducted to ascertain the actual number of inmates who become agripreneurs or take up agriculture-related jobs when released from prison farms.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express their deepest appreciation to the Comptroller of Prisons in Enugu and Edo States of Nigeria, for their approval to undertake this study in Ibite-Olo and Ozalla prison farms. Also, the role played by the Chief Superintendent of Prisons, officers and inmates in the respective prison farms is highly appreciated.

REFERENCES

- Adetula, G.A., Adetula, A. & Fatusin, A.F. (2010). The prison subsystem culture: Its attitudinal effects on operatives, convicts and the free society. *Ife Psychologia*, 18 (1), 232-251.
- African Development Bank (2011). Market brief, chief economist complex, November. Downloaded from: www.afdb.org
- Aiyedogbo, J.D. (1988). Nigerian prisons: A sociological study. Sokoto prison as a case study (B.Sc. Thesis). Department of Sociology, University of Sokoto.

- Capper, J.L. (2011). The environmental impact of beef production: 1977 compared with 2007. *Journal of Animal Science*, 89 (12) 4249–4261.
- Capper, J.L., Cady, R.A. & Bauman, D.E. (2014). The environmental impact of dairy production: 1944 compared with 2007. *Journal of Animal Science*, 87 (6), 2160-2167.
- Chukwudi, F. (2012). Challenges of reforms in the Nigerian prison system: Lessons from USA and South Africa. *Journal of Social Science and Public Policy*, 4: 1-12.
- Dobberman, A. & Nelson, R. (2013). Opportunities and solutions for sustainable food production. Background paper for the high-level panel of eminent persons on the post-2015 development agenda. Sustainable Development Solutions Network. Downloaded from: <http://unsdsn.org/resources/>
- Fresco, L.O. (2012). Hamburgers in paradise food in times of scarcity and abundance (in Dutch), Bert Bakker, Amsterdam
- Ishaka, P. & Akpovwa, P. (1986). Not a prisoner heaven. *Newswatch*, 2:26. December 29, 1986.
- Kangiwa, G.A. (1986). The political economy of crime in Sokoto town (B.Sc. Thesis). University of Sokoto.
- Langelid, T., Mäki, M., Raundrup, K. & Svensson, S. (Eds.) (2009). Nordic prison education, a lifelong learning perspective. Downloaded from: <http://www.norden.org/is/utgafa/utgefid-efni/2009-536>
- Mbang, E.J., Madukwe, M.C. & Uddin, I.O. (2019). Infrastructure and linkage challenges in the execution of agricultural programmes in Cross River State, Nigeria. *Path of Science*, 5(11), 3001-3009.
- Nigerian Prisons Service, (April, 2016). About Nigerian prisons. Downloaded from: <http://www.prisons.gov.ng/> (29.04.2016.)
- Obioha, E.E. (1995). Prison culture in Nigeria; A study of life within Agodi prison community, Ibadan (M.Sc. Thesis). Department of Sociology, University of Ibadan.
- Obioha, E.E. (2011). Challenges and reforms in the Nigerian prisons system. *Journal of Social Science*, 27 (2), 95-109.
- Odhiambo, W. (2007). Financing African agriculture: issues and challenges. Draft paper to be presented at the second African economic conference at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 15-17 November 2007.
- Todd, W.E. (2013). Using modern agricultural technology to increase production, food security, and profitability. *Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet*. Downloaded from: <https://www.feedthefuture.gov/printpdf/1695>
- Uddin, I.O., Igbokwe, E.M. & Olaolu, M.O. (2019). Prison farm inmates' reformation and rehabilitation: the Nigerian experience. *Criminology & Social Integration*, 27(2), 204-220.
- Warner, M., Kahan & Lehel, S. (2008). Market-oriented agricultural infrastructure: Appraisal of public-private partnerships. FAO, Rome.

Irenonsen Oyaimare Uddin

Katedra za obrazovanje u poljoprivredi, Sveučilište u Nigeriji, Nsukka, Nigerija

Edwin Mbadiwe Igbokwe

Katedra za obrazovanje u poljoprivredi, Sveučilište u Nigeriji, Nsukka, Nigerija

Jane M. Chah

Katedra za obrazovanje u poljoprivredi, Sveučilište u Nigeriji, Nsukka, Nigerija

IZAZOVI UPRAVLJANJA ZATVORSKIM POLJOPRIVREDNIM RADIONICAMA U NIGERIJU

SAŽETAK

Ovaj se rad bavi izazovima upravljanja zatvorskim poljoprivrednim radionicama u Nigeriji. Empirijski rezultati temelje se na kvalitativnom i kvantitativnom istraživanju koje je provedeno na 54 zatvorenika i 17 zatvorskih službenika na poljoprivrednim radionicama Ibite-Olo i Ozalla u nigerijskim saveznom državama Enugu i Edo. Rezultati pokazuju da su analizirane poljoprivredne radionice surađivale s partnerskim agencijama kao što su federalno ministarstvo poljoprivrede (57,9%), savjetnici za obrazovanje u poljoprivredi (47,4%), poljoprivredni instituti (42,1%) i nevladine organizacije (36,8%). Područja u kojima su trebali potporu partnerskih agencija bila su financijska pomoć (78,9%) i prodaja / održavanje poljoprivrednih strojeva i opreme (68,4%). Uz to, zatvorenici i zatvorski službenici naveli su izazove koji priječe učinkovito upravljanje poljoprivrednim djelatnostima u sklopu radionica, npr.: nedostatna financijska sredstva, nedostatak fizičke infrastrukture, neodgovarajuća poljoprivredna oprema i skladišta. Nalazi upućuju na to da nigerijska Uprava za zatvorski sustav, uz osiguravanje odgovarajuće infrastrukture, opreme i poljoprivrednih sirovina, u reviziji proračuna treba osigurati više sredstava za zatvorske poljoprivredne radionice kako bi se unaprijedilo pružanje usluga i potaknula reforma zatvorenika.

Ključne riječi: poljoprivredna radionica, zatvorenici na izdržavanju kraće kazne zatvora, zatvorsko osoblje, kriminalni povrat, poljoprivreda, zatvorski programi