



The Use and Capacity of Physical Facilities at The Correctional Service Centres in Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

The literature is extensive of the poor provision of welfare services to inmates in most Nigerian correctional facilities. As a result, this study examines the conditions and quality of correctional facilities in Oyo State, Nigeria with a view to suggesting practical measures to improve the conditions of the facilities particularly in the State and, by extension, the Nigerian correctional facilities in general. Data on the carrying capacities of the correctional facilities were obtained from official records in the sampled correctional centres while data on the conditions of the correctional facilities were collected with the aid of semi-structured questionnaires which were administered among 150 correctional officers across the correctional centres in Ibadan, Oyo and Ogbomoso. Nevertheless, only physical correctional facilities were examined. They include facilities in the provision and maintenance of hygiene & health, water supply, sanitation, space & quarters, and kitchen & preparation of meals. The findings showed that inmate population in Ibadan correctional centre had exceeded its official capacity, resulting in unhealthy impact on the facilities in the centre. The Oyo correctional centre has a fair outlook in the conditions of its facilities. In contrast, the Ogbomoso correction centre has an impressive performance in the availability and utilization of the facilities. The ANOVA results suggested that, with f-statistic as 12.63, f-critical as 3.46 and p-value as 0.00, the conditions of correctional facilities vary significantly across the locations. Based on the findings, it is recommended that government should improve cooperative mechanisms among criminal justice agencies so that case backlogs can be cleared in due course and pressure on the correctional facilities is relieved by joint action.

Keywords: correctional service, correctional facilities, occupancy rate, ANOVA, Oyo State.

INTRODUCTION

According to the Institute for Crime and Justice Policy Research (ICJPR), it has been estimated that more than 11 million individuals were under incarceration worldwide and this number has taken an upward trend as rising rates of global incarceration outstrip the global population growth (ICJPR, 2021). The prison population includes those under trial or those pleading or already found guilty or have been sentenced to a specified period of imprisonment. However, one fundamental fact that unites different categories of prisoners is that they must be treated with dignity. The basic principles for the treatment of prisoners, put forward in 2016 by the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, recognized that "except for those limitations that are demonstrably necessitated by the fact of incarceration, all prisoners shall retain their human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (United Nations, 2016). In other words, incarceration as a measure of depriving people of their freedom

must in no way, whatever the circumstances, be made more severe by treatment or material conditions of detention which undermine the dignity and the rights of the individual. Therefore, the issue of conditions of correctional service is important because it relates to the human rights of prisoners in the correctional institutions.

Nevertheless, the conditions of the correctional centres have negative outlook in most of the developing countries, particularly in Nigeria where the facilities in the detention centres are rarely consistent with international standards (Muhammad et al., 2017). The available correctional facilities in Nigeria are often in precarious state, leading to higher morbidity and mortality rates among the inmates than in the population from which they are drawn (Muhammad et al., 2017). The provision of welfare services to inmates in the Nigerian Correctional Service has been far from satisfactory (Oyeyipo et al., 2021).

Many correctional facilities do not meet the minimum standard rules for the treatment of prisoners while others violate the rights of inmates to adequate feeding, allocation, accommodation, privacy, lighting, medical services and so on (Ugwuoke, 2015; Ndukwe and Nwuzor, 2014). This is made worse by the increasing number of inmates in the correctional facilities triggered by high rate of urban crime and the incapacitation of the legal system to deal with all the cases brought before it within a reasonable period of time (Oroleye, 2018). Given the foregoing, this study aims at examining the conditions of physical facilities at the correctional centres in Oyo State, Nigeria.

BRIEF TOUR OF THE LITERATURE

The Correctional Service System and correctional facilities have existed in different civilizations in ancient times. It included short-term detention facilities for the confinement of persons awaiting trial, sentencing, execution, deportation (transportation to other countries as punishment) whipping or some other form of corporal punishment (Reid, 2012). However, placing offenders in an institution for the purposes of punishment is a relatively modern development. Correctional facilities have been described as the narrow funnel of criminal justice system into which "sentencers" continually pour new offenders (Bamgbose, 2003). The question that comes to fore is: what are the functions of imprisonment? The popular answer would be that imprisonment punishes and deters the imprisoned from offending again and deters others from offending and thus sharing the prisoners' fate. (McClellan and Wood, 1969). Correctional Service is also used to keep offenders from further "infecting and inflecting" other members of the society (Shajobi-Ibikunle, 2014). In short, the core functions of Correctional Service are reformation, security, discipline and education (Shajobi-Ibikunle, 2014).

A major constraint to healthy experiences of inmates in the correctional centres is overcrowding (Allen, 2010). Correctional service overcrowding is a serious problem which has generated the interest of national and international actors, yet it remains an elusive phenomenon. Overcrowding seems to represent a characteristic troubling the modern correctional service since its inception in the nineteenth century (Mullen, 1985).

Overcrowding or congestion, as it is called in some parts of the world, is the most important reason for the failure of states to meet minimum standards of decency and humanity (Allen, 2010). In Nigeria, overcrowding is a serious challenge to imprisonment in the country especially in the metropolitan cities. In most correctional service cells in Nigeria, facilities hold as many as twice or thrice as their required capacity. In this situation, there is hardly enough room for

correctional service inmates to move body and limbs freely (Ayade, 2010). There is no denying the fact that the nation's correctional facilities are facing many challenges, most notably limited resources, overcrowding, insufficient sanitary conditions and corruption (Fayemi and Olonisakin, 2008). Due to overcrowding, the Nigerian Correctional Service system, which was supposed to exist with the full complements of legal, vocational, educational, religious and social services, is in pathetic state (Ayade, 2010). Most correctional facilities had no toilet facilities and potable water. Medical facilities are characteristically limited. Food, which represents about 80 percent of annual correctional service expenditures, has been grossly inadequate for the inmates (Asylum Research Centre, 2019).

The rehabilitative function of the correctional service implies bringing the offender to normal life (Tarhule, 2020). However, to rehabilitate an individual, he must be developed within their own personality (Tarhule, 2020).

More succinctly, the rehabilitative activities of the Nigerian Correctional Service have two categories: psychological/psychiatric treatment and educational/vocational programmes (Monehin, 2021). This means the correctional service system protects the dignity of the inmates in the quest to reform them as functional members of the society (Monehin, 2021). The safe custody of the inmates is therefore only attained if the correctional service implements mechanisms which might champion the reformation and rehabilitation of the inmates (Shajobi-Ibikunle, 2022). The correctional service also serves as a medium of discipline for the inmates (Umukoro and Kore-Okiti, 2023). It follows that the inmates' experiences should produce acceptable character and pattern of behaviours which will lead to moral and mental improvement towards shunning deviant behaviours in the society (Umukoro and Kore-Okiti, 2023). In addition, discipline and disciplinary actions must be activated if the inmates are treading towards unacceptable behaviours (Hayford, 2023). Nonetheless, to achieve this change in behavioural patterns among the inmates, the correctional service needs to provide necessary facilities in good conditions for the inmates (Umukoro and Kore-Okiti, 2023; Hayford, 2023). In sum, the correctional service is responsible for improved living conditions within the correctional centre in order to rebuild the inmates.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopts the descriptive research design with the intent of bringing into limelight the conditions of correctional facilities in Oyo State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey was considered appropriate for this study as it allows for identification and description of opinions of the correctional officers on the state of facilities available at the correctional centres to take care of inmates. Nevertheless, only physical correctional facilities were examined in this study. They include facilities in the provision and maintenance of hygiene & health, water supply, sanitation, space & quarters, and kitchen & preparation of meals. Data used in this study were collected from primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected with the aid of self-designed semi-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire contains items asking for the perceptions of the correctional officers who have the official capacity to give information on the existing conditions of correctional facilities. The secondary data, which were sourced from the records of the sampled correctional service centres, include the population of inmates and the carrying capacities of the sampled correctional facilities.

All the three correctional centres in Oyo State constitute the sampling frame for this study. According to the official record, Ibadan correctional centre has total inmates of 1071, Oyo has 377

while Ogbomoso has 44, totaling 1492 inmates across the three correctional centres. Using a purposive random sampling technique, a sample size of 150 correctional officers were used for the study. Given the relative size of inmates in each correctional centre, 75 correctional officers were sampled from Ibadan, 45 from Oyo and the remaining 30 from Ogbomoso. Two sets of data were analysed in this study. First is the occupancy rate which is also known as the population density. It is determined as the ratio of population of inmates to the official capacity of the correctional centre, with the result multiplied by 100%. This is represented mathematically as $R = \frac{D}{C} \times 100\%$ where R is the occupancy rate, D is the detainees' population and C is the official capacity of the correctional centre. Where the occupancy rate exceeds 100%, there is a case of overoccupancy or overpopulation. The rate of overpopulation is obtained by subtracting 100% from the occupancy rate. If the overpopulation rate is negative, the situation is interpreted as underpopulation, that is, the correctional centre is under-occupied by the available inmates.

The second set of the data is concerned with the perceptions and experiences of the respondents regarding the conditions of correctional facilities. The questionnaire items have binary responses (Yes & No). Fifteen items were generated for each of the measured correctional facilities. Since the examined correctional facilities are physical, the researcher could easily compare the responses of the correctional officers with direct observations in the correctional centres. Where all the sampled officers answered YES to an item on the questionnaire, the response is coded 1 and 0 if otherwise. This means each correctional centre can score a maximum of 15 on a correctional facility. The scores of the three correctional centres across the examined correctional facilities (hygiene & health, water supply, sanitation, space & quarters, and kitchen & preparation of meals) were then compared. More inferences were generated from an analysis-of-variance (ANOVA) test and the results were interpreted at 5% level of significance.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

This section discusses features of the correctional facilities for inmates in Oyo State. The features include the occupancy rate, detainees' hygiene & health, water supply, sanitation, space & quarters, and kitchen & preparation of meals. After analyzing data on these features, a comparison was drawn on living conditions across the penal establishments in the State.

Occupancy Rate

Table 1 presents information on the average number of prisoner population relative to the capacity in Ibadan, Oyo and Ogbomoso correctional centres. It is revealing that Ibadan Correctional Service is the most overpopulated in Oyo State with the occupancy rate of 275% and rate of overpopulation of 175%. The population of detainees in Ibadan Correctional Service is almost three times higher than its official capacity. Similarly, but in less degree, the number of detainees in Oyo Correctional Service is 51% higher than the official capacity. However, the reverse was the case in Ogbomoso where the number of detainees is 44% lesser than its official capacity.

Table 1: Occupancy Rate of Correctional Facilities

Location of Correctional Facilities	Year of Establishment	Official Capacity	Population	Occupancy Rate (%)	Rate of Overpopulation (%)
Ibadan	1894	390	1071	275	175
Oyo	1840	250	377	151	51
Ogbomoso	2010	100	44	44	-56

Source: Oyo State Correctional Service, 2018

Hygiene and Health

Evaluation of detainee' hygiene and health in the three correctional facilities is as shown in Table 2. The aim here is to pinpoint the most significant health problems in the correctional facilities. In the 2-point response scale, 1 indicates that the respondents unanimously answered YES while 0 means they jointly answered NO. According to Table 2, the detainees have access to medical care in the three correctional facilities as they can be taken to hospital for medical care. However, diseases (respiratory and skin) and malnourishment were observed to be major challenges in Ibadan and Oyo correctional facilities. This might be connected with overcrowding structure in the two correctional facilities. The fact that detainees frequently suffer from diarrhea in Ibadan Correctional Service is an indication that the correctional centre has problems with waste-disposal system or food-preparation system or both. In both Ibadan and Oyo correctional facilities, it was reported that detainees were not allowed adequate exercise within the premises of the correctional centre. It was also obtained that detainees were not given adequate supply of soap in the two correctional facilities. More often than none, the detainees rely on public magnanimity for the supply of soap. Overall, the evaluation results show that with the score of 5/15 each, the problems of hygiene and health are more pronounced in Ibadan and Oyo correctional centres while Ogbomoso correctional centre, with the highest total score (14/15), has limited hygiene and health problems.

Table 2: Detainees' Hygiene and Health in the Correctional Facilities

S/N	Item on the checklist	Ibadan	Oyo	Ogbomoso
1	Do the detainees have access to medical care?	1	1	1
2	Is there a dispensary in the Correctional Service?	1	0	1
3	Can sick detainees be taken to a hospital?	1	1	1
4	Is there quick response to diarrhea among inmates?	0	1	1
5	Are the inmates well treated for skin diseases?	0	0	1
6	Are the inmates well treated for respiratory diseases?	0	0	1
7	Are sick detainees separated from healthy detainees?	0	1	1
8	Are there emergency responses to inmates' ill-health?	0	0	1
9	Are the detainees regularly supplied with soap?	0	0	1
10	Do the detainees have access to showers?	0	0	1
11	Are the detainees able to wash their clothes?	0	0	1
12	Are there concerns for malnutrition among inmates?	0	0	1
13	Is the mortality rate higher than the national average?	1	0	0
14	Are nurses present on a regular basis?	1	1	1
15	Are the detainees allowed to exercise?	0	0	1
	Total	5	5	14

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2018

Water Supply

The responses on the water supply checklist are as shown on Table 3. The checklist provides an easy means of determining whether, in a given correctional service, the detainees have access to sufficient quantity of potable water. The questions were designed to identify the source of the water supply and to determine whether the water is distributed in sufficient quantities throughout the correctional service. The results demonstrate that the correctional facilities rely on wells and boreholes as none of them is connected to urban water supply. It was observed that the water is protected, colourless, tasteless and odourless. It follows that, in terms of the quality, all the three prisons are supplied with quality water. Except in Ibadan correctional centre, the water is well distributed to all parts of the correctional facilities. That is, the detainees have extensive access

to water supply in Oyo and Ogbomoso correctional centres. However, the overall assessment of water supply in the three correctional facilities shows that Ogbomoso Correctional Service has the highest score in water supply (12/15). This is followed by Oyo Correctional Service (7/15) while water supply could be said to be relatively poor in Ibadan Correctional Service (5/15).

Table 3: Water Supply in the Correctional Facilities

S/N	Item on the checklist	Ibadan	Oyo	Ogbomoso
1	Does the water come from the urban main supply?	0	0	0
2	Does the water come from a lake, a pond or a river?	0	0	0
3	If the water comes from a well, is the well protected?	1	1	1
4	If the water comes from a spring, is the spring protected?	0	0	0
5	Is water distributed to all parts of correctional service?	0	1	1
6	Do all the detainees have free access to water?	0	1	1
7	Are there restrictions on the use of water for inmates?	1	1	1
8	Does the correctional centre have a water reservoir?	0	1	1
9	Can the detainees store water for use at night?	0	0	1
10	Is the amount of water stored for the night sufficient?	0	0	1
11	Are there frequent and inconvenient water cuts?	1	0	0
12	Does the water have particular colour, taste or smell?	0	0	0
13	Is the water treated (chlorinated) before it is used?	0	0	1
14	Is the water-collection system adequate?	1	1	1
15	Is there a maintenance team for the water supply?	1	1	1
	Total	5	7	12

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2018

Sanitation

Sanitary conditions often vary in direct relation to overcrowding features because there is a pressure on the infrastructure if it is used beyond its official capacity. This is a reflection of the sanitary conditions in the three correctional facilities in Oyo State as shown on Table 4. Except for Ogbomoso correctional centre, the sewage system in Ibadan and Oyo correctional facilities have been clogged from time to time. Although there is a team responsible for the collection of refuse in the three correctional facilities, refuse is not regularly collected in Ibadan and Oyo correctional facilities. It was also observed that there are pools of stagnant water inside or outside Ibadan and Oyo correctional facilities. As a result of inadequate sanitation, diseases and ailments are more popular in Ibadan and Oyo correctional facilities. The summary of sanitary conditions shown on Table 4 revealed that the sanitary condition in Ogbomoso correctional service is excellent with 14/15 sanitation domain score, while it is relatively poor in both Ibadan and Oyo Correctional facilities (7/15). Thus, the sanitary conditions in the correctional facilities suggest direct relationship with their occupancy rates.

Table 4: Sanitary Conditions in the Correctional Facilities

S/N	Item on the checklist	Ibadan	Oyo	Ogbomoso
1	Is the sewage disposal system prevented from clogs?	0	0	1
2	Are the latrines prevented from overflowing?	1	0	1
3	Is there at least one toilet block per 50 detainees?	0	0	1
4	Are the latrines or toilets washed regularly?	0	1	0
5	Are the detainees able to go to the toilet at night?	1	1	1
6	Is there a maintenance team for the toilets?	1	1	1
7	Is refuse collected regularly?	1	1	1

8	Is refuse burned or buried?	0	0	1
9	Is there a team responsible for refuse collection?	1	1	1
10	Is stagnant water prevented inside correctional service?	0	0	1
11	Is there at least one shower per 50 inmates?	0	0	1
12	Can the detainees take at least one shower a week?	1	1	1
13	Are vectors of disease considered to be a problem?	0	0	1
14	Is there hand-washing provision?	1	1	1
15	Do the detainees receive health/sanitation education?	0	0	1
	Total	7	7	14

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2018

Spaces and Quarters

In this domain, questions were raised on spaces and quarters issues. These questions make it possible to assess accommodation conditions in the cells or dormitories and the population ratio. Also, this shed lighter on the results of the checklist relating to the occupancy rates and detainees' health. The results, as shown in Table 5, point to overcrowding nature of correctional facilities in Ibadan and Oyo. In the domain analysis, while it was asserted that the detainees can walk about in the correctional service compound, they cannot stretch out to sleep in their rooms in Ibadan and Oyo correctional facilities. It is also noted that the mattresses available in both Ibadan and Oyo correctional facilities cannot serve all the detainees. As a result, many of them sleep on bare floor. The overall analysis of spaces and quarters domain shows that Ogbomoso Correctional Service, having scored 15/15, is the best in terms of spaces and quarters in the three correctional facilities. Oyo is relatively fair (7/15) while Ibadan Correctional Service (4/15) is relatively poor in this domain

Table 5: Spaces and Quarters Conditions in the Correctional Facilities

S/N	Item on the checklist	Ibadan	Oyo	Ogbomoso
1	Can the detainees walk around the correctional service?	1	1	1
2	Can the detainees stretch out when sleeping?	0	0	1
3	Do the detainees sleep on individual mattress?	0	0	1
4	Are the cells properly ventilated?	1	1	1
5	When it rains, are water leaks prevented?	0	0	1
6	Do the detainees have access to light within the cells?	0	1	1
7	Is there light in the toilets of the cells?	1	0	1
8	Are the cells too hot or too cold for the detainees?	0	0	1
9	Are the cells clean?	0	1	1
10	Are the cells washed or disinfected regularly?	0	1	1
11	Are insects and other pests controlled?	0	0	1
12	Is the correctional service disinfected regularly?	0	1	1
13	Is the correctional service whitewashed regularly	1	0	1
14	Is every detainee able to sleep on a mattress?	0	0	1
15	Is there a team responsible for cleaning the cells?	0	1	1
	Total	4	7	15

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2018

Kitchen and Meals

Correctional facilities must maintain sufficient food storage and cooking facilities to ensure that all prisoners are provided with safe, sufficient and nutritionally adequate food, or must ensure that these needs are met by the procurement of food from outside sources (UNOPS, 2016). As a

result, a series of questions relating to kitchen and preparation of meals were asked. The answers to these questions, taken together, indicate the capacity of the Correctional Service to provide the detainees with daily meals. The analysis of responses from the correctional facilities shows that in the three correctional facilities, kitchens are regularly washed or disinfected; the stoves are in good working condition; the kitchens produce at least one hot meal a day; there is a team in charge of kitchen maintenance; there are appropriate containers for the distribution of food; the detainees have plates or bowls for eating meals. In spite of the foregoing, the kitchens in Ibadan and Oyo are not always clean enough to safeguard the health of the detainees. All kitchens produce waste as part of food preparation process. This waste has to be disposed hygienically to avoid attracting rodents and pests. The infestation of kitchens in Ibadan and Oyo correctional facilities with insects and rodents is a pointer to the fact that the waste management practices in these correctional facilities are grossly inadequate. The overall evaluation of kitchen and meals in the three correctional facilities shows that Ogbomoso, with highest domain score (15/15), has the capacity to produce its detainees with hygienically-prepared daily meals. This is followed by Oyo (11/15) while Ibadan (with the score of 7/15), lacks the full capacity to meet the daily meal requirements of its detainees.

Table 6: Kitchen and Meal Conditions in the Correctional Facilities

S/N	Item on the checklist	Ibadan	Oyo	Ogbomoso
1	Is the kitchen clean?	0	0	1
2	Is the kitchen regularly washed or disinfected?	1	1	1
3	Are there enough stoves for cooking meals?	0	1	1
4	Are the stoves in good working order?	1	1	1
5	Does the kitchen produce at least one hot meal a day?	1	1	1
6	Is there a water storage tank in the kitchen?	1	1	1
7	Are the food storage areas always clean?	0	0	1
8	Are insects/rodents prevented in the food storage areas?	0	0	1
9	Is there a team in charge of kitchen maintenance?	0	1	1
10	Is there sufficient firewood for cooking meals?	0	0	1
11	Is there a place for storing firewood?	0	1	1
12	Is smoke controlled from being a problem in the kitchen?	1	1	1
13	Do the cooks have the necessary utensils to work?	0	1	1
14	Are there adequate containers for distributing the food?	1	1	1
15	Do the detainees have plates or bowls for eating meals?	1	1	1
	Total	7	11	15

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2018

Variation in Performance of Correctional Facilities

The conditions of correctional facilities vary significantly by locations. In Ibadan correctional service, the analysis of findings in Table 7 shows that it has low scores in almost all aspects of the facilities. The analysis shows that space and quarters (26.6%) is the most problematic domain in Ibadan. This can probably be explained by the serious overpopulation in the correctional service, which in turn leads to over utilization of facilities.

This also creates problems of hygiene and health, inadequate water supply, poor sanitary condition and low capacity to provide the detainees with decent daily meals. In similar vein, analysis of condition in Oyo correctional centre shows that hygiene and health facilities require urgent attention-the correctional centre has the lowest score in this domain (33.3%). There were reported cases of skin, respiratory and other epidemic diseases. It is observed that detainees were

not regularly supplied with soaps and there were reported cases of malnutrition. However, analysis of condition in Ogbomoso correctional centre shows that the centre is relatively adequate in all facility indicators, having scored 100% each in kitchen & meals and space & quarters, 93.3% each in hygiene & health and sanitation. Its lowest score is 80% which is in water supply. With these results, Ogbomoso correctional centre is the most functional correctional service in Oyo State.

Table 7: Domain Scores (%) of Facilities at the Correctional Centres

S/N	Facility domain	Ibadan	Oyo	Ogbomoso
1	Hygiene and health	33.3	33.3	93.3
2	Water supply	33.3	46.7	80.0
3	Sanitation	46.7	46.7	93.3
4	Space and quarters	26.7	46.7	100
5	Kitchen and meal	46.7	73.3	100

Source: Author’s Computation, 2018

ANOVA Results

The foregoing descriptive analysis of the conditions in the three correctional facilities revealed some variations. It is therefore important to test the differences to ascertain the degree of the variations. In view of this, the domain scores of conditions in different correctional facilities were subjected to Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) as shown on Table 8.

The result shows that with f-statistic as 12.63, f-critical as 3.46 and p-value as 0.00, the conditions of correctional facilities vary significantly across the locations. This implies that the variations observed in the conditions of correctional facilities are not due to chance, but the differences represent realities which should be attended to urgently and accordingly.

Table 8: ANOVA on Scores of Conditions of the Correctional Facilities

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	f-statistic	p-value	f-critical
Between Groups	63210	2	31605	12.63427	0.0000134	3.45942
Within Groups	90693.2	42	2159.362			
Total	153903.2	44				

Source: Author’s Computation, 2018

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study evaluated the conditions of the three correctional facilities in Oyo State, Nigeria. Using descriptive survey designs, the study assessed hygiene and health, water supply, sanitation, spaces and quarters and kitchen and meals in the correctional facilities. The findings showed that inmate population in Ibadan correctional centre had exceeded its official capacity, resulting in unhealthy impact on the facilities in the centre. The Oyo correctional centre has a fair outlook in the conditions of its facilities.

Nevertheless, the Ogbomoso correction centre has an impressive performance in the availability and utilization of the facilities. Based on the findings, it is recommended that government should encourage review of legality of detention so that some prisoners can be released on amnesty, compassionate release and other national release mechanisms. This may reduce the incidence of overcrowding in the correctional centres. In addition, government should improve cooperative mechanisms among criminal justice agencies so that case backlogs can be cleared in due course

and pressure on correctional facilities is relieved by joint action. Also, measures should be taken to reduce the duration of pre-trial detention. This can be achieved by setting statutory time limits on pre-trial. Furthermore, government should also consider increasing the capacity of Correctional Service as a short to medium-term measure while other strategies to reduce imprisonment are developed and implemented.

Finally, as a long-term measure, legislation may be reviewed to ensure that it includes a wide range of non-custodial sanctions, suitable for different types of offences, and applicable to individual circumstances.

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