

INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION: AN EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENT IN IMPLEMENTING POLICE REFORM

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INTRODUCTION

Current requirements in our national security architecture have given rise to the need for interdependence problem solving with focus on maintaining the sanctity of the nation and a focus on effective service delivery by relevant government agencies. The terrorist incidents at the Times Square and Detroit some years back obviously brought to fore how security agencies can stop an in bound threat from crossing our frontiers or even taking refuge inside the country. Terror attacks and attempt have constituted enormous fundamental issues of how government and security agencies evolve strategic security objectives, determine what budget priorities should be, plan long term capabilities and determine whether all these efforts are making Nigeria safer.

There is no doubt therefore that today's complex security challenges demand of us a smooth interaction among Nigerian's diplomatic, para-military, military intelligence communities. We must go beyond mere information sharing and connecting the dots. In 1998, the Philippines government "envisioned that their National Police was to evolve into a highly professional

dynamic and motivated organization working in partnership with a responsive community towards the attainment of a safe place to live, work, invest and do business". To support this reform they had a mandate enshrined in their Republic Act, a vision, philosophy, mission, core values and functions operating within a robust organizational structure similar to ours. So far they have operated together with other national agencies with a sense of collegiality and common purpose rarely seen in government.

The Nigerian experience at having good opportunity for a Police Reform could be traced to 1999 during the transition from military to democratic governance. It was to be the reformation of a Police that would be anchored on the need to deliver service professionally. That drive covered community policing, civil society, partnership, communications, provision of adequate resources, improved leadership and fighting crimes among others. In other to give meaning to all these, the Network on Police Reform in Nigeria (NOPRIN) was there to assist in identifying policy and reform issues and also provided civil society inputs.

Current contemporary challenges in the security sector (terrorisms) have shown more reasons why collaboration, transformation and reformation are essential drivers for supporting any strategies that seek to neutralize terrorism. This is so because insurgents around the world have developed

what some writers describe as the “ability to develop a strategic power projection capacity”. Let me make bold to mention here that the hallmark of most security sector (Police) reforms have been either detailing benchmarks or outcomes of the process.

In the course of this presentation therefore, I will attempt to examine inter-agency collaboration in order to see how it contributes to changes in service delivery by the Nigerian Police.

AIM

To discuss inter agency collaboration as a panacea for an effective implementation of Police reform.

SCOPE

- a. Define Reform and inter-agency collaboration.
- b. Conceptualizing inter-agency collaboration and Police Reform.
- c. Review of the Police and Army (AF) Acts.
- d. Examine current efforts and barriers to effective inter agency collaboration.
- e. The interface between Police and Army operations.

- f. Current Security challenges and the way forward – Law needed to imply reforms, edn/trg, fac/infras
- g. Conclusion

DEFINITION

REFORM

Reform in the words of some commentators, “Mistakes have been made in the past and what is needed would be to change the image of the organisation”. Simply put, a reform means improve someone or something by recovering or correcting faults, problems and so on. It also means improving your own behavior or habits by amending or introducing better methods or course of action.

COLLABORATION. In the words of Mathesich & Monsey (as cited by Townsend and Shelly 2008 p.102)

“Collaboration is a mutually beneficial and well defined relationship entered into by two or more organizations to achieve common goals, the relationship includes a commitment to mutual relationships and goals, a jointly developed (structure) and shared responsibility; mutual authority and accountability for success, and sharing of resources and rewards”.

Of great importance according to Greet et al (2008 p.58) is the fact that;

"Collaboration can also improve the overall effectiveness of service by moving stake holders to a greater state of "readiness to change" through provision of ample emotional, psychological and tangible support".

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What all these means for the Nigerian Army and Nigerian Police is;

- Faster access to services and interagency works.
- Reduced anxiety for personnel.
- Improved quality of monitoring and support.
- Better decision making.
- Improved ability to offer needed and timely resources and the judicious employment of scarce resources.
- Development of new policies and practices and reduction in duplication of services.

CONCEPTUALISATION OF INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION AND POLICE REFORMS

Current upsurge on security challenges have brought to fore attempts to foster cooperation among agencies.

According to Frederick Kaiser (2011) the term collaboration broadly refers to interagency activities' that others have variously defined as "cooperation",

"Coordination", "integration" or "networking". These terms have no commonly accepted definitions and there is hardly definitive distinctions between these different types or inter-agency activities except for the fact that they are seen as joint activities by two or more organizations that is intended to produce more public value than could be produced had any single agency or organization acted alone especially in specialized areas like the army and police with overlapping jurisdictions and shared responsibilities. It is however not a new phenomenon. The broad concept of integrated collaboration was seen by Kaiser (2008) as having at least 6 types of various activities and arrangements:

- a. Collaboration (an exchange among relatively equal partners)
- b. Coordination.
- c. Mergers.
- d. Integration.
- e. Networks.
- f. Partnerships.

They are capable of overlapping, supplementing and or reinforcing one another and many even occur severally in the same organizational structure and endeavour. What usually complicates issues in these arrangements is the absence of legal backing by our public laws or even directives as required.

Consequently, the practices sometimes lack consistency and precision (Kaiser 2008). Those who practice meaningful interagency cooperation have however evolve ways and means of developing working definitions to suit their purposes for each of the activities and arrangements stated earlier. This is with a view to enhancing collaboration, improved coordination or clarify responsibilities and efficiency.

In another way, let's examine an example of a concept of collaboration between the USA Department of Defence (DOD) and the new Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

In a 2010 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) regarding Cyber security the same characteristics of inter-agency collaboration were brought out:

It reads:

"The purpose of this Agreement is to set forth terms by which DHS and DOD will provide personnel, equipment, and facilities in order to increase interdepartmental collaboration in strategic planning for the Nations cyber security, mutual support for cyber security capabilities of both DHS; homeland security and DODI national security missions.....DOD and DHS agree to collaborate to improve the synchronization and mutual support of their respective efforts in support

of US cyber security Departmental relationships identified in this Agreement are intended to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of requirements formulation, and request for products services, technical assistance , coordination and performance assessment for cyber security missions executed across a variety of DOD and DHS elements”.

A common thread in an Army – Police collaboration is the threat and application of violence to achieve political ends. If you attempt using military theory to fill the void between social science and what officers observe on the street you will discover that the soldier is fighting an enemy whereas law enforcement officers are working within a general population that has enduring constitutional rights and liberties. The soldier therefore adheres to general laws of war often captured in flexible “Rules of Engagement” (ROE). The Police abide by more rigid set of established legal constraints. Collaboration between the army and Police in combating terrorism therefore entails both the use of a flexible balance between persuasion and coercion (or use of force).

POLICE REFORMATION

On the other hand, a security sector reform like what the Nigerian Police seeks to achieve today could be said to have emerged first as a concept in the 1990s in Eastern Europe. It has no globally accepted definition but generally

refers to a process of rebuilding or re-engineering and rebirth of a sector but in our case the Nigerian Police. The concept is all about a response to a dysfunction in the wheel of progress and difficulty in service delivery. Such dysfunction is as a result of abuse of policy or practice with overall attendant unpalatable consequences. Like in most democratic cultures, the police is also a security sector institution whose role include ensuring the security of the state and its people; a role that is played in conjunction with armed forces, law enforcement and intelligence services, the Justice Department and MDA, human rights and civil society groups, parliament are not left out.

Reforms could either be normative as well as an operational concept. In any of the 2, the guiding principle remain good Leadership and governance, civil oversight and the rule of law as important pillars. A police service reform would essentially be aimed at human security, democratic governance and long lasting peace for all, given the right strength, funding and professional competence. (see footnote 10 on printed SSR Paper on net)

A REVIEW OF THE POLICE AND ARMED FORCES (ARMY) ACTS

The Armed Forces and Police Acts derive their roots, authority and legality from the Grand Norm; the Nigerian Constitution. There have been several attempts to review the Nigeria Police Act with a view to overhauling its technical and political dimensions. I will not delve into the details of such

review but to briefly discuss how the act supports the discharge of duties efficiently and effectively to the extent that inter-agency collaboration becomes meaningful. For any reform in the police to function well, one challenge is to overcome those psychological aspects of how humans relate and respond to each others (behaviours). What is deemed acceptable by the society defines the rule for drafting any new laws or policies in a reform. As the army and the police continue to operate jointly, our modus operandi in tackling security and safety requirements will be publicly brought under scrutiny. Reforms must look at the demands by civil society and human rights groups that are growing in their numbers and not only that but the overall guiding principles in any democratic setting demands for accountability and transparency at all levels of our commands. There are a lot more.

Some public sector analyst have observed that the mission statement in the Police Act does not fully support democratic norms. This is debatable but what needs to be said here is perhaps the need to have robust mandates for maintenance of order, law enforcement and provision of service. The current organizational structure seems adequate for command and control except that Field Commanders should exercise a little autonomy to be innovative when it comes to Community Policing tasks. I shall not bother you with technicalities on who prosecute (police or AG) or even issues of arrest without warrants. It

is a matter for constitutional review and technocrats at the Police Service Commission including the National assembly to ponder upon.

The Nigerian Army Act (Now Armed Forces Act) derives its legitimacy from the Nigerian Constitution as earlier stated but could be described as an off-shoot of the "British Military Act 1881" which was applied to Nigeria as the West African Frontier Forces "Ordinance". This changed with the attainment of independence in 1960. General Ocran of Ghana Armed Forces in his book "Politics of the Sword" remarked that :

"the army thrives on discipline, obedience, self abnegation, self sacrifice, fidelity etc to the extent that if these disappear, there is no army but a rabble"

This I consider a very important background information for any fusion or collaboration with the army.

CURRENT EFFORTS AND BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE INTER AGENCY COLLABORATION.

Overcoming challenges or barriers to effective inter-agency collaboration or promoting it has been a complex issue more than efforts at implementing those things that make collaboration itself work for agencies not only the army and police. In no order of priority or importance, I will examine the role of

leaders and commanders at the strategic level, the role of principal staff officers and the police Management Team, challenges at the operational and tactical levels, role of government then list some identified challenges/barriers.

THE LEADERSHIP LEVEL COLLABORATION

There is an effective liaison that enables the 2 services to facilitate opportunities to “unpack and discuss any perceived or entrenched challenges or differences with workable initiatives (top-bottom) that facilitates better understanding of inter professional collaboration” (Willumsen, 2008) (Head, 2008).

THE POLICE MANAGEMENT TEAM/ ARMY PRINCIPAL STAFF OFFICERS COLLABORATION

This group could actually be the ones that should ensure real facilitation of crucial decision-making process, realistic expectations, sharing of ideas and advice, reviewing joint goals and plans that sustain better inter-agency collaboration (Head, 2008). Their intervention and impact requires review in the current situation. As Principal advisers to the leader, their perspective of influence and experience should make them more visible in our collaborative arrangements.

OPERATIONAL LEVEL COLLABORATION

There are visible attempts and efforts among Field Commanders that seek to improve understanding of effective inter-agency collaboration as we continue to notice commitment to mutual relationship and goals among GOCs, AIGs, Brigade Commanders and COMPOLs among others. There is an existing jointly developed structure in the field and a sense of shared responsibility. Most Task Forces in the states for Internal Security Operations are joint in nature increasing the profiles of the 2 Services in Joint Operations for a long time now. This notwithstanding, the implications for such collaborative process in terms of opportunities and limitations have continued to emerge with a need to also constantly review them (Willumsen, 2008). These reviews are mainly to concern our structures and relationship in the tactical levels as would be explained shortly.

TACTICAL LEVEL COLLABORATION

This could be referred to as the grassroots level collaboration where we find the unit Commanding Officer (CO) and his counterpart at the Divisional Police Office (DPO) with a supervising Area Commander responsible to about 3 Police DPOs in One Area of Responsibility held by an army CO. The inter-personal and inter-organizational levels in terms of degree of integration have not been very encouraging as a result of breakdown in communications,

lack of proper supervision and perceived organizational idiosyncrasies inherited from colonial past. Whatever causes friction among personnel would be at this all important level (they implement and execute routine orders because they own or superintend over the work force directly), we need more effective liaison, inter-agency meeting, appropriate supervision and most of all, increased personal knowledge of other agencies and their roles and responsibilities through regular training sessions and other formal and informal interactions.

GOVERNMENT ROLES IN INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

The government role is important in achieving effective collaboration between the 2 agencies and indeed all agencies, who find themselves collaborating in one way or the other. An improved role by government in funding and formulation of legislation and policy especially in areas of resourcing, information sharing, training among others. According to Metcalfe (2007), among agencies that work closely;

“Resource allocation process such as the competitive nature of funding have been identified as an area that can often divide agencies.....”.

Section 217 of the constitution of the Federal republic of Nigeria deals with the establishment of the Armed Forces. The command and operational use of the Armed Forces is enshrined in Section 218. Suppressing insurrection and acting in aid of civil authority including securing our borders are dealt with under Section 217 (b) and (c) respectively. The support to civil police and support in aid of civil authority in times of disaster form the 2 main components of the aforementioned constitutional duties by the Army.

From the foregoing therefore reform and interagency collaboration should target a robust working relationship as the strongest asset. Like Admiral Timothy Keating of NORAD/US NORTHCOM said "getting the right capability to right spot at the right time is what is important". This include the right information/intelligence, the right logistic support, the right operational decision and so on. Collaboration and Reform must therefore aim at achieving "unity of result as provided by unity of efforts". Reform must also target better methods of communications and collaboration.

POLICE REFORM AS A DRIVER FOR IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION

I have already alluded to the fact that there is strength in joint unified action. Our thinking therefore must be so adaptive with professionals in both police and army who understand the capabilities each service brings to joint

operations, how to integrate those capabilities in order to be able to organize, employ and sustain jointness. It is only when we do this that our national leaders are provided with a variety of options for tackling the security challenges facing the nation (US Joint Publication 3-0; 2011).

It goes without saying that an effective police force is critical to countering insurgency. A number of areas (not exhaustible) have therefore been identified as critically essential for meaningful reformation and collaboration to happen;

- a. Having a professional Human Resource Base.
- b. Well equipped Police Force to manage rising insecurity and militant violence.
- c. A robust civilian Law enforcement Infrastructure.
- d. The police to play central role in an over arching restructuring of our whole law enforcement infrastructure(Criminal Justice System Reform inclusive). (Hassan Abbas, 2011)
- e. Adequate training at all levels.
- f. Explore traditional and innovative reform options.

It is my believe that the aforementioned areas if well examined can impact on the way intelligence and information are shared, the way we evolve our joint standard operating procedures, building trust and partnership, joint training and missions among others.

WAY FORWARD

The promotion of interagency synergy remains the best option open. If you take the complexity of our current security challenges for example, the operating environment need a totally comprehensive approach by government and its agencies that leverages our various capabilities including the military, the police, diplomatic partners, MDAs among others.

The early identification of common goals and objectives under a common umbrella and working jointly to achieve them must be robust enough to support planning and execution of operations. We must evolve a culture of starting all these things before a crisis and not in the midst of it.

Collaboration and cooperation must be routinely addressed in an atmosphere of good communication and understanding of our different methods and perspectives (Gen Lloyd Austin II, 2013). The spirit should be that one man's job reinforces the ability to achieve the other.

Five hundred years ago, then President Eisenhower of the USA saw the importance of close interagency communication and collaboration in his country's international affairs when he introduced what has grown to be known today as the State Department Foreign Policy advisor Programme where over 100 high level State Department (Foreign.Affairs) officers are serving directly as policy advisors to service chiefs, senior military commanders at home and abroad. We can fashion our model back here.

The dynamic tactics and targets of terrorist in Nigeria today pose a formidable challenge not only to the police who are charged with maintaining law and order internally but the security agencies type of training, limited resources and types of equipment are areas identified as requiring review. Our law enforcement structures never catered for any systematic and advanced counter terrorist strategy. In law enforcement, we still are struggling to do away with old investigative tools, skills and incentives (USIP. Org, 2011). In his book, " The Good Soldier and the Good Cop", Douglas Lackey (2006) said "If terrorist are criminals, their natural antagonist are the police". This statement must be taken seriously.

It would not be wise to build the capacity of only one law enforcement agency in isolation and so a comprehensive approach with a lot of financial

backing is required. The dysfunctional relationship among all security institutions becomes counter productive for meaningful collaboration.

There is a long standing challenge with data collection and processing not only in the police and army. It is a national malady which must be tackled. Finally, if reforms are to persist, the astute change manager must ensure that the reforms belong to the institution and the people not just their own. This means reformers must build political and public support for such reform, so that budget may survive even when money is not forth coming. (Weisburd et al, 2003) (Skogan W.G., 2008)

References

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